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CENTRAL QUEENSLAND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY INCEPTION STUDY

BACKGROUND REPORT NO. 9:

MIRIAM VALE SHIRE REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STUDY REPORT



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**REPORT TO MIRIAM VALE SHIRE COUNCIL ON THE SHIRE'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STUDY**

PART A: IDENTIFICATION OF LOCAL CONDITIONS AND NEEDS

Presented by the Consultants

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PART A: IDENTIFICATION OF LOCAL CONDITIONS AND NEEDS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Miriam Vale is a Shire with very special conditions and needs. The key features are:

- . Strong population growth (63% increase in five years, from a low base of 1,920 persons in 1986 to 3,134 in 1991); however, the Shire is still a sparsely populated coastal area with the 3,134 persons spread over 3,709 square kilometres (sq kms).
- . This rapid growth in the population of the Shire is reflected in the finances of the Shire Council with total receipts more than doubling between 1986 and 1991, and rates and charges growing rapidly from \$654,000 in 1986 to \$2,566,167 in 1991.
- . Residents of the Shire are generally younger, less qualified and earn less than average Queenslanders.
- . The economy of the Shire is based on primary industry, consisting mainly of grass fed beef cattle supplemented by a small amount of dairying and small cropping, plus tourism, which mainly involves the servicing of travellers using the Bruce Highway running the full length of the Shire on a north/south axis.
- . Other economic activities carried on in the Shire are as diverse as railway sleeper cutting, fishing, macadamia nut and cultivated turf farming; however, whilst these are important for the local economy, they are all minor activities when considered on a Region-wide basis.
- . Significant mineral deposits exist in the sand dunes at Agnes Water: Mineral Deposits Limited holds leases over these and, according to company sources, will commence mining if and when world prices justify the significant infrastructural costs involved in their development.
- . Poor roads, developers' perceptions of a difficult Council bureaucracy, and the lack of a suitable fresh water supply are seen as the greatest impediments to the economic development of the Shire.
- . The only identified option to supply water to the Shire - piping water from the Awoonga Dam - is well beyond the financial resources of the Shire and, if the resources of private developers cannot be utilised, government assistance will be needed. This assistance may be difficult to justify on the basis of the immediate development potential of the Shire.
- . Sealing of the roads from Agnes Water and the Town of Seventeen Seventy to Bundaberg and Miriam Vale are seen as top priorities by residents and developers in the coastal area.

- . The construction of an all-weather road from the Town of Seventeen Seventy to Turkey Beach is considered essential for the tourism development of the Shire.
- . There is a number of national, environmental and recreational parks gazetted in the Shire, and these, together with 150 km of very attractive coastline and the Captain Cook history associated with Round Hill and the Town of Seventeen Seventy, provide the basis for significant tourism development.
- . Access to the southern section of the Great Barrier Reef from the Town of Seventeen Seventy also provides significant tourism opportunities with the demonstrated potential to draw tourists from the Gold Coast and other southern tourist centres.
- . Considerable interest in the Shire was expressed by individuals and organisations based outside the Shire, with many key parcels of land owned and/or controlled by these persons/organisations. Hence, it is inevitable that much of the impetus for development will come from these individuals and organisations, which increases the potential for conflict between developers, residents, ratepayers and the Council.
- . As a consequence of the rapid population growth in the Shire and the Considerable difficulties that the Council is experiencing in catering to this growth, several disputes have occurred between developers and the Council and its staff, and these disputes could halt further development if mechanisms are not put in place to resolve and dissipate the basis of these disputes.
- . Council and its staff have been on a steep learning curve over the last four to five years; a number of the staff are recent appointments and a number of the councillors are also new. However, plans either completed or being developed will contribute greatly to the orderly development of the Shire.

Miriam Vale Shire Council places considerable emphasis on the identification of viable economic options and future business opportunities for the future development of the Shire.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Following the successful submission by the Miriam Vale Shire to the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development (DBIRD) under the Regional Economic Development (RED) Program, the Consultants were commissioned by the Miriam Vale Shire Council to carry out an Identification of Regional and Local Conditions and Needs Study, as specified in the Study Brief. The aims of the Study were refined and the Study Methodology was approved by the Council.

