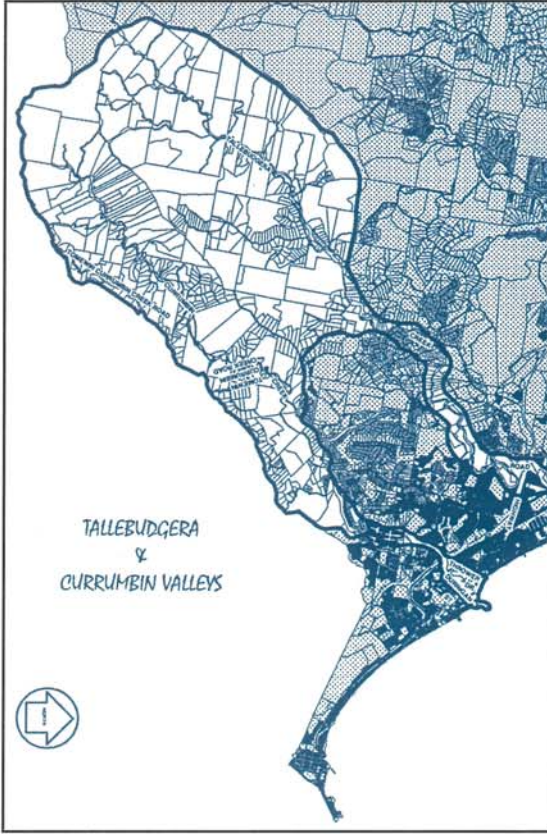


3.12.1 Character Area 6.1: Currumbin Valley



Tallebudgera & Currumbin Valleys

Although agricultural land still exists throughout the City in the area to the west of the Pacific Highway, the Tallebudgera and Currumbin Valleys are particularly early and accessible remnants of this aspect of the Gold Coast story.

Both narrow valleys which terminate at the foothills of the mountain ranges to the west have a long history of cedar getting, banana plantations and dairy farming. Roads are narrow and winding following the creeks and crossing at low level bridges.

Subdivision has taken place in recent years from larger holdings to smaller hobby farms and some new housing is apparent. In general however evidence of the earlier land use is apparent.

Old farmhouses, outbuildings and fences and steep hillsides focused on the watercourses characterise the area.

Traffic is limited because of the narrow roads and the fact that once at the end of these valleys the only way out is to retrace one's path.

Their topography and land use sets them apart from other places at the Gold Coast. Their vegetation is equally distinctive - rural landscapes to the east and the remnants of early rainforest toward their western ends.

Access to the valleys is direct and sudden and the immediate contrast between the development and glitter of the coastal strip and the rural ambience of both Currumbin and Tallebudgera valleys is dramatic.

They are important icons of the characteristic green behind the gold that is at the heart of the Gold Coast heritage and character.

Extract from the *Gold Coast Urban Heritage & Character Study*, Gold Coast City Council 1997.

Note: Currumbin Valley is a local character area within the River Valley Character Area. This visual diary focus on the particular landscape character that contributes to the overall character of Currumbin Valley.

