

Help prevent
illegal
dumping in
Moreton Bay

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Littering and Illegal Dumping
Plan 2021-2026

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1. Introduction

Littering and illegal dumping incidents are a growing issue throughout the Moreton Bay Region costing Council and the community more than \$5 million each year for clean-up programs.

The impact of illegal dumping and littering are most serious for the aquatic environment of Moreton Bay, rivers and creeks and the amenity and wildlife of local parks, reserves and bushland.

This *Littering and Illegal Dumping Plan* aims to combat littering and illegal dumping by:

- ✚ establishing sound collaborative partnership programs that combat littering and illegal dumping with community groups, regulators, industry and neighbouring Councils
- ✚ setting out action programs to reduce littering and the incidence of illegal dumping and its impacts on our natural and built environments and communities

1.1 Strategic context and alignment

Moreton Bay Regional Council's Plan aligns to State Government initiatives and revolves around five priority focus areas for Action (MBRC WRRP 2016-2026):

- ✚ **Data Management** - enhancing intelligence and data on illegal dumping to ensure targeted, strategic action to prevent it,
- ✚ **Engagement with the Community** - supporting collaborative stakeholder and community involvement in projects that combat illegal dumping,
- ✚ **Recovery of Resources** - educate and inform on available correct waste disposal and recycling options
- ✚ **Minimise Environmental Impact** - targeted clean-up programs, strategic detection, investigation and enforcement action
- ✚ **Responsible Financial Management** - reduction of illegal dumping expenditure

This Plan details the impacts of unlawful disposal of waste; the need for community awareness; an overview of the practices for responding to illegal dumping incidents and their impacts in our region.

Illegal dumping and littering are increasing despite the provision of free domestic waste and recycling disposal at Council's three Waste Management Facilities and eight Waste Transfer Stations.

This Plan and its implementation plan aims to strengthen protection of local environments and the community by reducing illegal dumping sites and the associated social, environmental, financial and health impacts.

Queensland Litter and Illegal Dumping Plan 2013

The Queensland Government released the Queensland's Litter and Illegal Dumping Action Plan in October 2013. This plan details five interactive programs (Figure 2) designed to achieve "A Queensland free from litter and illegal dumping – driven by the adoption of best practice in waste management and education". Resource tools for Local Government include:

Illegal Dumping Handbook – A guide for Local Governments (2013) Practical advice for local governments to develop, implement and evaluate effective illegal dumping programs.

Grants- Illegal Dumping Hot Spot Grants and Partnership programs (2019/20) - MBRC received two grants for Hot Spot asbestos and partnership regulatory enforcement

Love Queensland. Let's keep it clean. Community based social marketing campaign

Illegal Dumping case studies (2016 – ongoing) Project and research reports that provide guidance and examples.

LIDORS – Litter and Illegal Dumping Online Reporting System for vehicle litter and dumping offences.

Table 1 - Guiding references

Key Documents	References	
Queensland Government	Queensland's Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy 2019	Sets 2019-2050 Targets.
	Queensland's Litter and Illegal dumping Action Plan 2013	Details five priority action program areas
	Littering and Illegal Dumping website	Information & reporting portal
	<i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011</i>	Defines applicable litter and illegal dumping offences
Moreton Bay Regional Council	<i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan 2016-2026</i>	Short, medium- and long-term Actions based around 5 focus areas for action.
	<i>Waste Education and Community Engagement Plan 2020</i>	Details 19 waste management programs and initiatives

1.2 What is littering or illegal dumping?

Litter and illegally dumped rubbish represent the unlawful disposal of items materials in places they are not meant to be. Legally (WRR Act) the definition of litter and illegal dumping is

determined by the volume of material deposited. Litter—the unlawful deposit at a place (including waters) of an amount of waste of less than 200L in volume. Illegal dumping—the unlawful deposit of an amount of waste that is 200L or greater in volumes.

Queensland definition of waste

Waste is defined under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act) and includes anything that is: *left over, or an unwanted by-product, from an industrial, commercial, domestic or other activity;*





or

surplus to the industrial, commercial, domestic or other activity generating the waste.