This Study provides the input for a subsequent Study which will be concerned with the identification of a viable economic future for the Miriam Vale Shire. This will require a concerted effort to ensure that the maximum benefit is attained from the adoption of a strategy to fully utilise the resource base of the Shire and build on its strengths.

1.2 STUDY BRIEF

The details for the Study Proposal were discussed with senior officers of the Miriam Vale Shire and in effect became the Study Brief. The focus of this Study was on the future economic development of the Shire and therefore used all information available from Council documents and reports, government reports and any other materials made available by key stakeholders, representative bodies and individual members of the community. A strategic analysis of this information was carried out. It was necessary to contact a large number of stakeholders in the region in order to ensure that the consultation process was comprehensive.

1.3 FUNDING

Funding of \$5,000 was provided by DBIRD, and this was matched by the Miriam Vale Shire on a dollar for dollar basis.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted was:

- . assembly, compilation, tabulation and analysis of up-to-date economic/ demographic data
- . analysis of ratepayer's database
- . questionnaire survey of key stakeholders in the Miriam Vale Shire

- . face-to-face interviews with identified major Central Queensland (CQ) stakeholders, both resident and non-resident, in the Miriam Vale Shire
- . telephone interviews with key stakeholders living outside the CQ Region
- . interviews with Council staff and consultants to the Council
- . interviews with representative bodies, such as Gladstone Area Promotion and Development Limited and Bundaberg Area Tourism and Development Board.

1.5 TIME FRAME

The original proposed time frame indicated that the Study would commence on 3 February 1992 and would be completed by 23 March 1992. Due to the time-consuming nature of the Study for Council staff and the Consultants, this time frame was revised by agreement with Council so that the completion due date for the Draft Report was extended to Friday, 17 July 1992, and for the Final Report to Friday, 18 December 1992.

2.0 SHIRE PROFILE STATISTICAL SUMMARY AND COMMENTARY

A Statistical Profile of the Shire is provided in Appendix A. The key features of this statistical profile are highlighted below.

2.1 GEOGRAPHIC

(a) Location

Miriam Vale Shire is located in the southern part of the area commonly referred to as Central Queensland. It is part of the Wide Bay-Burnett Statistical Division, being the northernmost Shire in that Division. The Shire is sparsely populated, with the rapidly growing Gladstone District on its northern border and the stable Bundaberg Region on its southern border. It is a four hour drive from Brisbane, being some 400 kilometres (km) by road north of Brisbane.

To be geographically precise, the Shire of Miriam Vale is situated between 24 and 25 degrees South and 151 and 153 degrees East in the southeastern region of Queensland. The total area of the Shire is 3,709 sq kms. The major part of the area, apart from town areas and reserves and Crown land, is coastal grazing country.

(b) **Topography**

From the seashore just north of Hummock Hill, Rodd's Bay, the Shire boundary runs through undulating country past Iveragh railway siding towards the Many Peaks Range, which forms the western boundary.

The southwest border is bounded by the Dawes Range, while Bobby's Range branches off from Many Peaks Range at Blackman's Gap and intrudes the western part of the Shire. Prominent points are Booroon Mt (630 metres), Gindoren Peak (436 metres) and Mt Molangul (769 metres). Topography of this area is steep and rugged.

The eastern border coastline consists of some of the finest beaches on Australia's seaboard. The Town of Seventeen Seventy provides the closest departure point to the southern reaches of the Great Barrier Reef. Lady Musgrave Island and Lady Elliot Island, located some 37 km off the coast, are the most accessible Barrier Reef attractions.

Colosseum Creek, Granite Creek and its tributaries, Banksia Creek, Palm Creek, Seven Mile Creek and Booloo Creek are the most prominent waterways that drain the coastal ranges feeding Baffle Creek.

The southern boundary goes through the Dawes Range and Watalgan Range, which meets the Bucca Range at the Double Sloping Hummock (420 metres) southwest of Watalgan railway siding. Mt Boreilla (521 metres), Mt Warrot (473 metres) and Mt Grevillea (473 metres) are the principal peaks in these ranges.

From Double Sloping Hammock, the Shire boundary runs through coastal lowlands towards the estuary of Baffle Creek and meets the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of Baffle Creek. The eastern boundary extends along the Pacific Ocean.