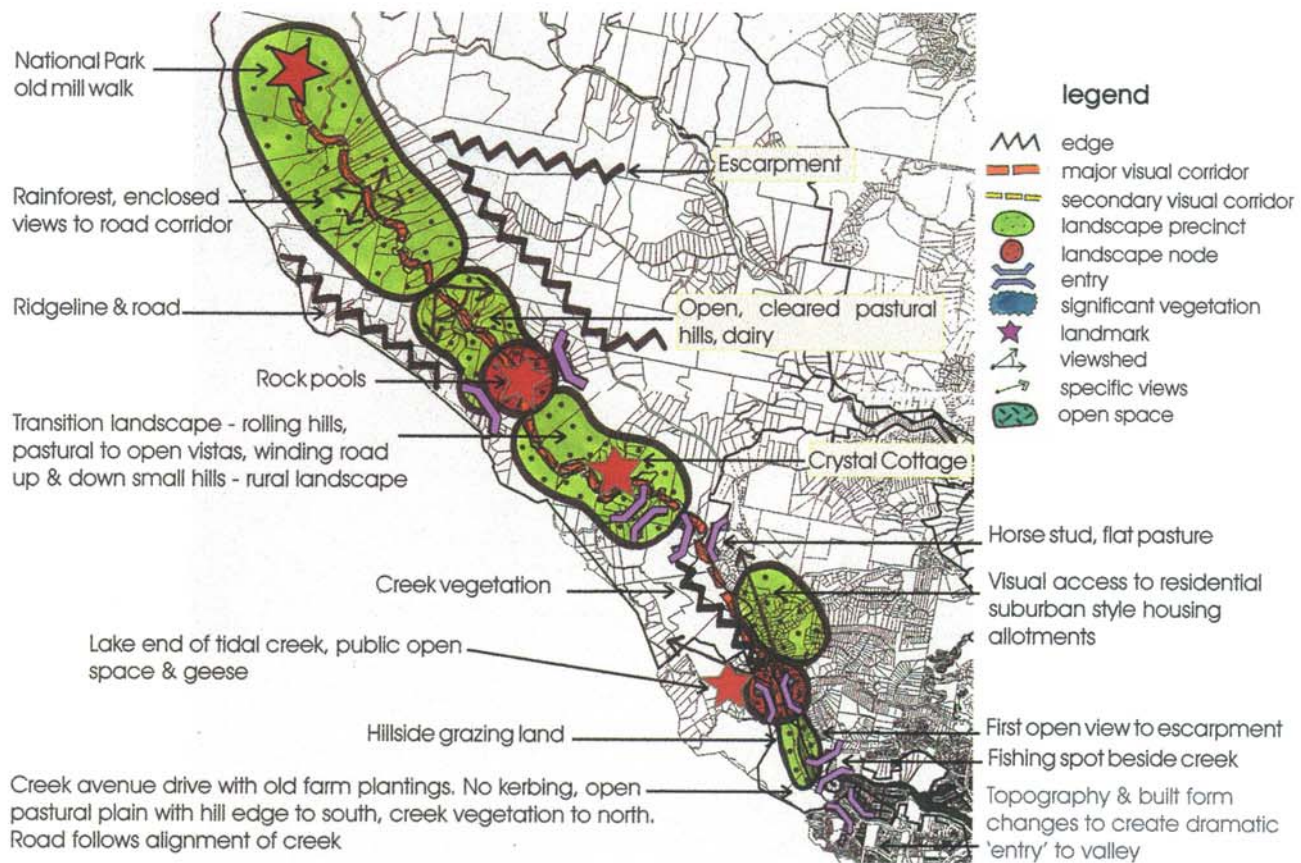
A Vision for the Future of Currumbin Valley

The unique rural character of Currumbin Valley is retained and protected in any proposals for new development. Currumbin Creek Road remains the main visual corridor for experiencing Currumbin Valley. Cultural plantings that are visible or form part of Currumbin Creek Road are retained along with significant areas of native remnant vegetation. Filtered, framed and open views of rural pastureland and associated housing is retained from



Currumbin Creek Road through appropriate design of fencing, vegetation and housing setbacks. Future subdivision of larger parcels of land along the Currumbin Creek Road has regard for the impact on the rural character through restricting multiple access points/driveways onto Currumbin Creek Road, and providing adequate setbacks for housing that allows views into open grassed rural-type land. Future development in foothill areas ensures minimum cut and fill and maximum retention of existing vegetation. Housing styles in the valley respect the rural pastoral character with the use of appropriate materials, forms and colours.

Character Map



Existing Landscape Description

Currumbin Valley consists of low lying grassland areas surrounded by foothills and enclosed by high escarpments. Currumbin Creek Road is identified in the Gold Coast City Planning Scheme as a Scenic Route. The character of Currumbin Valley is primarily perceived as one journey along Currumbin Creek Road. The character of Currumbin Creek Road is that of views and vistas into rural areas and surrounding escarpments.

There are three character precincts within the valley - rainforest area, rural area, and the more cleared area at the eastern end. Planting is a mix of local native species in rainforest areas and in parts of the rural zone, with scatterings of cultural vegetation associated with the older rural properties, and along some parts of Currumbin Creek Road. The dominant cultural plant forms are exotic Jacarandas and native Hoop Pines.