Waste can be a gas, liquid, solid or energy, or a combination of any of these (section 13 of the EP Act)

Litter is a waste volume of less than 200 litres and 200 litres or more is illegal dumping

Understanding the reasons why illegally dumping of waste occurs drives the development of effective strategies to combat illegal dumping. People in all parts of the community, private and business, have been identified in illegal dumping enforcement action. Depending on the type of waste illegally dumped, four recurring reasons that motivate this behaviour have been identified (DES, *Illegal Dumping Handbook*, 2013):

-  convenience
-  using organised disposal networks, most common for waste generated by businesses
-  an unwillingness to pay
-  an uncaring attitude

Addressing these motivations will enable strategies to be developed that deal with the root causes rather than the results of illegal dumping.

2.0 Moreton Bay Region - an overview

Population growth in Moreton Bay region is set rise from 459,600 in 2020 to 690,000 by the year 2041; that's 10,000 new residents every year for the next 25 years.

Rapid population growth and urban expansion has contributed to illegal dumping in the Moreton Bay region. Undeveloped bushland, mangroves, vacant lots, large acreage, parks and Forests near major roads and waste management facilities are all affected by illegal dumping.

Littering is most prevalent near shopping centres, food outlets and along highways. Council's dedicated sanitation teams are well equipped to manage the carelessly discarded rubbish that comes with urbanisation and population growth, but this comes at an ever-higher cost if social and environmental risks are to be minimised. \$4.8m were spend in 2019/20.


Existing initiatives include:

- ✚ Litter traps in creeks and drains
- ✚ Litter collection by waste and operations staff
- ✚ illegal dumping investigation and enforcement
- ✚ Illegal dumping clean-up and site management
- ✚ Support for clean-up activities
- ✚ Street sweeping

Affordable disposal and convenient infrastructure: Moreton Bay Regional Council (MBRC) operates 3 major landfills and 8 minor waste transfer stations in the local government area and is committed to providing affordable, effective and sustainable waste management services across the region. Domestic waste and recyclables are accepted free of charge and waste management facilities and transfer stations are located within easy reach, not more than 10km, from any residential property in the MBRC region.

This Plan builds upon existing responses to combat illegal dumping including:

- **Waste Disposal Infrastructure** - provision of access to easily accessible waste disposal options at 12 facilities across the region and 3,557 public places litter bins in parks, foreshores and nature strips
- **Education initiatives** - to encourage the use of appropriate disposal options
- **Enforcement actions** to discourage irresponsible waste disposal by increasing the risk of being caught



Illegal Dumping and Littering activities	Total cost per annum 2019/20
1. LABOUR COSTS (Council staff)	\$2,255,187.00
2. VEHICLES AND PLANT	\$467,902.00
3. OTHER EQUIPMENT / ASSETS	\$1,556,897.00
4. CONTRACTOR COSTS	\$474,846.00
4. MATERIALS / CONSUMABLES	\$5,479.00
6. EXTERNAL FUNDING (OUTGOING)	\$2,601.00
7. DISPOSAL COSTS	\$46,071.00
Annual Cost to Council	\$4,808,984.00



2.1 Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this Plan is to:

- ✚ Implement Action 2.1 of Council's *Waste Reduction & Recycling Plan 2016-2026*: Develop a litter and illegal dumping strategy/management plan in cooperation with the state government, other Council departments and interested stakeholders (*MBRC WRRP pg. 27*)
- ✚ Support Queensland's *Litter and Illegal Dumping Action Plan 2013* targets and vision: a Queensland free from litter and illegal dumping - driven by the adoption of best practice in waste management and education.

The Plan's objectives include:

- ✚ reduction in litter and illegal dumping incidents
- ✚ decreased costs to manage litter and illegal dumping
- ✚ improved staff capability through training
- ✚ reduced workplace and public health and safety risks
- ✚ stronger stakeholder networks that encourage positive participation, capacity building and collaboration
- ✚ improved urban and rural amenity
- ✚ improved environmental health of local rivers bushland, beaches and Moreton Bay
- ✚ increase in reporting of illegal dumping; and
- ✚ decrease of social acceptance of littering and illegal dumping

Implementing these objectives and actions will bring about a well-informed community who embrace and promote sustainable waste management and appropriate waste disposal. The Plan will improve and optimise enforcement activity and collective action to effectively investigate potential offenders.

