

Chapter 8

Protected Area

Oct-2021

Genex Kidston Connection Project - Ministerial Infrastructure Designation Assessment Report

8.0 Protected Areas

8.1 Existing Environment

Protected areas represent those areas protected for the conservation of natural and cultural values at a Commonwealth, State and Local level. Protected areas also include areas managed for production of forest resources, including timber and quarry material. This section does not discuss Indigenous and Non-indigenous cultural heritage places. Discussion on these is provided in Chapter 16 Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Chapter 17 Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage respectively.

Protected areas within 10 km of the Preferred Alignment were identified through a review of publicly available desktop information, including the following databases:

- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment Protected Matters Search Tool (DAWE, 2021)
- *State Planning Policy 2017* (SPP) and SPP Matters of State Environmental Significance Mapping Database (DSDILGP, 2021)
- Queensland Government protected areas databases supplied through Queensland Globe (Queensland Government, 2021)
- Gulf Regional Development Plan 2000 (a non-statutory Regional Plan) (GRPAC, 2000) and the North Queensland Regional Plan 2020 (DSDMILP, 2020)
- Local Planning Instruments for Hinchinbrook Shire Council (Hinchinbrook Shire Council), Charters Towers Regional Council (Charters Towers Regional Council, 2020) and Etheridge Shire Council (Etheridge Shire Council, 2020).

The Preferred Alignment does not traverse any existing protected areas. The protected areas which have been identified in proximity to the Preferred Alignment are listed in Table 8-1 from west to east along the alignment, and shown in Figure 8-1.

Table 8-1 Protected Areas in proximity of the Preferred Alignment

Name	Type	Governing Legislation	Proximity
Newcastle Range – The Oaks Nature Refuge	MSES Protected Area (nature refuges)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	2.6 km north east
Girringun National Park	National Park	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	350 m north
Lifeway Nature Refuge	MSES Protected Area (nature refuges)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	1.6 km north east
Lannercost State Forest	State Forest	<i>Forestry Act 1959</i>	3.5 km north east
Range View Nature Refuge	MSES Protected Area (nature refuges)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	10 km north east
Poison Lake	Nationally Important Wetland	N/A (Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia)	10 km north
Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Property	MNES	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> World Heritage List 1988	3.5 km north east (overlaps Lannercost State Forest)
Wet Tropics of Queensland	MNES	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	3.5 km north east

Name	Type	Governing Legislation	Proximity
National Heritage Place		National Heritage List 2007	

The Girringun National Park is 277,868 ha in size and spans through three local government areas, including Tablelands Regional Council, Cassowary Coast Regional Council and Hinchinbrook Shire Council. The eastern section of the Preferred Alignment is near Mount Fox which is part of the National Park. Mount Fox is a dormant volcanic cone, and holds tourism and visitor opportunities. A track is present which allows visitors to climb to the summit of the volcanic cone, providing views of the crater and surrounding area. Further details on visual and landscape values of this area are discussed in Chapter 14 Visual Amenity.

8.2 Potential Impacts

The Preferred Alignment for the transmission line and switching station locations does not affect any protected areas identified in Table 8-1. The nearest identified protected area is the Girringun National Park, approximately 350 m north of the Preferred Alignment at the eastern (Mount Fox) end. All other identified protected areas are located greater than 1.5 km from the Preferred Alignment. Potential impacts on protected areas are therefore anticipated to be limited to minor and indirect impacts on Girringun National Park associated with noise, dust and visual amenity.

Dust emissions may arise from earthworks, construction of structures and access track usage. The qualitative air quality risk assessment undertaken in Chapter 6 Air Quality determined that the unmitigated air emissions from the construction phase of the Project pose a low risk of dust soiling impacts. Emissions associated with the construction are expected to be localised to the immediate area and only present for a short period of time per work area.

Construction noise sources will include light vehicles and machinery for vegetation clearing, access track construction, structure foundations, and helicopters for transmission line stringing. Based on the construction noise assessment undertaken in Chapter 19 Noise and Vibration, construction noise impacts from vehicles and machinery is anticipated to be negligible beyond the southern boundary of Girringun National Park. Helicopter use in proximity to the National Park will be short term for both construction activities and transmission line maintenance, and overall noise impacts on the National Park are therefore anticipated to be negligible.

The summit of Mount Fox within Girringun National Park, is located approximately 1 km to the north of the nearest Project structure. The visual impact assessment undertaken in Chapter 14 Visual Amenity, identified that, although there will be noticeable change due to the close proximity of this scenic viewpoint, there will be no change to the fundamental visual character of the landscape and the structures will 'blend' with the existing view to a considerable extent.