A few coastal ranges are situated in the area east of the railway line. They are in the north Edinburgh Mountains and Westwood Range, with Arthur's Seat (501 metres) as the dominant peak. Further south are Colosseum Mountain and the Gwynne Ranges, the Munro Range and the isolated Mt Tom and Mt Dromedary (475 metres).

The areas between these mountain ranges consists mainly of undulating country. Hacking Hill, Maude Hill and Toowong Hill are elevations surrounded by flat country near the coast.

The Baffle Creek system, with its tributaries Bottle Creek, Oyster Creek, Murray Creek, Granite Creek, Colosseum Creek, House Creek and Three Mile Creek, drains the central and southern portions of the Shire.

A few minor creek systems, such as Blackwater and Deepwater Creeks, drain the central part of the coastal region, and Round Hill Creek and Oakey Creek drain coastal areas further north.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC (including employment and unemployment statistics)

[Note: Only very limited data were available from the 1991 Census. As soon as all information is available, a complete analysis of the changes from 1986 to 1991 will be possible; however, these statistics will not be available before March 1993.]

The population of the Shire was estimated to be 2,351 at 30 June 1990, and is now 3,134, made up of 1,666 males and 1,468 females. The population growth from the 1986 Census to the 1991 Census was 55.4%, which makes Miriam Vale one of the fastest growing Shires in the State.

Points of interest with regard to the demographics of the Shire are:

- . The population is younger than the Queensland population on average, with 39.8% below 24 years in the Miriam Vale Shire compared with 32.7% for Queensland; also, 22.8% are over 50 years compared with 25.2% for Queensland on average.
- . There are fewer overseas-born persons living in the Shire compared with Queensland on average - 9.9% for Miriam Vale Shire compared with 16.7% for the State average.
- . There are fewer persons with a degree or trade - the figures are 1.6% with degrees for the Miriam Vale Shire compared with the State average of 3.9%; and 6.6% with a trade compared with 10.7% for the State average. These differences reflect the relatively undeveloped nature of the Shire.
- . Reflecting a lack of manufacturing and other high technology activities in the Shire, there are more unqualified persons in the Miriam Vale Shire compared with the State average - 72.4% compared to 60.7%.
- . Individual incomes are lower, with 43.8% indicating an income below \$6,000 compared with the State average of 37.1%; also, 10.10% have incomes from \$6,001 to \$9,000 compared with 10.3% for the State.

2.3 INDUSTRIAL

The major industrial activities that characterise the economy of Miriam Vale Shire are indicated by the following key statistics:

- . Gross value of agricultural production:
\$10.8 million for 1989-90 and \$13.3 million for 1990-91
- . Building approvals:
\$4.3 million for 1989-90 and \$5.3 million for 1990-91
- . Retail trade turnover:
\$5.6 million for 1985-86
- . Local government total expenditure:
\$4.5 million for 1989-90
- . Tourism takings from accommodation:
\$1 million for 1991

2.3.1 Agriculture

The major industrial activity category in the Miriam Vale Shire is clearly agriculture, and within this category, beef production dominates, while dairying, supported by a few piggeries and vegetable farms makes up the remainder. Generally, the soils in the Shire are low in nutrients, poorly drained and poorly structured, and hence are not suitable for commercial cultivation, except for a few pockets of fertile soils. The Shire Development Control Plan for the coastal area (page 9) refers to this problem in the Agnes Water area. This is reflected in the statistics for agriculture, which show that the bulk of the agricultural economic activity of the Shire is associated with grass-fed cattle.

According to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures, there were 142 agricultural establishments at the end of March 1990. These were broken down to 106 beef cattle, sixteen dairy cattle, two piggeries and eleven vegetable producers. These figures are disputed by locals, who argue that there are substantially more small crops producers, especially in the Baffle Creek area. Estimates are that there are at least fifty small crops producers in the Shire. Agricultural production has been stable, with the gross value of agricultural production being \$13.3 million in 1990-91, \$10.8 million in 1989, \$10.4 million in 1988, \$10.5 million in 1987 and \$9 million in 1986. Only slow growth could be expected from agricultural

production unless some form of intensive farming is developed. Distance to markets and poor roads militate against easy development of small crop farming. Several macadamia nut farms have been established in the Baffle Creek area, and details available on these ventures from ABS statistics show that the value of production declined from \$1,869,000 in 1986-87 to \$725,000 in 1990-91.