2.2 Prevention framework

Proven littering and illegal dumping prevention methods employed by the Plan's integrated action program include:

1. **Complicate dumping** - increase access difficulty through installation of lighting, CCTV (responsive/interactive), bollards, fencing, barrier landscaping at known dumping hot spots
2. **Reduce benefits and increase risks** - publicise enforcement outcomes (fines, clean-up costs awarded) and educate on illegal dumping surveillance programs
3. **Capacity building and education** - engage with the community, Stakeholders and business at all levels by:
 - ✚ informing on correct waste disposal and recycling opportunities available locally;
 - ✚ support clean-up initiatives that maintain problem areas free of waste;
 - ✚ displaying signs at known illegal dumping hot spots; and
 - ✚ reporting on local illegal dumping and littering data and projects



STAKEHOLDERS - COUNCIL

Responsibility for infrastructure, education and enforcement of littering and illegal dumping is shared across many Council departments. A co-ordinated approach is required for effective implementation of the Plan's action plan.



Report littering and illegal dumping

- ▶ see it
- ▶ report it
- ▶ stop it

What happens to rubbish that doesn't make it into the bin?





STAKEHOLDERS - EXTERNAL

In addition to Council, stakeholders involved in the management of litter and illegal dumping in the Moreton Bay region include:

Government:

- ✚ The Queensland Department of Environment and Science (DES). DES is the lead agency for Queensland’s *Litter and Illegal Dumping Action Plan 2013* and Administering Authority for the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011*.
- ✚ Several other Queensland Government Departments have also powers to prevent littering and illegal dumping on land and in waterways under their jurisdiction, including Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR).

Business and community:

- ✚ HQ Plantations manage 29,200 ha of Forestry plantations in the northern SEQ region. 13,200 ha are in the Moreton Bay Council area at Ningi, Pumicestone Rd (3,100ha) and Beerburrum/Woodford (10,100ha). Both these plantations extend into the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area (LGA) and are subject to significant illegal dumping from both residential and commercial sources. Tyres and Asbestos are identified priority wastes. 2016 survey found 619 illegal dump sites in 9 out of 27 logging areas surveyed.
- ✚ Sunshine Coast Regional Council is an important Stakeholder as illegal dumping incidents can often be traced back across LGA boundaries north and south.
- ✚ Many Not-for-profit groups and charities are engaged with clean-up activities, advocacy and community engagement and education. Key stakeholders from this sector includes Keep Australia Beautiful (KAB), Tangalooma Eco Marines and many more
- ✚ Moreton Bay primary, secondary Schools, Universities and Education Centres also participate in clean - up and rehabilitation projects.



3. Achievements and Barriers

Convenient waste disposal

- ✓ free domestic waste and recycling disposal
- ✓ 1,680 free waste disposal authorities issued annually for charities, community groups and ratepayers
- ✓ free disposal of bulky waste and Greenwaste for householders
- ✓ affordable on-demand bulky waste and green waste collection service
- ✓ reliable weekly waste and fortnightly kerbside collection with a choice of bin sizes available

Effective infrastructure

- ✓ 3,557 public places litter bins readily available in popular parks, reserves, foreshores, nature strips
- ✓ 338 gross pollutant traps, 1,178 litter baskets, 361 sediment traps, 422 trash racks and screens protect local waterways and Moreton Bay
- ✓ 1,350 CCTV cameras operational in parks, public places, Council facilities and dumping hot spots
- ✓ 3 major waste management facilities and 9 waste transfer stations available for waste disposal and recycling within 10km from homes
- ✓ 2 Treasure Markets offering a wide range of pre-loved goods and opportunity for resource recovery

Community engagement & support

- ✓ MBRC award winning waste and recycling education program is now part of the curriculum in 142 primary, secondary schools and early learning centres
- ✓ 20 successful partnership programs including annual Clean-up Australia Day, Garage Sale Trail, Oyster recycling program
- ✓ Litter HOT spot program - DES funded - target priority hazardous waste (Asbestos) dumping and enforcement action
- ✓ Education campaigns at events, shopping centres

Enforcement action

- ✓ MBRC/DES illegal dumping prevention partnership program 2020/21
- ✓ 514 illegal dumping reports first 7-month 20/21
- ✓ 255 illegal investigations
- ✓ 191 successful compliance outcomes
- ✓ 34 infringements, 12 show cause and 80 warning notices issued

Achievements to date

Since amalgamation in 2008 Council has worked hard keeping our growing Moreton Bay region clean. This work has been furthered by the efforts of dedicated local community groups and individuals who volunteer their time to remove waste from bushland, parks, reserves, nature strips, local waterways, beaches, and Moreton Bay.

