

Prepared for:  
**SOUTH BURNETT REGIONAL COUNCIL**

SEPTEMBER 2025



# CONTENTS

1.0	DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY .....	1
2.0	APPLICATION SUMMARY .....	2
3.0	THE SITE.....	3
3.1	SITE PARTICULARS .....	3
3.2	LOCALITY CONTEXT .....	4
3.3	SITE HISTORY .....	5
3.4	EASEMENTS.....	6
3.5	PRELODGEEMENT.....	6
4.0	THE PROPOSAL .....	7
4.1	DEVELOPMENT DETAILS .....	7
4.2	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS .....	8
4.2.1	AIR .....	8
4.2.2	NOISE .....	8
4.2.3	STORMWATER .....	8
4.3	TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT .....	8
5.0	THE ASSESSMENT .....	10
5.1	STATE PLANNING POLICY.....	10
5.2	REFERRAL AGENCIES .....	10
5.3	PLANNING SCHEME.....	11
5.3.1	STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK.....	11
5.3.2	RUAL ZONE CODE .....	12
5.3.3	OVERLAYS .....	12
6.0	OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS.....	14
7.0	CONCLUSION .....	15
8.0	ATTACHMENTS .....	16

*Disclaimer:- This report has been prepared in accordance with the scope of services described in the agreement between Infinitum Partners Pty Ltd ABN 95 634 081 584 and the Client. The report relies upon data and information taken at or under the particular times and conditions specified herein and may rely on material provided by other parties. The report has been prepared solely for use by the Client and is not for further distribution. Infinitum Partners accepts no responsibility for its use by other parties.*

Version	Date	Details	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By
1	16/09/2025	Draft	LM	KI	KI
2	18/09/2025	FINAL	LM	SJH	SJH



# 1.0 DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Infinitum Partners have prepared this report on behalf of the applicant to obtain a Development Permit for a Material Change of Use – High Impact Industry (including ERA 47(c) and ERA 33).

The proposed development seeks to increase the annual throughput of the Pro Pine Sawmill to mill a maximum of 60,000 tonne of timber, and to screen approximately 5,000 tonne of bark in a trommel. The sawmill has been operational since 1910 and currently operates under an existing permit for ERA 47(b) Timber milling and woodchopping. The Mill currently employs 20 staff and is an important business for the region. The increase in throughput is a great indication that operations are strong and demand for the timber is only going to continue as the building and construction sectors increase their production.

The proposed increase in throughput requires both an EA permit for ERA 47(c) and an EA permit for ERA 33. Additionally, the proposed throughput means the site will be considered a high impact industry use. This application seeks a Development Permit for High Impact Industry. The increase in throughput will occur through more efficient work practices, resulting in no change to existing buildings or the existing development footprint. There are no changes to the existing operating hours.

This planning report, along with supporting specialist reports demonstrate that the proposed development is an appropriate outcome for the site and demonstrates compliance with the relevant provisions of the *South Burnett Regional Council Planning Scheme 2017 V2.0*.



Image 1. Site plan – RMA Engineers

## 2.0 APPLICATION SUMMARY

<b>Address</b>	256 & 258 Old Esk Road, Taromeo
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 228 & 229 SP136942
<b>Easements</b>	Several, Refer to Title Search and to Section 3.4 No changes to easements proposed.
<b>Site Area</b>	64.8Ha
<b>Land Owner (s)</b>	LONGWAIT PTY LTD A.C.N. 621 283 449 TRUSTEE UNDER INSTRUMENT 708809050
<b>Planning Legislation</b>	<i>Planning Act 2016</i>
<b>Local Government</b>	South Burnett Regional Council
<b>Regional Plan</b>	Wide Bay Burnett
<b>State Planning Policy (SSP) Designation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water Resource Catchments</li> <li>• Bushfire Prone Area</li> </ul>
<b>Referral Agencies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SARA – exceeding threshold and environmentally relevant activity</li> <li>2. Ergon &amp; Powerlink – easement</li> </ol>
<b>Planning Scheme</b>	South Burnett Regional Council Planning Scheme 2017 V2.0
<b>Planning Scheme Zone</b>	Rural Zone
<b>Local Government Infrastructure Plan (LGIP)</b>	Not located within Priority Infrastructure Area
<b>Overlays</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bushfire Hazard</li> <li>• Regional Infrastructure</li> <li>• Biodiversity Areas</li> <li>• Agricultural</li> </ul>
<b>Application Type</b>	Material Change of Use – Development Permit for High Impact Industry (including ERA 47(c) and ERA 33)
<b>Level of Assessment</b>	Impact Assessment
<b>Applicant Details</b>	LONGWAIT PTY LTD A.C.N. 621 283 449 TRUSTEE UNDER INSTRUMENT 708809050 C/- Infinitum Partners

## 3.0 THE SITE

The 64.8Ha site is located at 256 & 258 Old Esk Road, Taromeo. The site currently contains the existing Pro Pine Sawmill.