2.3.2 Tourism

The tourism data available for the Miriam Vale Shire include Kolan and Gooburrum Shires. Figures for 1991 are for combined takings from accommodation in licensed hotels, motels and so on, with accommodation facilities. For these three Shires, the takings were \$1,328,000. There is a total of twelve establishments in these three Shires, and, with six in the Miriam Vale Shire with tourist facilities, the takings in that Shire are estimated to be 50% of the total; that is, \$660,000.

Combined Kolan, Gooburrum and Miriam Vale Shire statistics for 1987 show seven establishments with 78 guest rooms and 222 bed spaces. Takings were reported at \$326,000.

In 1991, Miriam Vale Shire had six caravan parks, four motels and four hotels, whose combined takings were in the region of \$1 million. Tourism takings are expected to grow as further establishments are built and basic infrastructure is improved.

2.3.3 Manufacturing

There is very little manufacturing taking place in Miriam Vale Shire. There are four manufacturing establishments, two involved in wood products and two involved in non-metallic mineral products. These are a couple of small engineering works and a couple of joineries.

2.3.4 Mining

There is no mining currently taking place in the Miriam Vale Shire. Mineral sands in commercial quantities are available at Agnes Water, and Mineral Deposits Limited, a subsidiary of BHP, have proposed sand mining in this area. Some 3.5 km of industrial strength bitumen highway has been built to facilitate development of this sand mining; however, no further work has been carried out. Information supplied by Mineral Deposits Limited indicates that the mining will not commence until world prices rise sufficiently to justify the significant infrastructure costs involved in developing the deposit.

Shale oil deposits have been surveyed for a considerable part of the coastal area of the Shire; however, there are no known proposals to mine these sample ore deposits in the foreseeable future.

2.4 INFRASTRUCTURE

2.4.1 Roads

There is a total of 824 km of road in the Miriam Vale Shire. The major road is the Bruce Highway, travelling north-south for over 100 km through the Shire. Some new sealed roads have been developed; however, apart from a few stretches of road from Miriam Vale to Agnes Water, most of this new road is part of new subdivisional development. While significant improvements have occurred over the last few years, major road works are still needed to provide better access for those travelling from Bundaberg to Agnes Water, and Miriam Vale to Agnes Water. This road improvement is identified as a priority by most stakeholders in the Shire.

New roads are also needed if tourism in the Shire is to advance as quickly as desired. In particular, a new road is needed to link Agnes Water to Turkey Beach. This is the subject of several planning documents.

2.4.2 Sewerage

There is no sewerage in the Miriam Vale Shire, except for an individual system at the Captain Cook Caravan Park. There is unlikely to be any significant sewerage system for some time to come although there is provision in the Strategic Plan for sewerage in all new developments. Homes are currently fitted with septic tanks. This is currently acceptable for building approvals to be granted.

2.4.3 Water

Currently, water is supplied to three locations in the Shire - Miriam Vale, Bororen and Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy. The water is pumped from creeks in Bororen and Miriam Vale and pumped from collection trenches dug into low-lying land in the vicinity of Agnes Water. None of these arrangements is satisfactory; for example, the trench supplying water to Agnes Water is under dispute because of its location on mining leases, and the water supplied to the Miriam Vale township is generally unfit for drinking. Provision of a quality water supply is of major importance for the development of the Shire in each area where development can take place. This will pose significant problems, as 'there are no major watercourses that could provide sources for an urban water supply scheme'. (Kinhill Cameron McNamara, Development Control Plan for Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy, p. 10) The only long-term proposal which is certain to satisfy

requirements in the reticulation of water from the Awoonga Dam near Gladstone. Costs of reticulation are put at \$12 million.

2.4.4 Electricity

Electricity is available to virtually all populated parts of the Shire.

2.4.5 Telephones

Telephones are available to virtually all populated parts of the Shire.

