

Proserpine to Airlie Beach

School Needs Analysis 2021



Executive Summary

This Proserpine to Airlie Beach School Needs Analysis (SNA) is a recommended outcome of the Proserpine to Airlie Beach Growth Study (GS) and aims to define the future educational needs of Greater Airlie Beach (GAB) and Proserpine catchments. The GS seeks to define demand generation in GAB at full capacity, population of almost 60,000, including education facilities, medical and aged care facilities, transport, water, sewer and community facilities in a manner that is orderly and cost efficient.

It is anticipated the GS area will provide sufficient land to accommodate for growth in GAB up to 60,000, with approximately 38,000 people moving into the growth corridor. The GS and GAB Structure Plan (SP) set out key objectives of identifying a desired land use mix, identifying land for community facilities and securing infrastructure corridors.

The GAB will be home to approximately 4,850 primary school age children and 3,270 high school aged children requiring an additional 44ha of primary school land and an additional 24ha of high school land within the GAB catchments. This SNA will be a tool for Council to advocate for the Department of Education Queensland to improve the standards of service for education facilities in the Region, which will require the acquisition and construction of a 20ha GAB primary school and collocated GAB high school in the short-term.



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1. Demographics & Population Growth

The population of the GAB SA2 in 2016 was 10,665 (excluding Islands), having increased from 8,775 in 2011 at a rate of 3.9% p/a. Into the future, it is estimated the GAB SA2 will be home to 19,250 people in 2036, of which school age children make up approximately 13% of the population (8% primary school, 5% high school)¹. For the purpose of the GS, the population was projected beyond 2036, utilising the average per annum growth rates sourced from long-term, moderate projections for the decade of 2026 to 2036 (2.74% per annum). With this methodology, the GAB is likely to support approximately 60,000 people at *ultimate development*² estimated at 2080, with approximately 38,000 people moving into the growth corridor.

Whilst Proserpine is a separate Census Statistical Area (SA2), schooling infrastructure is shared between GAB and Proserpine. In 2016, Proserpine had a population of 8,829, which is anticipated to grow to approximately 9,720 by 2036 at a rate of 0.5% p/a. School age children make up approximately 18% of the population (10% primary school, 8% high school).

2. Existing Schools

The GAB and Proserpine catchments have six schools, totaling 21.7ha of primary school land and 18.5ha of high school land. All but Cannonvale State School (Grade 1-6) and Whitsunday Christian College (Grade 1-12) are in the Proserpine SA2, refer to **Figure 1**.

Primary Schools (21.74ha)	High Schools (18.51ha)
P1 - Cannonvale State School 4.2ha; P2 - Whitsunday Christian College (Cannonvale) approx. 2.03ha of 4.062ha site*; P3 - Saint Catherine's Catholic School (Proserpine) approx. 9.95ha of 19.9ha site*; P4 - Proserpine State School 5.56ha.	H1 - Proserpine State High School 6.53ha; H2 - St Catherine's Renwick Senior School approx. 9.95ha of 19.9ha site (Proserpine)*; and H3 - Whitsunday Christian College (Cannonvale) approx. 2.03ha of 4.062ha site*.
*Half primary school, half high school	*Half high school, half primary school

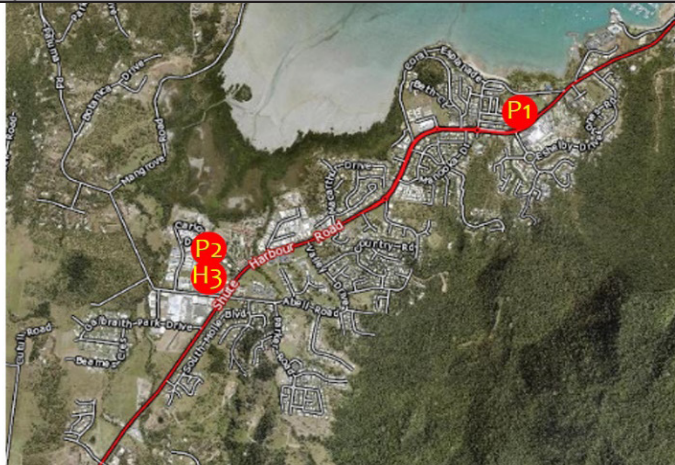


Figure 1: Primary and High School Locations in Proserpine (left) and GAB (right)

1 (EPS, 2018)

2 Ultimate development - means the estimated total population of the GAB if all zones are built to full capacity, taking into consideration constrained land.