*Image 2. Subject Site Aerial – Nearmap*

### 3.1 SITE PARTICULARS

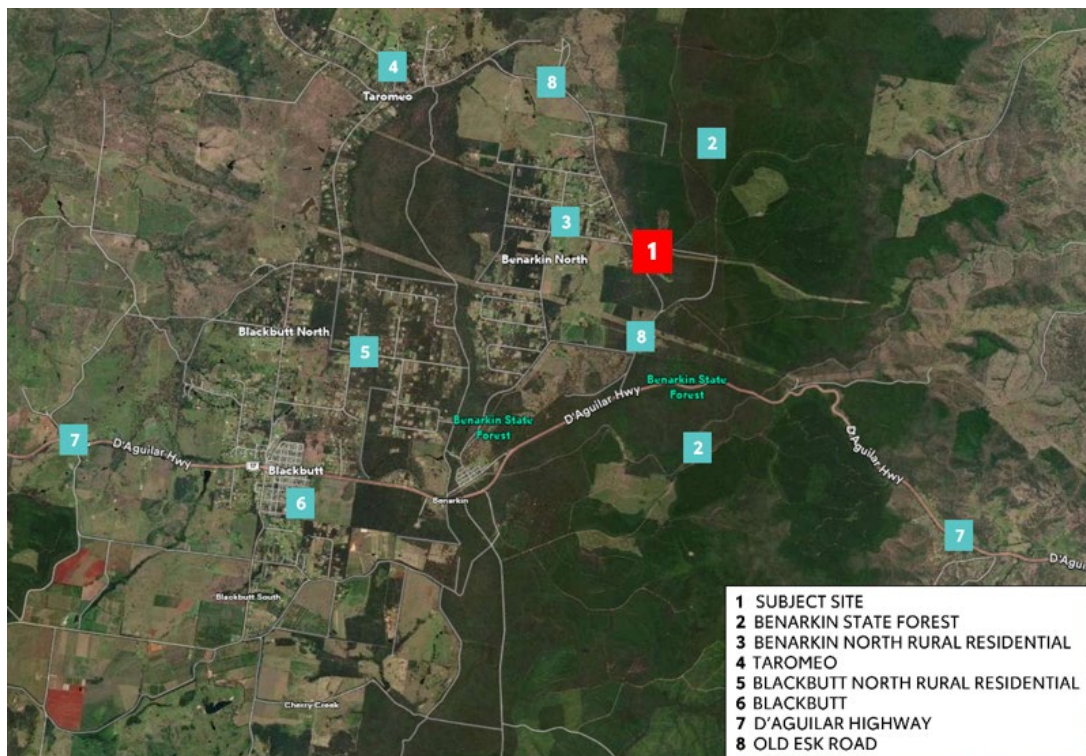
<b>Existing Use of Land</b>	Pro Pine Sawmill
<b>Topography</b>	Generally flat across site. 390m in northwest corner (location of sawmill) to 430m in the east
<b>Existing Vegetation</b>	Approx. 70% of site is heavily vegetated, with cleared areas for the sawmill and the easements
<b>Road Frontages</b>	Approx. 50m to Old Esk Road with crossover
<b>Existing Services</b>	Connected to power grid, rainwater tanks for water and envirocycle septic system collected by a contractor
<b>Surrounding Land Uses</b>	Rural residential and Benarkin State Forest

### 3.2 LOCALITY CONTEXT

The site is located in the Rural zone, with a large frontage and a single crossover to Old Esk Road, which provides connection to the D'Aguilar Highway to the south and to Taromeo to the north. To the east of the site is the Benarkin State Forest which is managed for timber production and habitat protection. To the north-west is rural residential land known as Benarkin North while the rest of the site is surrounded by larger rural lots.



