

To whom it may concern,

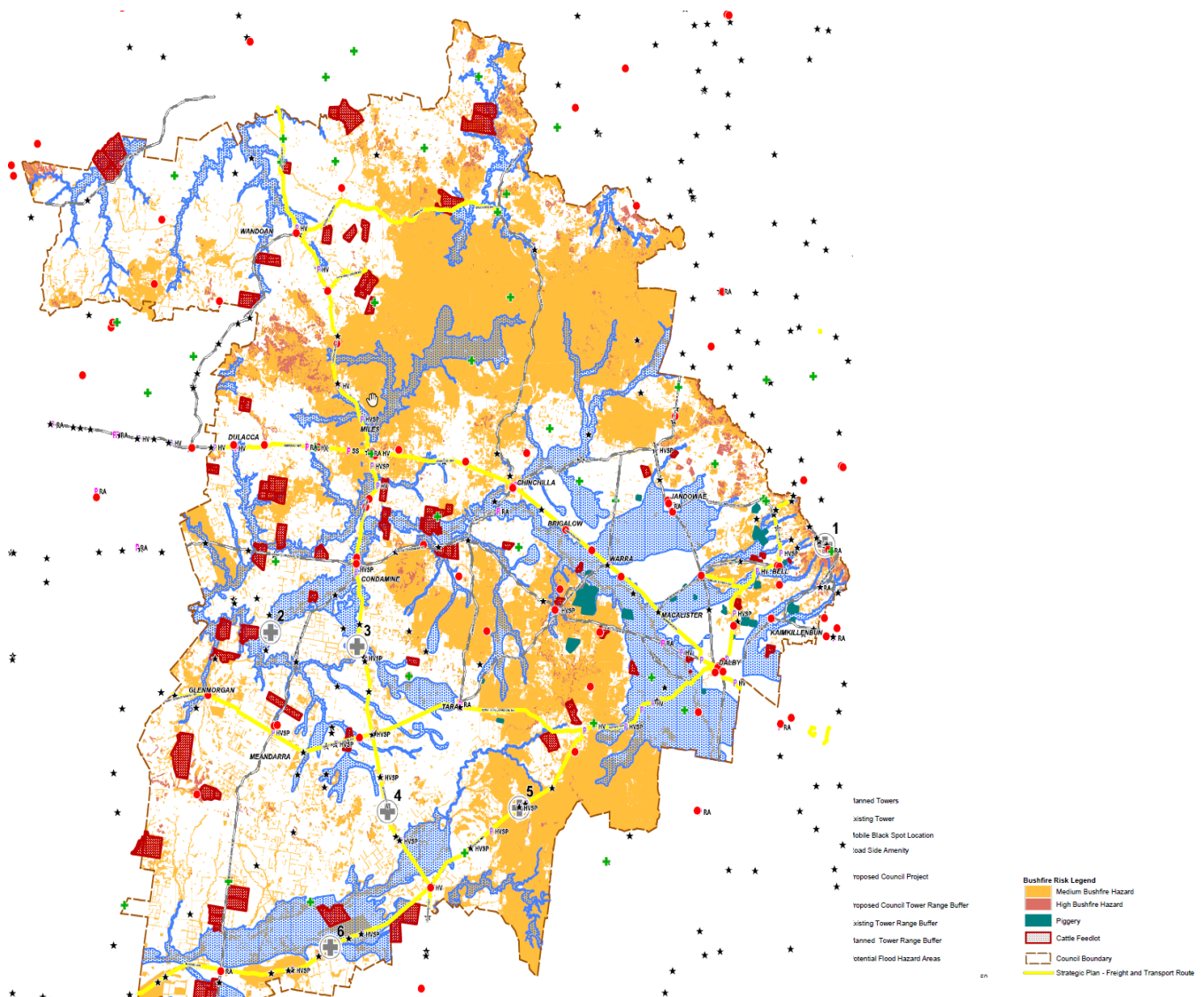
Western Downs Regional Council - Round 5A Mobile Black Spot Program Submission

Our Councilors and staff are regularly approached by businesses and residents seeking assistance to improve mobile coverage. The availability of good quality mobile coverage is essential for commercial businesses, employment, transport and public safety in times of emergency and disaster management. Coverage is even more essential in regional and remote areas which this application is focused on.