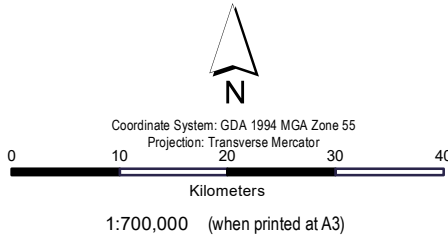
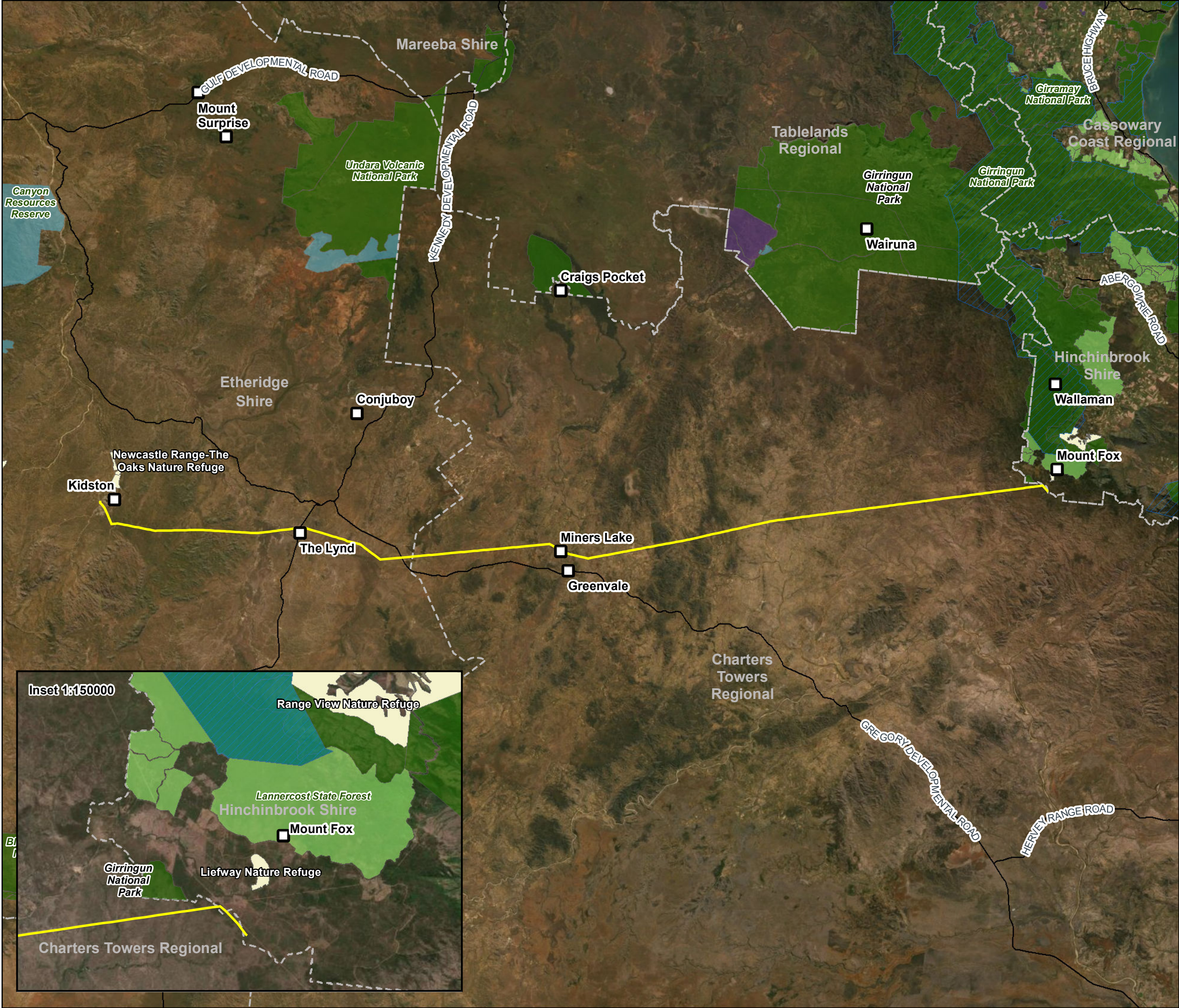
It is also noted that Girringun National Park (600-800 m elevation) is higher in elevation than the Project corridor (600-620 m elevation), therefore the Project is not anticipated to have a hydrological impact on the National Park.

8.3 Mitigation and Management Measures

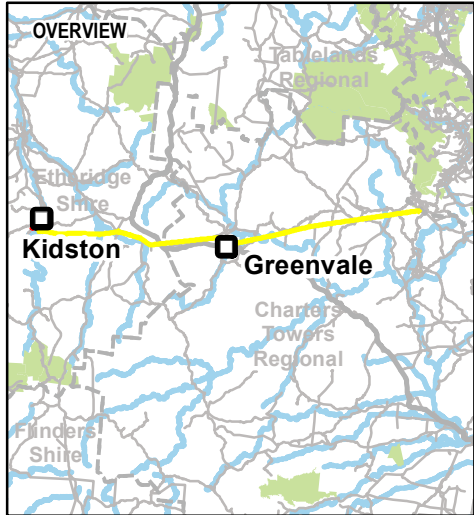
The Project will not directly impact on a protected area, and indirect impacts on Girringun National Park, such as dust deposition and noise, are anticipated to be short term and of negligible significance.

Standard mitigation measures, as provided in Appendix B Environmental Management Plan, will be implemented to minimise potential dust and noise impacts on protected areas, including the following.

- Active management of dust emissions, such as restriction of vehicle speeds, application of dust suppressants or watering, and the covering of loads for transport to and from work sites.
- Standard environmental controls for noise management such as limiting working hours, fitting machinery with appropriate noise attenuation devices and shutting down equipment when not in use.



- Legend**
- Places
 - Preferred Alignment
 - Main Roads
 - Local Government Area
 - World Heritage**
 - Wet Tropics of Queensland
 - Protected Areas**
 - Conservation Park
 - Forest Reserve
 - National Park
 - Resources Reserve
 - State Forest
 - Nature Refuge



Data sources:
DCDB, Roads, Watercourses - DNRM 2017
Site Features and Layout - AECOM 2018
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Kidston Connection Project

PROTECTED AREAS

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