*Image 3. Zoning – South Burnett Planning Scheme 2017 V2.0*



*Image 4. Local Context – Nearmap*

### 3.3 SITE HISTORY

The site has been used as a sawmill since 1910 and was purchased as a State sawmill in 1915. It is now privately owned but is recognised as a foundational industry of the South Burnett. The sawmill is critical to the regional supply chain including producing timber for new housing. The sawmill currently processes up to 20,000 tonnes of timber annually. Logs are debarked, milled, and graded into various timber products used for construction and landscaping. By-products of the milling process such as bark, woodchips, and sawdust are collected and sold or reused. The sawmill employs approximately 20 staff with roles including machinery operations, logistics, maintenance, and administration. The site directly adjoins the Benarkin State Forest which is home to hoop pine plantations and eucalypt forests. The sawmill currently processes Hoop Pine logs from Queensland forests.



*1961 Site Aerial (QImagery)*

As per council's online records no previous development applications can be found.

The sawmill operates lawfully under existing use rights ascribed to it by section 260 of the *Planning Act 2016*.

### 3.4 EASEMENTS

The site includes numerous easements including:

- A Powerlink easement for powerlines along the north of the site
- An Ergon easement for a transformer next to Milling Workshop 1
- Access easements to the Benarkin State Forest in the north and to Lot 229 SP136942.



*Easement Locations – Development Assessment Mapping System*

### 3.5 PRELODGEEMENT

A prelodgement meeting with council was held 15 October 2024. A number of matters were discussed in the meeting, including the acknowledgement of the role of the sawmill as an important business in the region. Council confirmed that the proposed work to increase throughput constituted a material change of use. Despite the proposal being subject to impact assessment council confirmed that there are relevant matters at play that gave merit to the proposal.

It was also acknowledged that with any proposed increase there would be potential matters requiring mitigation. As a result, considerable time has been spent on preparing supporting reports that demonstrate that the increased can be supported and any potential impacts will be well-managed.

During the prelodgement meeting the technical perspective focused on the traffic and impacts on the transport network. A comprehensive traffic report has been prepared by RMA Engineers to address the concerns and demonstrate the impact on the surrounding transport network.

## 4.0 THE PROPOSAL

---

### 4.1 DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

The proposal seeks a Development Permit for Material Change of Use for High Impact Industry (including ERA 47(c) and ERA 33). Currently the sawmill has a permit to mill 20,000 tonnes of timber per annum (ERA 47(b)). The applicant proposes to mill a maximum of 60,000 tonnes of timber per annum and to screen approximately 5,000 tonnes of bark per annum. The increased throughput requires two new ERA permits:

- ERA 47 (c) – timber milling and wood chipping – milling, in a year, more than 20,000 tonnes but not more than 100,000 tonnes of timber.
- ERA 33 – crushing, grinding, milling or screening more than 5,000 tonnes of material in a year.

The proposed increase of the throughput will result from more efficient work practices and will not require any new buildings or structures. The sawmill is able to increase throughput with a mix of new machinery such as new debarking lines and automatic stacking, and improved systems such as electronic processing intelligence and material handling.

The sawmill receives raw hoop pine logs from Queensland forests. A majority of the product is sourced hyper locally from the Benarkin State Forest, with a small portion of logs coming from areas such as the Mary Valley. The logs are then debarked, milled and processed to create various sizes of timber boards, bark (mostly landscaping bark), woodchips, and sawdust.

The maximum throughput applied for is not expected to be reached until 2036 with the sawmill increasing throughput slowly overtime. Currently 20 staff are employed onsite with an additional 20 staff members expected to be employed over time as part of the expansion. Staff travel to and from site in general light vehicles, while deliveries of raw materials and collection of processed materials require semi-trailers and B-Double heavy vehicles. Internal to the site will be a range of mobile machinery such as front-end loaders, forklifts, bobcats, tip trucks and an excavator. Operation of the sawmill will not require the mobile machinery to enter or exit the site. While the expansion of the sawmill production will result in an increase of both heavy and light vehicle movements it will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding road network.

The sawmill is already connected to the local above ground power grid. On site water is sourced from existing rainwater tanks. There is an Envirocycle Septic system to manage greywater and blackwater in holding tanks, sewage is collected by a contractor on a regular basis. General waste and recycling is stored onsite in covered bins and collected weekly by JJ Richards.

The sawmill will continue to operate as per existing hours being: 6am to 6pm on Monday to Friday, and 7am to 6pm on Saturday (for maintenance only). No operations are proposed on Sundays or public holidays.

Importantly, this development application does not propose any additional buildings or infrastructure to be added to the site. Only an increase in production based on increased efficiency from new machinery is proposed. The increased output from the Pro Pine Sawmill will

be beneficial to increasing the supply of building materials in Queensland while also providing additional jobs to the South Burnett region.