The Western Downs is located 3 hours west of Brisbane, it encompasses 37,937 square kilometres and has 9,700 kilometres of roads. When considering this vast area with a population density of 1.1 square kilometres per person there is an inherent risk of poor or lack of readily available and effective communication tools leading to risks of social and physical isolation and emergency response delays compromising the health of our community.

Western Downs Regional Council formally requests that the following locations are considered for the establishment of telecommunications infrastructure that will assist with the issues outlined above. Each of the sites proposed meet the 5A assessment criteria on multiple levels.

The map below shows our flood & fire risk areas, major transport / community corridors, intensive industries, rest stops, blackspots, existing and planned towers and the 6 proposed locations.



Note: the numbers associated with the proposed locations on the map are based on their coordinates and is not a priority.

Proposed Locations

	Location common name	Latitude	Longitude	State
1.	Bunya Avenue	-26.879639	151.597278	Queensland

Transport Corridor (Commercial / Community Benefits)	Remote / Low Population	Natural Disaster Prone	Multiple Black Spot Zone	Tech Opportunities for Remote sites	Points of Interest / Resting points
Yes – Both > 200 vehicles daily (8% Heavy Vehicles)	144	High Fire and Flooding at the base	Yes	Connectivity for guests & Locals. Emergency Communications	Cafes, B&Bs, Camping, Lookout, Mountain Bike Trail, Picnic areas, walking trails

Bunya Avenue is located in the Bunya Mountains National. The Bunya Mountains attracts many visitors, with over 140 accommodation houses on the mountain available for short term stays. The Bunya Mountains has always retained a certain traffic risk due to its remote location and winding roads. The Bunya Mountains has been identified through the Area Fire Management Group (AFMG) as one of our **high-risk bushfire areas**.

Given the number of daily visitors and permanent residents it is critical that we have enough coverage for emergency situations. The addition of a new tower will vastly improve road crash response times, disaster management and commercial opportunities in that location.

	Location common name	Latitude	Longitude	State
2.	Morlocks Rd Meandarra	-27.093493	149.871088	Queensland

Transport Corridor (Commercial / Community Benefits)	Remote / Low Population	Natural Disaster Prone	Multiple Black Spot Zone	Tech Opportunities for Remote sites	Points of Interest / Resting points
Yes – Both > 140 vehicles per daily (27% Heavy Vehicles)	<264	Fire	Yes	Commercial Industries & Farms. Logistics. OH&S Emergencies	Heavy Stopping Area

Key strategic road transport route for industry, primary producers and the community.

High flooding risk to residences, primary producers and the significant traffic numbers on the Condamine Meandarra Road. This area experiences relatively frequent flooding due to the Undulla Creek joining the Condamine River.

	Location common name	Latitude	Longitude	State
3.	Leichhardt Highway (Condamine / Gums)	-27.128833	150.140306	Queensland

Transport Corridor (Commercial / Community Benefits)	Remote / Low Population	Natural Disaster Prone	Multiple Black Spot Zone	Tech Opportunities for Remote sites	Points of Interest / Resting points
Yes – Both >300 vehicles daily (40% Heavy Vehicles)	<200	Flood	Yes	Commercial Industries & Farms. Logistics. OH&S. Emergencies	Caliguel Lagoon – Camping

Key strategic road transport route for industry, primary producers and the community.

Area prone to flooding due to the Condamine River. Recently, flooding has forced the evacuation of Condamine in 2010, and twice in 2011. The latest flooding occurred in 2019. Emergency communication via mobile phone network is limited or non-existent.

Area of strategic importance to industry – Roma to Brisbane gas pipeline passes Condamine to the south. Gas compression facilities for the Braemar Line Pack gas pipeline and the Peat/Scotia Lateral gas pipeline.

Large population of temporary workers linked to the resource sector. These users primarily rely on the mobile phone network for access to data services. During peak network use data services slow significantly to the point where access to internet and email services becomes non-existent.