Barriers to overcome

Successfully stopping illegal dumping and littering requires significant effort in the areas of enforcement, infrastructure investment and education/collaboration. Enforcement is often hampered by insufficient evidence to prove the offence. Surveillance infrastructure, signage, physical barriers all come at a cost. Public attitudes must change from “this is a problem for Council to clean-up to” to “dumping and littering is socially and environmentally not acceptable”.

Barriers to effective enforcement

- lack of human resources and capacity
- difficulty establishing an offence - lack of evidence
- uncaring attitudes
- perception that there is little risk of getting caught
- financial benefit outweighs the risks of discovery

Public perception/ uncaring attitudes

- 1 in 4 people surveyed admit to having littered, and only 15% accepted it was laziness.
- 1 in 5 people surveyed know someone who has littered, and 64% described offenders as lazy and they don't care about the community or the environment
- Only 5 in 100 people surveyed admit to illegally dumping, for a range of reasons including disposal cost, nowhere to dispose, left for someone else, lazy, no Council kerbside collection, and unaware it's illegal

QLD DES *2014 Litter and Illegal Dumping survey Enhance Consultants



Table 1: Targets, Action and Measurement

Targets	Action program	Measurement
1. Effective Data Management: monitoring, collection and evaluation	<p>1.1 Building an evidence base through data collection and analysis</p> <p>1.2 Adopt technology to support evidence gathering, information collection and sharing with regulators/stakeholders</p> <p>1.3 Analyse data to determine hotspots for intervention strategies</p> <p>1.4 Analyse data to explore the factors that motivate and influence people to carry out illegal dumping and the factors that would bring about change (i.e. enough public bins, recycling opportunities etc)</p>	<p>🏠 Quarterly reporting</p> <p>🏠 Annual review of program effectiveness</p>
2. Engagement with the Community and Stakeholders: Partnerships, capacity building, education, behaviour change	<p>2.1 Develop and deliver five (5) education litter and illegal dumping education and information campaigns per year</p> <p>2.2 Develop and implement collaborative wholistic “catchment” programs with key stakeholder’s HQ Plantations, SEQ Water, Unity Water, Healthy land & water, QLD Government, and community groups</p> <p>2.3 Support Littering Campaigns - Community clean ups, events that support responsible waste disposal and recycling</p> <p>2.4 Develop a specific illegal dumping and littering webpage that informs and builds capacity with links to incident reporting, information and educational resources</p> <p>2.5 Develop an illegal dumping and littering communication package</p> <p>2.6 Source grant funding for illegal dumping and littering initiatives and regional wide infrastructure projects that combat illegal dumping</p> <p>2.7 Conduct annual community survey to capture littering and illegal dumping attitudes and behaviours</p>	<p>🏠 5 education campaigns completed/year</p> <p>🏠 3 Stakeholder program completed/ year</p> <p>🏠 Number of campaigns completed</p> <p>🏠 10% reduction of illegal dumping incidents/year</p> <p>🏠 Number of grants received/year</p> <p>🏠 change in community attitude year on year</p>
3. Recovery of Resources:	<p>3.1 Develop a process to maximise recycling from illegally dumped waste</p> <p>3.2 Increase recycling opportunities for households and business</p> <p>3.3 Investigate the feasibility of free annual bulky waste collection days</p>	<p>🏠 25% of illegally dumped waste is re-used/recycled</p>
4. Minimise Environmental Impacts: Capacity building, infrastructure	<p>4.1 Reduction in illegal dumping incidents year on year</p> <p>4.2 Report illegal dumping incidents</p> <p>4.3 Review investigations, fines, penalties, recovery process and resources required</p> <p>4.4 Restrict site access to dumping hotspots through appropriate site modification or infrastructure - CCTV, information/ warning signage</p>	<p>🏠 25% reduction in illegal dumping incidents year on year</p> <p>🏠 2 joint partnership programs/year</p>
5. Enforcement action	<p>5.1 Increase the human resources available for Illegal dumping and littering investigation and enforcement action</p> <p>5.2 Develop and implement a strategic enforcement program where serious illegal dumping incidents are detected, investigated and prosecuted</p> <p>5.3 Facilitate collaborative enforcement action, including investigation and data sharing, with regulators (DES, QPWS), partner Councils and land managers (HQ Plantations and SEQ Water)</p> <p>5.4 Work with public land managers to identify illegal dumping hot spots, and investigate and prosecute illegal dumpers who dump waste on publicly managed land such as in state forests, foreshores, bushland and parks</p> <p>5.5 Work with Charities on Illegal dumping at donation bins</p> <p>5.6 Inform the community and Stakeholders of illegal dumping enforcement action, investigation and clean-ups</p>	<p>🏠 The illegal dumping enforcement team has at least 2 full time officers</p> <p>🏠 Number of successful enforcement action</p> <p>🏠 Number of clean-ups by offender</p> <p>🏠 Number of collaborative illegal dumping mitigation programs</p>