## **4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

Refer to the Environmental Assessment by Range Environmental Consultants in **Attachment 2**. The assessment has determined that the proposed development poses a low risk to the environmental values at the site. The assessment confirmed that there are no anticipated significant residual impacts to Prescribed Environmental Matters and therefore no environmental offsets are required. By implementing the Site Based Management Plan prepared by Range Environmental Consultants (**Attachment 3**) the proposed development will maintain the identified low risk of harm to the environmental values.

### **4.2.1 AIR**

Refer to the air quality impact assessment by ViridAU in **Attachment 4**. The assessment has determined that the resulting pollutants from the increased throughput are well below the respective assessment criteria/air quality objectives. Therefore, the increase in throughput is not expected to adversely impact the existing air quality levels on the surrounding environment.

### **4.2.2 NOISE**

Refer to the noise impact assessment by ViridAU in **Attachment 5**. The assessment has determined that the proposed increase of production is predicted to achieve compliance with the relevant noise criteria. Noise management measures have been recommended to minimise emissions from the site. These measures include restriction on operating hours, maintain equipment to manufacturers requirements, no revving or idling of engines, and minimise drop height when loading and unloading vehicles.

### **4.2.3 STORMWATER**

Refer to the stormwater management plan by RMA Engineers in **Attachment 6**. RMA have developed a stormwater management strategy to ensure the peak flow discharge does not increase once development has occurred. The strategy involves a sediment basin and an open channel to discharge stormwater into an existing dam on site. As a result the proposed development will not result in adverse impacts to surrounding properties or infrastructure due to stormwater discharge.

## **4.3 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT**

Refer to Traffic Engineering Report by RMA Engineers in **Attachment 7**. The assessment has determined that:

- Future daily heavy vehicle movements equate to 38 movements (combined in and out), which is an increase of 19 movements.
- Peak hour movements are expected to comprise a maximum of 40 staff movements in both AM and PM.
- The special charge rate that Council levies on other industry operators should be disclosed so that a fair and reasonable special charge rate could be derived for the proposed development.

- During the site visit, it was identified that some dirt/gravel migration was present. It is recommended that staff periodically monitor and sweep the access throat to remove any loose dirt/gravel that may have accumulated on the road.
- Council should evaluate the potential of road widening and line marking, or at a minimum vegetation clearing to extend sight lines around horizontal curves on Old Esk Road. The special rate charge could assist these works.
- Department of Transport and Main Roads should investigate and modify the turn lane treatment at the intersection of D'Aguilar Highway and Old Esk Road which is an existing network deficiency. It is recommended that the auxiliary right turn lane be converted into a short channelised right turn lane.
- The proposed development can proceed without any unacceptable or adverse impacts on the external road network. No traffic and transport engineering matters have been identified that should preclude approval of the proposed development at this location.

## 5.0 THE ASSESSMENT

The *Planning Act 2016* (the Act) and *Planning Regulation 2017* (the Regulation) provide the land use planning and development assessment framework in Queensland.

<b>State Planning Policy (SPP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Natural hazards, risk and resilience</li> <li>• Water quality</li> <li>• Energy and water supply</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide Bay Burnett</li> </ul>
<b>Referral Agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SARA – exceeding threshold and environmentally relevant activity</li> <li>• Ergon &amp; Powerlink – electricity infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Scheme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>South Burnett Regional Council Planning Scheme 2017</i></li> </ul>

### 5.1 STATE PLANNING POLICY

The *State Planning Policy*, which commenced in July 2017, ensures the state's interests in planning are protected and delivered as part of local government planning across Queensland.