2.4.6 Air Transport

There are only small country airfields in the Shire, and access to air services is via airports at Gladstone, Rockhampton or Bundaberg. There is a need for an airport at Agnes Water so that the demand for access to the Great Barrier Reef from international tourists based in Brisbane or on the Gold Coast can be met. A temporary airstrip is currently being used. While road access to Agnes Water is poor, this will remain a priority.

2.4.7 Sea Access

There are no approved all-weather access points to the sea from anywhere in the Shire. Again, there is the need to provide jetty access, at least at the Town of Seventeen Seventy. There are proposals currently before the Council for approval of a jetty which may provide a solution. There are access points to the estuary rivers and to beaches for fishing; however, these are merely boat ramps or access points provided over sand dunes.

2.4.8 Rail Access

The main north-south railway line runs through the Miriam Vale Shire with stations at Bororen, Miriam Vale, Lowmead and Rosedale. The latter two stations are not normally put-down points. It is likely that both Miriam Vale and Bororen will have limited access, as Queensland Government Rail (QGR) is generally servicing such stations by road and limiting train stops to major centres.

2.4.9 National Parks and Coastal Attractions

A number of very good, strategically selected recreation, environment and national parks have been gazetted in the Miriam Vale Shire. These can be seen on the map provided. These include:

- . Mt Stanley National Park
- . Eurimbula National Park
- . Mount Colosseum National Park
- . Round Hill National Park
- . Deepwater National Park
- . Fingerfield National Park
- . Agnes Water Recreation Reserve

The beaches along the coast of the Miriam Vale Shire are some of the best in Queensland, providing the northernmost surfing beaches in Queensland, and can provide year round conditions suitable for surfing. They are long beaches, and from Agnes Water to Baffle Creek there is almost continuous uninhabited beach. The sand is clean and plentiful and these beaches are equally attractive to the family, the four-wheel driver and the fisherman.

3.0 DETAILS OF SHIRE PLANS

Miriam Vale Shire officers supplied the Consultants with the following documents:

- (a) The Strategic Planning Map

This is a broad brush forward planning document for the Shire.

- (b) The Town Planning Scheme

This document, gazetted on 21 December 1991, provides a detailed picture of the zoning of the Shire. This document specifies land use rights as well as prohibiting certain land uses. This document, because of its legal status, sets the constraints on future development possibilities.

- (c) The Development Control Plan for Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy

This is a detailed and very specific planning tool that attempts to determine the optimum development uses of specific blocks of land. This document is backed by development guidelines with detailed explanations based on accepted planning/land usage guidelines.

It is understood that the Development Control Plan cannot determine land uses other than those outlined in the Town Planning Scheme (see [b] above). This Development Control Plan is in the final draft stage. On completion it will be placed before the Shire Council for approval.

In the view of the Consultants, the adoption of the plans completed to date will lead to the balanced strategic development of the Shire, supplementing the primary industry base with a tourism base. The plans demonstrate sensitivity towards key environmental assets and are realistic in terms of the limited opportunities within the Shire.

Key issues yet to be addressed are:

- . solution of the water supply problems
- . development of road access from Agnes Water, both north to Gladstone and south to Bundaberg
- . availability of adequate reasonably priced residential land for potential workforce
- . availability of light industrial/commercial land in the Agnes Water Area and also in the north of the Shire to benefit from the rapid industrial development planned for the Gladstone area.

The community and developers must be made aware of these plans and the guidelines and reasons for the plans so that there will be less friction between the Council and competing stakeholders.

In the spirit of the present State Government's preference for a 'bottom up' approach to strategic economic development, the extensive consultation undertaken by the Consultants should ensure that Shire residents and stakeholders in the Shire will have ownership of the new strategic directions which will emerge in the second Study. To assist this process, a Future Search Workshop will be held in the Shire to allow the various local communities to have constructive input into the identification of future opportunities for the Shire.

4.0 ANALYSIS OF RATEPAYER'S DATABASE

The ratepayers' database contained the following information:

- . Valuation Number
- . Owner's Name
- . Other Owner's Name

- . Postal Address 1
- . Postal Address 2
- . Postal Address 3
- . Location of Property
- . Category
- . Land Valuation
- . Zone or Property
- . Category
- . Pensioner Code
- . Rateable Code
- . Last Levy

This was analysed as follows:

- . total rates paid
 - by zone
 - by category
- . top ten individual areas
- . top ten individual rates
- . total land valuation
- . total number of rateable ratepayers
 - by category
 - by zone
- . number of ratepaying pensioners
- . number of ratepayers by postcode of first postal address

See Appendix B for details of rates paid by category.