4. Implementation, resourcing, reporting

This Plan will be implemented between 2021 and 2026 in line with the timeframes for the MBRC *Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan 2016-2026*. Progress will be reported quarterly to Council from the Plan’s implementation year 2.

Initiatives and programs that require additional human or financial resourcing will have a business case prepared to enable appropriate budget allocation

5. Plan review

The dynamic nature of littering and illegal dumping requires that the Plan and its action program is frequently reviewed and refined. Effective response to the issues can change over time.

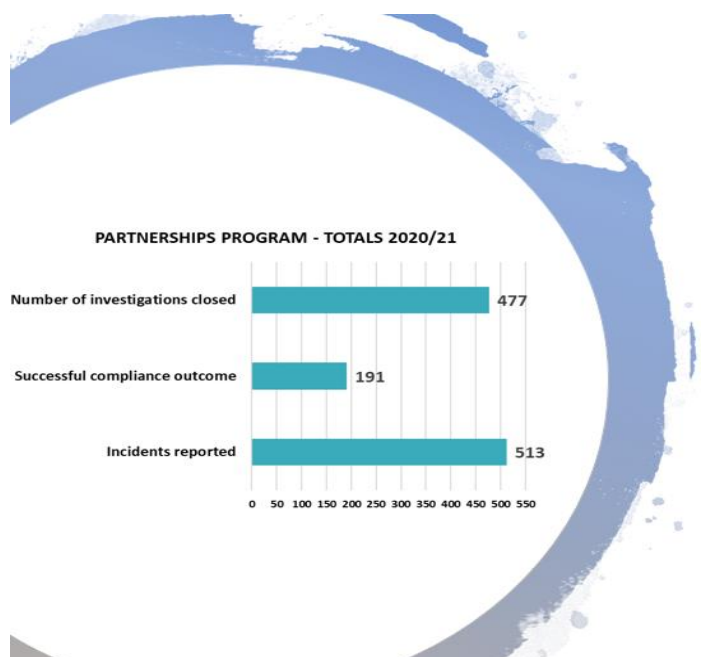
Waste Type	Total
Household	386
Construction & Demo	36
Car	3
Tyres	22
Industrial/Commercial	2
Green waste	49
Bagged	13
Chemical	1
Hazardous	0
Asbestos	1
Unknown	0



6. Acknowledgements

The following documents have informed the Moreton Bay Regional Council’s Littering and Illegal Dumping Plan:

- ✚ *Keep Australia Beautiful*, National Litter Index 2019/20
- ✚ NSW EPA Illegal Dumping Strategy 2017-2021
- ✚ *Illegal Dumping Handbook 2013* (DES)
- ✚ *Queensland Litter and Illegal Dumping Action Plan 2013* (DEHP)
- ✚ *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy 2019* (Qld)
- ✚ *MBRC/DES Survey of Council Litter and Illegal Dumping Costs 2019*