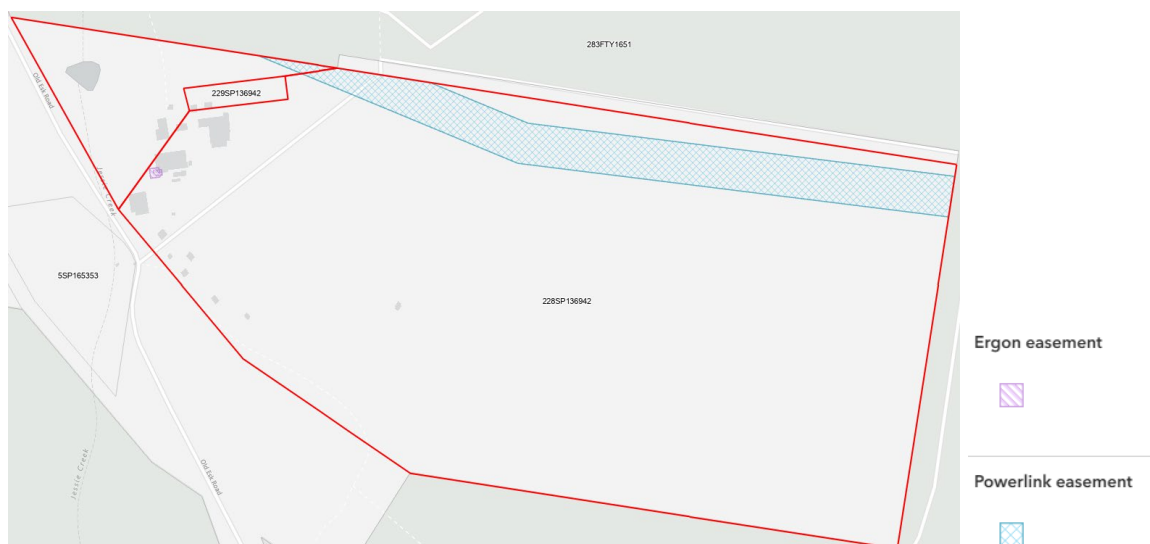
The site is mapped as containing numerous matters of state interest. However, many of the matters of interest are not located on the portion of the site of the proposed development. The matters that are relevant to the proposal are agricultural land classification and bushfire prone area. Since the proposed development does not result in changes to the development footprint and is the intensification of an existing use there will be no adverse impacts on agricultural land on the site. Additionally, bushfire hazard is mapped as an overlay in the planning scheme and assessment against the overlay code demonstrates the proposed development complies.

Therefore, the proposed development is consistent with the relevant state interests.

### 5.2 REFERRAL AGENCIES

The application requires referral to the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) for exceeding thresholds, which requires assessment against State code 6: Protection of state transport networks. A complete assessment against the code is provided in **Attachment 9**. In addition, an environmentally relevant activity is proposed with relevant supporting information attached to demonstrate compliance with the relevant State codes.

The application also requires referral to Ergon and Powerlink due to easements on the site for electrical infrastructure.



*Ergon and Powerlink infrastructure – Development Assessment Mapping System*

## 5.3 PLANNING SCHEME

The South Burnett Regional Council Planning Scheme V2.0 commenced on 28 October 2024 and is the relevant planning scheme for the assessment of development proposals.

The assessment tables for the Rural zone identifies that High Impact Industry is subject to Impact assessment.

The relevant assessment benchmarks for the proposed development include:

- Strategic framework
- Rural Zone code
- Bushfire overlay code
- Other codes

A summary of compliance against these assessment benchmarks is provided below. A complete assessment of the assessment benchmarks is provided in **Attachment 8**.

### 5.3.1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The proposed development complies with all relevant aspects of the Strategic framework. Specifically, 3.2 Settlement Patterns identifies: *'Blackbutt (and nearby Benarkin) is a timber and highway service town near the Blackbutt Range and Benarkin State Forest on the D'Aguilar Highway.'*

Specific Outcome 3.2.1.1 (10) is: *'Industry is located and designed to minimise impacts and where appropriate, to minimise visual intrusion into rural landscapes or town/rural fringes. Inherently noisy activities are to be separated from areas and land uses where the expectation is for a quieter environment. Expansion beyond zoned industrial areas is discouraged unless there is an overriding planning need.'*

The proposed development is located on a site away from sensitive land uses and will therefore not adversely impact neighbouring properties. Additionally, due to the existing use of the site the proposed development will not change the visual landscape of the area. While the

production throughput of the sawmill is increasing there is no physical expansion beyond the existing site area.

Specific Outcome 3.4.1.1 (1) is: *'Natural resources and rural land uses that contribute significant economic benefits to the community are identified and protected for use when needed.'*

The proposed development contributes economic benefit to the community by increasing production and jobs in a primary production industry which relies on local natural resources.

### **5.3.2 RUAL ZONE CODE**

The purpose of the Rural Zone is to *"provide for rural uses and activities;" "provide for other uses and activities that are compatible with– (i) existing and future rural uses and activities; and (ii) the character and environmental features of the zone; and" "maintain the capacity of land for rural uses and activities by protecting and managing significant natural resources and processes."*

The proposed development complies with the Rural Zone code through either acceptable outcomes or performance outcomes. The site has been operating since 1910; the use is therefore well established and the rural amenity and character surrounding the site is maintained.