Key points arising from the analysis of this database are:

- . There are 4,094 separate properties on the database, of which 3,847 involve the payment of rates, meaning that there are no rates levied on 247 properties.
- . Zone 1 has the largest rates base, with \$1,228,170.75 paid in rates on 1,868 parcels of land.
- . Total rates paid at last levy, according to the database, was \$2,566,167.59.
- . Category 7 ratepayers pay the greatest total amount of rates, i.e. \$807,320.08 on 1,552 properties; Category 2 pay the lowest total amount, i.e. \$7,676 on 21 properties.
- . There are 112 pensioner ratepayers.

- . The highest rates paid by a ratepayer on a single property were \$13,836.75.
- . Highest land valuation of \$8,700 is on a reserve for an environmental park on Captain Cook Memorial Drive.
- . The largest single property in the Shire is Turkey Station, with an area of 15,236 hectares.

General Comments

A number of major properties are owned by ratepayers living outside the Shire. Of the top ten land valuations, only one has a local address for rates, suggesting that only one of these properties is owned by a Miriam Vale Shire resident.

5.0 SURVEYS OF IDENTIFIED STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 SURVEY DESIGN

5.1.1 Questionnaire

To ensure a high response rate, the questionnaire consisted of five simple, open-ended questions. The questionnaire was administered by experienced interviewers. An additional space for comments was provided. A response rate of approximately 90% was achieved.

5.1.2 Sample

The Shire was divided into three areas as follows:

- . North East Turkey Beach area, abutting Calliope and Gladstone Shires
- . Eastern Coastal Developed Strip, including Agnes Water, Town of Seventeen Seventy and Baffle Creek
- . Western area of Shire, including Miriam Vale, Bororen and Bruce Highway strip.

To ensure representative coverage, a clustered random sampling technique was used. In effect, a virtual census of all key stakeholders took place because of the small numbers involved. Lists of stakeholders were identified by the Shire staff, and were selected from the ratepayer's database.

5.1.3 Analysis

Answers were coded and the analysis was conducted by an experienced computer analyst. Tabulated results were verified. Answers were grouped into a maximum of nine common response categories.

5.2 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

For the purposes of this Report, the findings of the Coastal and Bruce Highway areas have been amalgamated. This Report contains analysis by local area and by industry.

1. **Question 1:** *What resources do you see to be the most important assets of the Miriam Vale Shire in terms of economic development?*

MAIN RESOURCES ACCORDING TO COASTAL RESIDENTS

Tourism	24
Coastline/Scenery	19
Rural Industry	16
Boating Facilities/Reef	15
National Parks	12
Sand Mining	11
Highway and Rail Links	5
Timber	5
Service Traders	3
'Residents'	2
Non-Responses	1
Total	113

**GROUPED RESPONSES OF COASTAL, NON-COASTAL AND TOTAL
RESIDENTS: MAIN RESOURCES OF SHIRE**

		Coastal Residents		Non Coastal Residents		Total Residents	
01	Coastline/Scenery/ Boating Facilities/Reef/ National Parks	46	40.7%	19	27.14%	65	35.52%
02	Tourism	24	21.2%	9	12.86%	33	18.03%
03	Rural Industry	16	14.2%	15	21.43%	31	16.94%
04	Sand Mining	11	9.7%	7	10.00%	18	9.84%
05	Highway/Rail Links	5	4.4%	1	1.43%	6	3.28%
06	Timber	5	4.4%	7	10.00%	12	6.56%
07	Service Trades	3	2.7%	0	.00%	3	1.64%
08	Residents/Human Resources	2	1.8%	5	7.14%	7	3.83%
09	Non-Responses	1	0.9%	7	10.00%	8	4.37%
Total		113	100.00%	70	100.00%	183	100.00%

Very detailed and in-depth answers were provided by respondents. In summary, the major resources of the area identified by respondents were related to three key industries, viz. tourism, beef and sand mining. Timber and fishing were considered almost insignificant. Tourism was identified as having the greatest growth potential, based on the unspoilt environment, national parks, the historic connections, closeness to the most southerly section of the Great Barrier Reef, extensive and good beaches and rock and estuary fishing. As could be expected, coastal residents rated the tourism potential relatively higher than the non-coastal residents, while the reverse held for rural industries.