The Queensland Schools Planning Reference Committee (QSPRC) met with Council in 2015 and 2019, identifying the recommendations in **Table 1**. In the 2019 meeting, updated growth figures from the Queensland Statisticians Office were identified, with recommendations from 2015 remaining unchanged. It should be noted, the projections of school demand in this SNA are based on Council's detailed Economic and Population Study (EPS) completed in 2018, which reflect marginally higher rates of growth than the Queensland Statisticians Office within the GAB.

Table 1: Recommendations for Schooling within the GAB and Proserpine SA2s (QSPRC 2019)

SA2 or Cluster	New government and non-government schools that may be required:				Estimated and Projected Primary (ages 5-11) and Secondary (ages 12-17) School-Age Population					
	2021 to 2031		2031 to 2041		Population 2016		Growth 2021 to 2031		Growth 2031 to 2041	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Airlie-Whitsunday SA2	1	1	0	0	1,128	662	128	244	221	169
Proserpine SA2	0	0	0	0	854	712	28	2	81	50
Bowen SA2	0	0	0	0	833	640	45	41	98	63
TOTAL	1	1	0	0						

Note: Recommendations do not include new schools opening in 2020.

Cannonvale State Primary School is currently at capacity with little room for expansion on the grounds and population growth of school age children within the SA2 area continues to increase demand. In 2016, there were approximately 3,250 school age children within the Proserpine and GAB catchment, of which 1,728 (53%) live within the GAB SA2³.

Growth in school age children by place of residence, occurred predominately in primary school age children within the GAB, at 6.7% p/a from 2006 - 2016, with the highest growth in high school age children within the GAB, at 5.8% p/a. Proserpine is home to the majority of schools within the catchment despite having the lowest growth, refer to **Table 2** (excluding Island populations).

3 (EPS, 2018) (REMPAN, 2019)



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Table 2: Growth of School Age Children within GAB and Proserpine SA2s. (REMPLAN, 2019)

Place of residence	2006	2011	2016	Per annum growth %
GAB Primary school age 5-11	739	880	1,217	6.7%
GAB SA2 High school age 12-17	438	393	521	5.8%
Proserpine Prep / Primary school age 5-11	769	916	925	0.1%
Proserpine High school age 12-17	456	516	586	2.6%
Total	2,402	2,705	3,249	

3. Projected School Demand

Figure 2 identifies expected growth in school age children by place of residence based upon projections in the EPS, 2018⁴. These projections are based upon population growth and students as a percentage of this population, rather than historic per annum growth in students displayed within **Table 2**, which is higher than population growth.