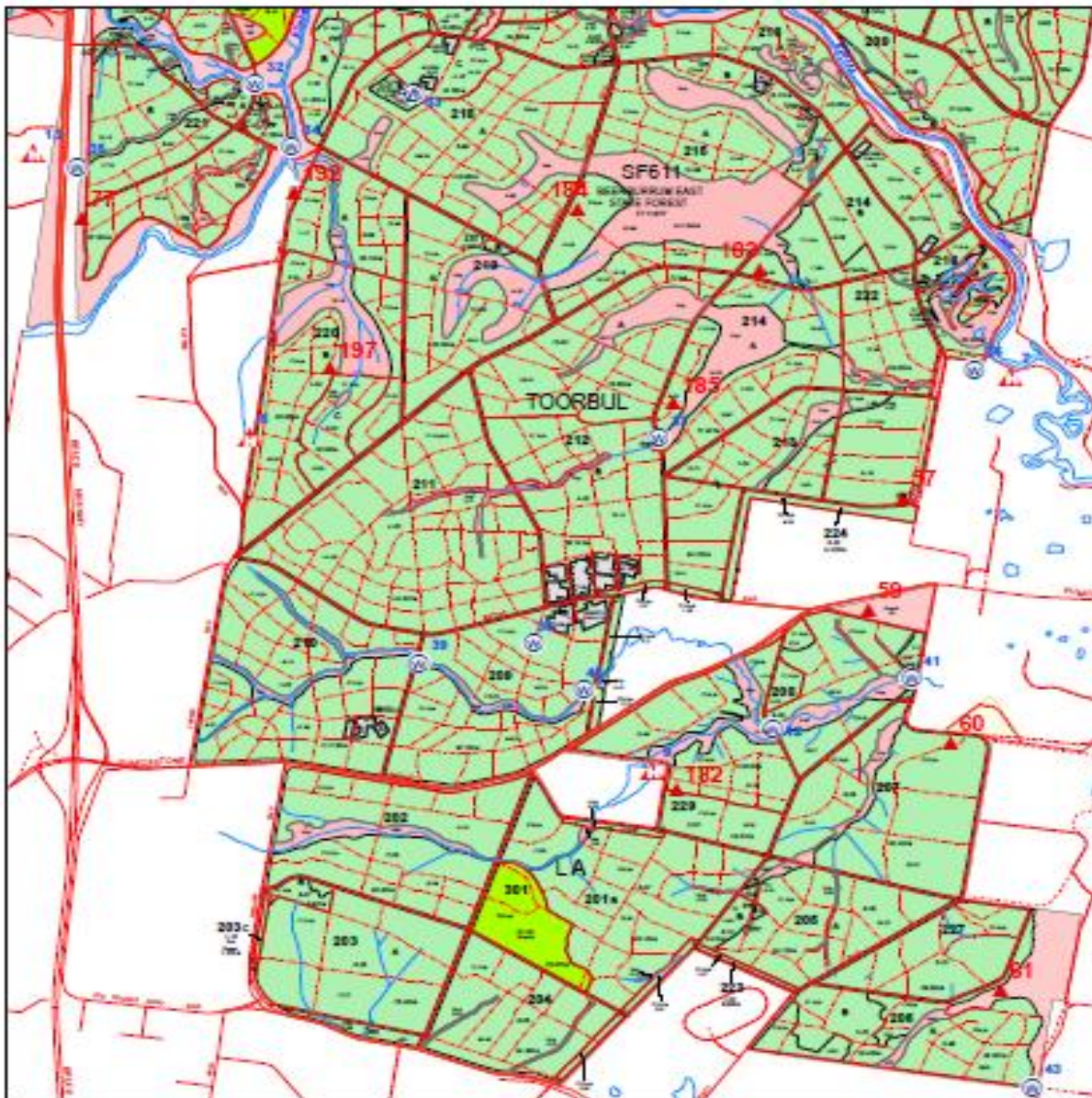




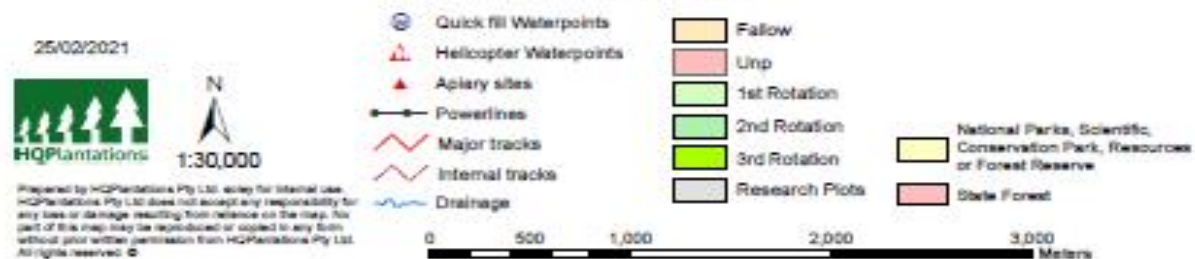
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - HQ Forestry Plantations: 27,200ha (13,200 MBRC area, remainder SCC)



EXAMPLE AREA



Large scale illegal dumping of commercial as well as general waste
 619 illegal dump sites identified in a 2016 survey of 9 out of 27 logging areas
 Annual clean-up average 15t waste
 Priority waste - up to 500 tyres /year and building material, including Asbestos
 Problem areas - Woodford, Toorbul, Donnybrook, Rose, Twins and Ningi