	Location common name	Latitude	Longitude	State
4.	Leichhardt Highway (The Gums / Moonie)	-27.531587	150.234754	Queensland

Transport Corridor (Commercial / Community Benefits)	Remote / Low Population	Natural Disaster Prone	Multiple Black Spot Zone	Tech Opportunities for Remote sites	Points of Interest / Resting points
Yes – Both > 300 vehicles daily (40% Heavy Vehicles)	<100	Flood	Yes	Commercial Industries & Farms. Logistics. OH&S Emergencies	Heavy Stopping Area x2

Key strategic road transport route for industry, primary producers and the community.

Identified flood risk from the Horse Creek catchment and Moonie River. There are also several pockets of bushfire risks identified in the area.

	Location common name	Latitude	Longitude	State
5.	Moonie Highway (Dalby to Moonie)	-27.52221	150.645214	Queensland

Transport Corridor (Commercial / Community Benefits)	Remote / Low Population	Natural Disaster Prone	Multiple Black Spot Zone	Tech Opportunities for Remote sites	Points of Interest / Resting points
Yes – Both > 650 vehicles daily (30% Heavy Vehicles)	<100	Fire	Yes	Commercial Farms. Logistics. OH&S Emergencies	Heavy Stopping Area x2

Key strategic road transport route for industry, primary producers and the community. The Moonie Highway is a lifeline for local primary producers and industries further West.

Major bushfire risk and has some flooding impacts identified from both the Moonie and Weier Rivers. This area is surrounded by the Kumbarilla and Waar Waar state Forests and due to the expanse of this area large scale bushfires could cause major issues for people travelling during an emergency.

	Location common name	Latitude	Longitude	State
6.	Moonie Highway (Moonie to Westmar)	-27.863181	150.057008	Queensland

Transport Corridor (Commercial / Community Benefits)	Remote / Low Population	Natural Disaster Prone	Multiple Black Spot Zone	Tech Opportunities for Remote sites	Points of Interest / Resting points

Yes – Both > 300 vehicles daily (22% Heavy Vehicles)	<100	Flood	Yes	Commercial Industries & Farms. Logistics OH&S Emergencies	Heavy Stopping Area x2
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Key strategic road transport route for industry, primary producers and the community. The Moonie Highway is a lifeline for local primary producers and industries further West.

Technology

Western Downs Regional has the highest number of piggeries and cattle feedlots in the southern hemisphere, we also have a large cotton industry. Innovative agricultural practices are currently not possible in the proposed locations due to poor or non-existent coverage.

At present many agricultural enterprises continue to operate on paper systems, causing double entry of records, additional staff time required and significant errors.

Other innovations that have been raised by Industry and the Community which are limited or not currently possible include:

- Virtual fencing.
- Drones.
- IoT solutions such as animal tracking devices.
- Electronic National Vendor Declaration forms.
- Live data collection and sharing to the cloud, and AI learning to automate decision making etc. This is particularly relevant for water monitoring, livestock welfare, and feed management.
- OH&S tracking devices or contact (ensuring staff members are safe in remote locations).
- Logistics Tracking.
- Tourism development.
- Enhanced social connection through video and social media.
- Emergency and Disaster management solutions.
- Access to training / instructions in the field - i.e. YouTube.

Connectivity will also benefit these communities by enhancing liveability of regional areas to attract the right staff. Phone access and high-speed broadband is key to families moving into these businesses. This further enhances the economic viability of our communities and our economy.

Our mobile phone network is relied upon for communication in emergency situations - particularly in the event of road accidents, farm and industrial accidents. The energy sector has highly developed workplace health and safety systems. This sector is highly reliant on the mobile phone network to provide communication services in order to provide a safe working environment for workers.

Mobile phone networks are increasingly relied upon as the principal communication network for voice and data traffic. Reliability and coverage have never been more important. Adequate network coverage and capacity is of significant concern to the Western Downs Regional Council and our community.

We can provide additional supporting material for each of these sites and would be pleased to supply if this would assist in supporting this request.

If your office should require any further information, please contact Council's CIO, Ann Yardley on 07 4679 4258 or email ann.yardley@WDRC.qld.gov.au