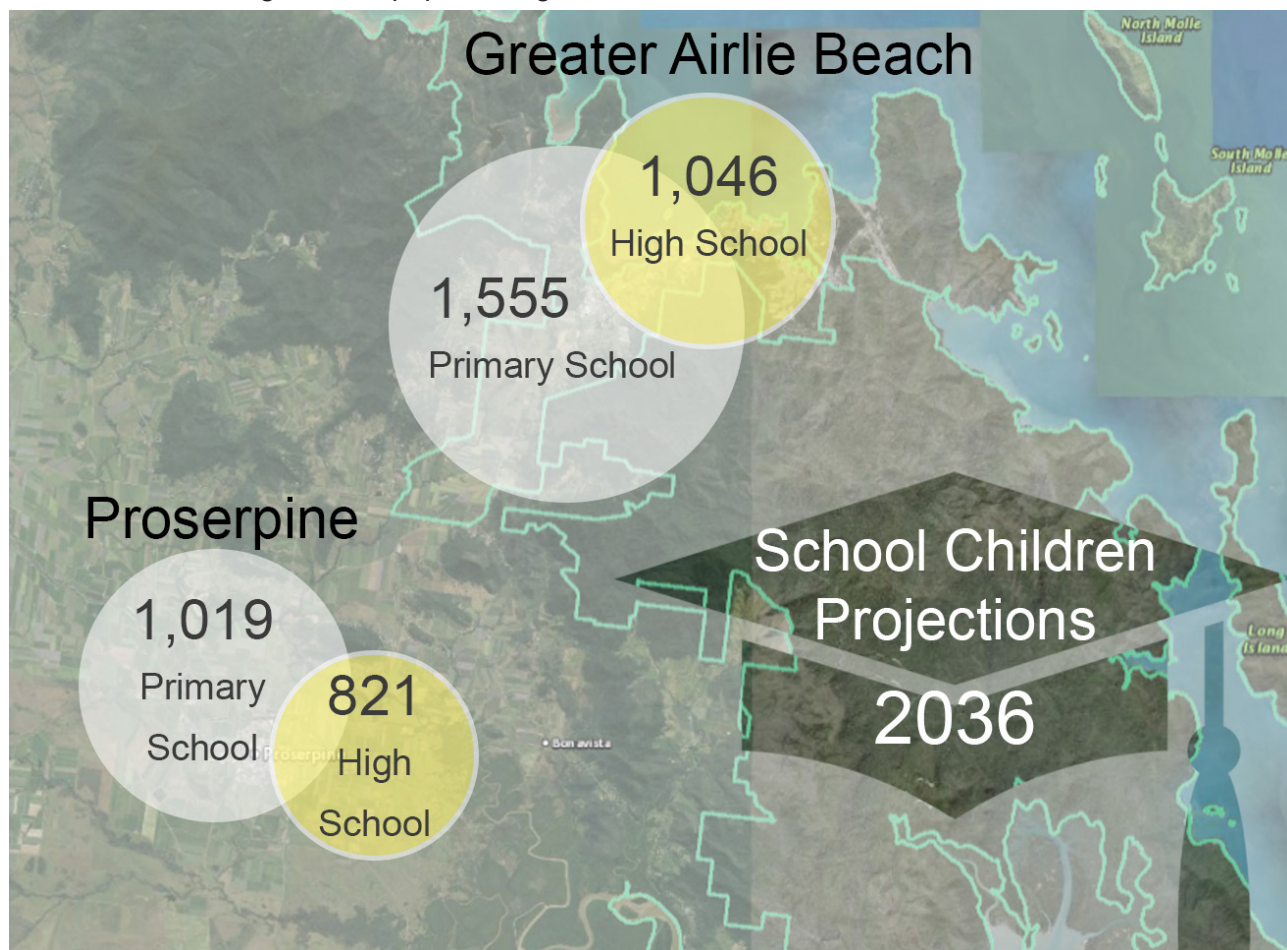


Figure 2: School Children Projections by 2036 (SA2).

4 (EPS, 2018)

Table 3 compares existing student and projected school age children by place of residence against desired standards of service for school provision defined by *Economic Development Queensland's Community Facilities Priority Development Area Guideline 11*⁵.

Table 3, below, highlights an immediate need for land to be secured for a State Primary School within Cannonvale or Cannon Valley, to meet Economic Development Queensland's (EDQ) recommended desired standard of service for primary school age children (96 students per hectare⁶). The need for a GAB primary school was also identified by the Queensland School Planning Reference Committee (QSPRC) 2019, with the report recommending a primary school be developed between 2021-2031, refer to **Table 1**.

High School aged children may be absorbed into current Proserpine non-state high schools until beyond 2036, however a state high school will be triggered earlier, refer to **Table 3**. QSPRC has also identified the need for a GAB high school by 2031 to better support the local population and improve high school accessibility standards.

Table 3: Schools within Proserpine and the GAB in comparison to DSS. Red identifies catchments not meeting the Desired Standard of Service.

Existing School Sizes	Primary Schools (21.74ha)	High Schools (18.51ha)
	- Cannonvale State School 4.2ha; - Saint Catherine's Catholic School (Proserpine) approx. 9.95ha of 19.9ha site*; - Proserpine State School 5.56ha; - Whitsunday Christian College (Cannonvale) approx. 2.03ha of 4.062ha site*.	- Proserpine State High School 6.53ha; - St Catherine's Renwick Senior School approx. 9.95ha of 19.9ha site (Proserpine)*; - Whitsunday Christian College (Cannonvale) approx. 2.03ha of 4.062ha site*.
	*Half primary school, half high school	*Half high school, half primary school
DSS⁷	96 students per ha	125 students per ha
Catchment	Proserpine + GAB Catchment	Proserpine + GAB Catchment
Current Standard of Service	99 students/ha	60 students/ha
2036 Standard of Service	143 students/ha	89 students/ha

4. Long-Term Demand within Cannon Valley and GAB

The ultimate development GAB population is estimated at 60,000 and is anticipated to be reached by approximately 2080. Assuming the present demographic profile, where school age children make up approximately 13% of the population (8% primary school, 5% high school), the GAB will be home to approximately 4,850 primary school age children and 3,270 high school aged children requiring a total of 50ha of state primary school land (44ha additional required) and 26ha of state high school land (24ha additional required) within the GAB catchment in 2080. The Proserpine High School has capacity for expansion, which may cater for a portion of the GAB high school population in the short-

5 (Economic Development Queensland, 2015)

6 (Economic Development Queensland, 2015)

7 (Economic Development Queensland, 2015)



term, albeit with lower accessibility standards. However, it is prudent to plan for a GAB high school, which will be required before 2031 (QSPRC).

