

3.12.2 Character Area 6.2: Mudgeeraba

Mudgeeraba & Nerang

These two townships, outwardly different, are the very remnants of those townships that characterise the rural hinterland of the Gold Coast. Together with Advancetown and Tallebudgera these settlements were brought together with the construction of the Gold Coast railway in the later years of the 19th century.

Both were centres of government at different times and served their immediate communities as commercial and service centres. It was not until this century that their coastal lands became dominant. Subdivision was conventional and buildings were traditional rural or rural commercial.

Nerang has focused very much on the river crossing and the head of navigation. Land was first sold in 1871 and coach and river transport to the settlement became more regular.

Sugar and maize were grown by farmers along the upper reaches of the river. The arrival of the railway in 1887 gave added impetus to the town.

Recent years have seen the early Nerang flourish as an administrative centre for the growing Gold Coast. The construction of the new Pacific Highway on the old railway reserve has helped to focus development in the town in a manner which has extended and indeed largely swamped the early township. Its character is however still dependent upon the river, early subdivision patterns and the commercial centre.

Mudgeeraba was, like Nerang, an early centre which rose to some prominence with the coming of the railway. The town in fact stepped from an earlier location to the west to its present position adjacent to the railway reserve.

Left behind in the more recent boom period Mudgeeraba contains important evidence of its earlier form and building.



Contained on an island on the flood plain its character remains one of a nineteenth century village despite the recent encroachment of housing estates to nearby land.

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

Note: Mudgeeraba is a local character area within the River Valley Character Area. This visual diary focuses on the particular landscape character elements that contribute to the overall character of Mudgeeraba.

A Vision for the Future of Mudgeeraba

Mudgeeraba continues to develop as a leafy green village, with an intimate enclosed character. It becomes a key gateway to the hinterland and serves as a transition area from the green to the gold. The area has a predominantly natural character. New development is an appropriate scale and form and encourages green links of vegetation through to open space areas.



The character of the Mudgeeraba Village is reinforced by the rural, open grassy areas to the east and vegetated foothills to the west. The pedestrian environment and open space links within the village centre are enhanced.

Important streetscape elements such as the grassy medians and associated shade trees are retained as part of the village character.

Character Map



Existing Landscape Description

Mudgeeraba is a small village at the base of the foothills and is bordered by the open space of the flood plain. Much of its character is derived from its heritage as a timber town and its traditional main street. Mudgeeraba has retained the character from this period through its built form and road layout. The plant forms within this village consists of pockets of cultural planting such as *Poinciana sp.* and *Lagerstroemia sp.* reinforced by remnant vegetation. Due to its position at the base of the foothills, the village creates a gateway to the hinterland. The remnant vegetation, mainly *Eucalypt sp.*, filters down through the village and creates a strong natural feel. The village character is currently under threat through rapid and unconnected commercial development and an increase in denser housing types on the fringes.

Important Views & Vistas

- Views from high areas across flood plains to Surfers Paradise
- Views from Robina back across flood plain to Mudgeeraba

Important Landscape Elements

- Remnant *Eucalypt sp.* and other local native vegetation
- Open flood plain area to east
- Split carriageway of Railway Street
- Large grassy medians with cultural planting
- Undulating landform to west
- Existing street pattern
- Small scale remnant traditional timber built form

Social & Recreational Issues

- Rural/village life - markets, pony club,
- Encroachment and sprawl of new housing development
- Increase in number of disconnected shopping centres which detract from main street
- Strong sense of community



Character desired

Character not desired



- Village Built Form**
- Simple built forms avoid the use of bulk massing through appropriate design, materials and colours
 - Remnant vegetation integrated with built form
 - Authentic detailing, simple timber embellishments and roof forms
 - Siting provides views through to open space and remnant vegetation
 - Fencing simple, low and transparent
 - Structures block visual access to views
 - Built form is bulky in design and use of materials and colours – creates a dominant visual barrier
 - Carpark and large blank wall dominates streetscape
 - Minimal integration of vegetation and built form



- Vegetation**
- Appropriate cultural and native planting reinforce the local character of the village and surrounding open space areas
 - Solitary palm planting and subtropical resort-style planting do not reinforce a leafy green rural character
 - Vegetation lacks integration with built form and streetscape



- Views**
- Views and visual access to green areas of flood plain and foothills reinforce character of traditional rural village and gateway to hinterland
 - Appropriate built form, position and use of vegetation frames views
 - Siting of built form blocks views to flood plain
 - Blank walls and hard edge dominates the view



- Signage**
- Scale of signage appropriate to built form
 - Signage uncluttered and designed as part of the building design and aesthetic
 - Signage is cluttered (varied forms and colours) and dominates streetscape
 - Signage not integrated with built form as part of the building design and aesthetic



- Streetscape**
- Appropriate use of cultural planting - simple configurations
 - Wide medians with large shade trees and grass
 - Traditional main street provides links to village's past
 - Appropriate use and location of street furniture
 - Resort-style landscapes detract from the local village character
 - Wide roads with no median
 - Visually intrusive signage
 - Views dominated by service poles
 - Minimal street furniture



Streetscape