Important Landscape Elements

- ▮ Currumbin Creek
- ▮ National Park and the Rockpools
- ▮ Currumbin Creek Road winding up through the Valley
- ▮ Views across pastureland to rural homesteads
- ▮ Minimum built form visible on foothills and escarpment area
- ▮ Gentle transformation from flat open plain lands to rainforest escarpments

Social & Recreational Issues

- ▮ Roadside honour system stalls
- ▮ Subdivision of large rural lots into small rural residential blocks contributes to the potential loss of rural character
- ▮ Currumbin Creek Road is the main traffic route and visual corridor - scenic route
- ▮ Some open space areas detract from rural valley character

Important Views & Vistas

- ▮ Views to open grassland, pastureland and other agricultural uses
- ▮ Glimpses of Currumbin Creek
- ▮ View across open fields to rural homesteads
- ▮ Views across fields to escarpments
- ▮ Extensive views along and across waterways



Character desired

Character not desired



Property Entries

- ▶ Entry does not dominate streetscape / road frontage due to design, materials and colours appearing visually less bulky
- ▶ Built form transparent, view sheds preserved
- ▶ Trees as entry markers, minimal built form
- ▶ Driveway materials are permeable and create soft lines
- ▶ Fence a solid barrier, view shed blocked
- ▶ Form, materials and plants are typical of urban residential developments and not rural character of the Valley
- ▶ Entry dominates streetscape / road frontage
- ▶ Driveway materials consist of large areas of hard surfacing



Fences

- ▶ Fencing is transparent. Design, scale and material avoids bulk massing. Materials appropriate to rural character
- ▶ Road integrates with rural use
- ▶ Planting forms and location are simple with species appropriate to the local character of the area
- ▶ Inconsistent fencing styles to different properties along street impact on rural character and detract from streetscape amenity
- ▶ Fencing creates solid barrier and blocks views. Scale, materials and lack of transparency are inappropriate to reinforce rural character
- ▶ Minimal interface between road and rural character



Built Form

- ▶ Subdivision has larger lot sizes. House setback and settled into landform
- ▶ House footprint light, avoids bulk massing of materials and colours
- ▶ Design appropriate to rural character
- ▶ Large shade trees as framework planting
- ▶ Limited access points onto main road corridor
- ▶ Subdivision has small lot sizes. House setbacks closer to road edge
- ▶ Access points/driveways onto main road corridor are increased
- ▶ House footprints are bulky, materials and colours are not sympathetic to rural character
- ▶ Minimal planting between road and house



Public Open Space - Rural Precinct

- ▶ Informal, open grassed areas with large trees
- ▶ Built form simple, reflecting rural character - visible pastoral land
- ▶ Revetment materials and forms create a perceived soft edge
- ▶ Carpark areas integrated into landscape within park - not highly visible from Currumbin Creek Road
- ▶ Revetment materials create hard, unnatural edge
- ▶ Carpark area highly visible and intrusive
- ▶ Few facilities or amenities - minimal pastoral character



Public Open Space - Rainforest Precinct

- ▶ Areas of small patches of cleared land surrounded by extensive planting
- ▶ No large cleared areas of grass
- ▶ Built form unobtrusive and sympathetic in materials and design - appears visually less bulky
- ▶ Car parking in small patches screened by planting
- ▶ Informal planting structure and layout
- ▶ Extensive use of hard elements in planters & surfaces
- ▶ Planting structured and formalised
- ▶ Carpark obtrusive and not integrated within the open space area.



Currumbin Creek Road

Road verges

- ▶ Soft, grassed edges to the road
- ▶ Positive streetscape value through appropriate fencing and informal use of planting
- ▶ Fencing and vegetation give definition to road edge
- ▶ Built form set back with minimal access to road
- ▶ Large, hard surfaced road edge
- ▶ No shade trees or structured planting to give definition to road edge



Scenic Experience

- ▶ Variety of experiences along road including wide open and filtered views, and glimpses across pastoral land
- ▶ Enclosed streetscapes with strong plant forms
- ▶ Appropriate use of cultural planting of Jacarandas and Hoop Pines
- ▶ Minimal framework planting close to road
- ▶ No variety in driving experience, wide open views only
- ▶ Presence of built form on verge reduces rural character of area
- ▶ Views to public infrastructure
- ▶ Signage size and scale obtrusive in landscape



Advertising Signs

- ▶ Small scale signs utilising natural materials
- ▶ Signage form is simple and allows views through
- ▶ Signage does not impact negatively on streetscape amenity
- ▶ Large scale signs - obtrusive colours and size
- ▶ Sign face is solid and dominates streetscape
- ▶ Sign close to road edge



Public Facilities

- ▶ Materials and forms sympathetic to rural character - design avoids bulk massing of materials and colours
- ▶ Built form complements rural setting - traditional rural building character
- ▶ Appropriate scale and form adjacent to Currumbin Creek Road
- ▶ Inappropriate style of built form, materials and colours detracts from rural character
- ▶ Use not appropriate adjacent to Currumbin Creek Road
- ▶ Built form location and lack of vegetation reduces integration with the streetscape