The additional 68ha of state primary and high school land required to service a GAB population of 60,000, would most efficiently be provided in three stages and preference a combined primary/high school, co-located to create efficiency and reduce capital spending by sharing infrastructure.

The GAB population is projected to be 18,000 in 2036, which would require 7ha for 900 high school students and 15ha for 1440 primary school students or 22ha total. It is anticipated that by co-locating the schools and sharing some facilities, this could be reduced to 20ha total. The co-located Proserpine Saint Catherine's Catholic Primary/High School shows that the proposed size is appropriate at 19.9ha.

At 2036 another 20ha of primary/high school would need to be constructed and another 20ha again at approximately 2060 to service the GAB population out to approximately 2080 or a population of 60,000.

It is considered existing TAFE facilities within Cannonvale have adequate space for expansion and will meet the demands for the Region for tertiary education to 2036, in collaboration with Bowen TAFE, based upon EDQ standards.

5. Accessibility & Safety

Students who must travel from Jubilee Pocket, Airlie Beach and Cannonvale could save up to 1.5hrs per school day, when considering travel time, travel from home to and from bus stop, bus stop wait times and bus scheduling inefficiencies.



The approximate 30-minute travel time has been identified as a safety risk to students, as much of the travel is on high-speed roads (100km/h), which is not recommended. The access to and from GAB and Proserpine is prone to flooding in the wet season, which can be a safety risk and reduce attendance by up to a week each school year.

The cost of private transport or bus travel on families in the catchment could also be avoided by establishing state primary and high schools in the GAB catchment to improve accessibility and safety.

6. Co-location Benefits

The benefits of co-locating the primary and high school would be:

- an overall reduction in land, reduced by approximately 10%, which reduces the purchase price;
- shared facilities and infrastructure, reducing costs further;
- sharing facilities with larger number of students allows for more diversity or higher quality;
- sharing facilities will significantly reduce service and maintenance costs;
- facilities get used to their full capacity;
- families with multiple children will have a single drop off destination, saving time; and
- design and construction of the primary and high schools can be coordinated, creating economies of scale, reducing cost and complexity further.

Council may also consider engaging with the Department of Education to discuss co-locating a Regional Sport Park with a primary/high school, further benefitting from shared facilities and cost sharing. In general Council's Sport Parks are most highly utilised on weekends and weekday evenings, while school ovals are primarily utilised during school hours, making for a perfect opportunity for the optimisation of facilities.

7. Recommendations

It is recommended that Council advocate for an 20ha primary/high school to be constructed in the GAB within the next 5 years, which would require the acquisition of the land immediately. If the primary school was 15ha, it would meet the EDQ's desired standards of service of 96 primary students per hectare until a GAB population of 18,000, anticipated in 2036. It is also recommended that Council advocate for the acquisition an additional 5ha of land (total 20ha co-located) for a GAB high school, which should be constructed immediately after the primary school's completion, refer to **Table 4**.

The high school component currently has accessibility demand, not population demand, so land acquisition should be explored immediately but construction could be staged to meet population demand over time.

It is also recommended that Council do further research into the possibility of co-locating a Regional Sport Park with the school and open discussions with the Department of Education to explore the possibility.



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Table 4: Summary of Actions and Timing within the GAB Catchment.

Year	Recommended Actions
2021 - 2025	Advocate for the acquisition of land (20ha) for a co-located GAB Primary School/ High School.
2022 - 2025	Advocate for the design and construction of a GAB Primary School (15ha) by 2025.
2022 - 2027	Advocate for the design and construction of a GAB High School (5ha) by 2027.
2027 onward	Advocate for schools required to service the GAB community beyond 2036.

8. Conclusion

The Queensland School Planning Reference Committee recommends that primary school and high schools be developed between 2021-2031. This SNA shows that, to meet GAB demand, a primary school is required immediately and, to meet GAB accessibility standards, a high school is also required immediately.

Council plays a key role in advocating to the Department of Education for the immediate acquisition of land for a GAB primary school and GAB high school and to begin design and construction as soon as practicable. Although the construction of both the primary school and high school are important, it should be noted that the primary school is the priority in the first instance.

Council also has a unique opportunity to explore the option to co-locate a Sport Park with the Schools, to save the community significant costs and provide the highest quality facilities possible.





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