Appendix 1: Photographs of illegal dump sites



Appendix 3 Locations of Illegal Dumping incidents 2020/21 MBRC area

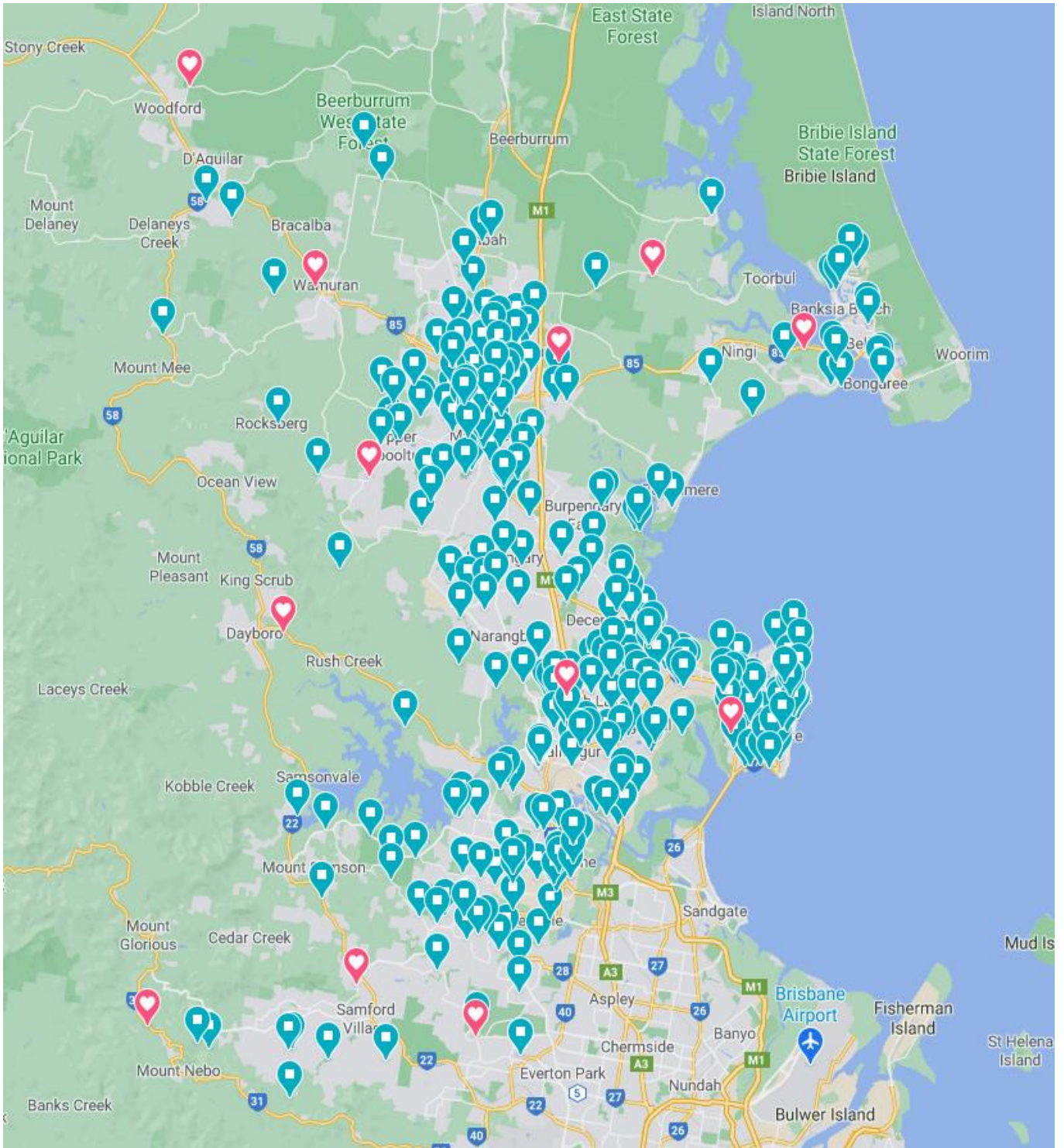


Figure 1. Map showing illegal dumping () locations from July 2020 to January 2021 and Moreton Bay Regional Council’s major and minor waste facilities ().

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