2. **Question 2:** *What are the most significant impediments to economic development of the Miriam Vale Shire?*

MAIN IMPEDIMENTS ACCORDING TO COASTAL RESIDENTS

Roads	27
Council/Bureaucracy	20
Lack of Business Services	9
Funding (lack of)	8
Business Charges	7

Too Many Small Towns	7
Lack of Planning	7
Infrastructure (lack of)	5
No Business District/Town	4
Tourism Facilities	3
No Land for Light Industry	3
Lack of Industry/Employment	3
Boating Facilities/Marina	1
Lack of Promotion/Marketing	1
Total	110

GROUPED RESPONSES OF COASTAL, NON-COASTAL AND TOTAL RESIDENTS

		Coastal Residents		Non Coastal Residents		Total Residents	
01	Roads	27	24.5%	10	15.87%	37	21.39%
02	Council/Bureaucracy	20	18.2%	7	11.11%	27	15.61%
03	Lack of Basic Services/ Infrastructure/Facilities	18	16.4%	15	23.81%	33	19.08%
04	Lack of Planning/Funding	15	13.6%	5	7.94%	20	11.56%
05	Lack of Business District Industry (Light) District	11	10.0%	12	19.05%	23	13.29%
06	Business Charges	7	6.4%	5	7.94%	12	6.94%
07	Too Many Small Towns	7	6.4%	3	4.76%	10	5.78%
08	Distance Isolation	4	3.6%	5	7.94%	9	5.20%
09	Lack of Promotion/ Marketing	1	0.9%	1	1.59%	2	1.16%
Total		110	100.0%	63	100.00%	173	100.00%

The impediments are clearly identified as road access, lack of industry and lack of infrastructure. Dissatisfaction with the management of development in the Shire is identified as the second most significant impediment to economic development by coastal residents. Non-coastal residents rate lack of basic services and lack of infrastructure as the major concern for development, with the lack of either a business district or a light industry area as the second major impediment.

Other questions in the Survey relate to the Study on opportunities in the Shire, which have been analysed and form the basis of some of the recommendations in Part B of the Study.

6.0 INTERVIEWS WITH MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS FROM WITHIN CENTRAL QUEENSLAND: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

There is significant interest by developers in the Shire. All those interviewed recognise the immense potential for the Shire, especially the coastal areas. Several have made multi-million dollar investments in the Shire and are keen to spend more if the opportunity presents itself. All those contacted had many years' experience in the area and could be considered to be serious about the long-term development prospects of the area.

This interest is tempered by the concerns relating to disputes between the Shire Council and developers. A number of those contacted expressed extreme displeasure with individual Council staff members and with some elected members of the Council. They expressed the view that unreasonable restrictions were being placed on developers, especially in terms of head works charges and other incidental charges relating to meetings with Council staff and applications to Council. Certainly there were those who also expressed some dissatisfaction with other developers who if not 'reined in' would do irreparable environmental damage in their pursuit of financial self-interest.

7.0 INTERVIEWS WITH MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS FROM OUTSIDE CENTRAL QUEENSLAND: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Significant interest has been expressed in the Shire; however, again there were concerns expressed in relation to the Shire Council. The location of the Shire's key resources, especially the coastal area in the northern part of the Shire, close to the Gladstone development area, means that there is interest by developers to cater for the population growth in Gladstone. Also, almost all bus tours presently bypass the coastal areas of the Miriam Vale Shire because of the poor road access. If this road access was improved, then it would be practical for tours, which generally emanate from the south, to include the coastal areas of Agnes Water and the Town of Seventeen Seventy, rather than drive past this magnificent scenery on their way up and down the Bruce Highway.