Refer to code compliance in **Attachment 8**.

### **5.3.3 OVERLAYS**

The site is subject to several overlays including:

- Bushfire Hazard
- Regional Infrastructure
- Biodiversity Areas
- Agricultural

Given the existing use of the site, the proposed development will not be impacted by most of the overlays. Only assessment against the Bushfire Hazard Overlay Code is required.

### **BUSHFIRE HAZARD OVERLAY CODE**

The site is located in the bushfire hazard zone with the site being mapped as containing very high potential bushfire intensity, medium potential bushfire intensity, and potential impact buffer zone.



*Bushfire Hazard Zone Overlay Map – South Burnett Planning Scheme 2017 V2.0*

The proposed development complies all parts of the code through either an acceptable outcome or a performance outcome. The proposed development has direct access to a constructed road to serve as an evacuation route and has existing rainwater tanks that can be utilised by fire-fighting vehicles in the event of a bushfire.

Refer to code compliance in **Attachment 8**.

## 6.0 OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS

---

As per Section 45(5)(b) of the Act, Impact assessment ‘may be carried out against, or having regard to, any other relevant matter, other than a person’s personal circumstances, financial or otherwise’, including, but not limited to:

- a planning need,
- the current relevance of the assessment benchmarks in the light of changed circumstances,
- whether assessment benchmarks or other prescribed matters were based on material errors.

This section outlines other relevant matters as it relates to the proposed development.

### Regional Plan Priorities

The Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan identifies ‘*taking charge of our economic future*’ as a key strategic priority. Specifically with the objective of ‘*lead primary production into the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century*’ by safeguarding the region’s agricultural industries and promoting opportunities for intensification. The regional plan also identified the increased local demand for construction materials such as timber and other agricultural products.

The proposal will increase the yield of the sawmill, helping to lead the region’s primary production into the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century, aligning with the goal of intensifying production through technological innovation. Additionally, by increasing sawmill production locally, the region can help meet the growing demand for timber and other wood-based product, ensuring the region is resilient and sustainable.

### Regional Development Action Plan

The South Burnett Regional Council Regional Development Action Plan recognises innovation as a key strategy “*Council attracts innovative agribusiness, professional services and high-quality tourism investment.*” The proposed development helps achieve this strategy by utilising more efficient production processes which in turn helps grow the regions economy.

### Housing Crisis and Construction Material Shortage

Queensland Building and Construction Commission identified “*the Queensland residential construction industry is currently impacted by an Australia-wide shortage of building materials and skilled trades.*” Queensland is currently facing a housing crisis, which is exacerbated by a shortage in construction materials, making projects slow and costly. The shortage of materials such as timber has been worsened by high demand and supply chain shortages. By increasing throughput at the Pro Pine Sawmill more timber would be available locally and regionally, which could help ease the shortage of timber products and speed up construction.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

---

This planning assessment forms part of the development application lodged on behalf of the applicant C/- Infinitum Partners, seeking a Material Change of Use for High Impact Industry at 256 & 258 Old Esk Road, Taromeo, formally described as Lot 228 & 229 SP136942.

The information provided in this development application (and accompanying reporting) demonstrates that the proposed development complies with all relevant and applicable provisions of the statutory planning framework.

The Pro Pine Sawmill is part of the rich forestry history for the region. It is a vital business that has withstood the various market cycles across its 115-year operations. The increase in throughput should be seen as a great opportunity for the region, job growth and also seeing a business thrive. It's access to timber and ability to deliver milled timber to support our construction industry has never been more important. The proposed increase whilst triggering an application and a change to the ERAs, will all be possible without any increase to the development footprint or additional on-site changes.

We therefore recommend that Council favourably consider the proposed development.

## **8.0 ATTACHMENTS**

---

**ATTACHMENT 1 – TITLE SEARCH**

**ATTACHMENT 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**ATTACHMENT 3 – SITE BASED MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**ATTACHMENT 4 – AIR QUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**ATTACHMENT 5 – NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**ATTACHMENT 6 – STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**ATTACHMENT 7 – TRAFFIC ENGINEERING REPORT**

**ATTACHMENT 8 – CODE RESPONSES**

**ATTACHMENT 9 – STATE CODE RESPONSE**

**ATTACHMENT 10 – ENVIRONMENTALLY RELEVANT ACTIVITY FORM 1**