8.0 INTERVIEWS WITH COUNCIL STAFF AND COUNCIL CONSULTANTS: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The general impression is that the staff are very committed employees, working very hard to satisfy the requirements of the ratepayers through implementation of Council policy, and enacting Council decisions as appropriate. There is the clear impression that the staff are reasonably new to the Shire and that there has been significant growth in the work of the Shire in line with the growth in population and growth in development activity. There was also clear indication that considerable effort had gone into the development of plans and guidelines to ensure the orderly development of the Shire. It would appear that staff had to grapple with the task of controlling the development taking place with limited guidelines and plans already in place.

These comments do not deny the fact that a number of developers and others have had, and still have, some serious concerns regarding their interaction with Council staff members, decisions taken by Council and plans being prepared for the Shire. It is not unusual for developers' perceptions of development regulations to differ from those of professional administrators, particularly when these professional administrators are concerned with the long-term interests of the Shire.

Because of the importance of town planning considerations, the Consultants interviewed the consultant town planners. The impression gained is that the planning consultants have a very good working relationship with the Council and staff and have put considerable effort into the plans developed and proposed for the Shire. The zoning and planning guidelines proposed are sensitive to the environment of the Shire and designed to present 'shanty town' and strip development, which would not only be difficult to service, but would also detract from the attractiveness of Miriam Vale Shire as a place in which to reside and to visit. The Consultants for this Study concur with the Consultant Shire Planner on the issue of preventing 'maverick' developments that are inimical to the long run interests of the Shire.

9.0 COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP REPORTS

Several public meetings had been held in the Shire just before and during the course of the Study. Copies of the minutes of those meetings were procured and the concerns of those attending detailed. This included the meeting held at Agnes Water on Tuesday, 12 May 1992.

There are several vociferous pressure groups in the Shire. Some have genuine concerns about the lack of job opportunities (which is not strictly the Shire's responsibility), while others represent special interest groups (mainly developers) who do not see eye to eye with the Council. The clash between private

profitability considerations of developers and public responsibility considerations as reflected in the Council's plans and development controls must be viewed in the context of the recent development surge in the Shire, which was largely speculative. As a consequence, it has not yielded the strengthening of the rate base to provide the levels of service promised by the developers when the big land sale push was on.

There was a strong indication that one particular developer who disputed Council headwork requirements was 'stirring the possum'.

Ultimately, it is Council's job to contain developments that are perceived to be detrimental to the economic interests of the residents and ratepayers of the Shire, and to encourage those that reflect social responsibility.

In the view of the Consultants, the provision of clear development guidelines and the dissemination of information on future development control plans will go a long way towards dissipating the dissension that has been voiced at these community action group public meetings.

**REPORT TO MIRIAM VALE SHIRE COUNCIL ON THE SHIRE'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STUDY**

**PART B: IDENTIFICATION OF VIABLE ECONOMIC FUTURE
AND POSSIBLE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**

Presented by the Consultants

KEN DOOLEY AND LIAM RYAN

**FACULTY OF BUSINESS
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL QUEENSLAND**

17 December 1992

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dependence on Major Projects

The future economic development of the Miriam Vale Shire cannot be based with any certainty on major projects such as the Hummock Hill Island development, the Baffle City development or the mineral sands mining at Agnes Water, and hence planning should not rely on any major project driving the economic development of the Shire.

In other words, it would be unwise to view such projects as definite 'engines of growth' due to present uncertainties associated with each project.

Economic Base

Rural industry, based mainly on cattle grazing, will continue to be the main industry in the Miriam Vale Shire for some years to come. This industry will experience some growth as farming methods become more efficient and more intensive. However, there is little chance of expansion of rural industries without increase in population, as the markets for rural products likely to be produced in the Miriam Vale Shire (apart from beef) are better serviced by areas with more suitable land and which are also closer to those markets.

The other major source of income to the Shire will continue to come from servicing the road and rail traffic through the Shire; that is, retail sales to travellers and maintenance of road and rail infrastructure.

Economic Growth

The findings of the Survey of Stakeholders in the Miriam Vale Shire suggest that the main opportunities for economic development will be provided by tourism and residential development.

Tourism should be based on the major assets of the Shire, which include:

- . lifestyle, which is laid back and uninhibited
- . climate, which is coastal sub-tropical with mild, dry winters
- . coastline, bordering the Pacific Ocean, with the southern-most links with the Great Barrier Reef, and the northern-most surfing beaches
- . estuaries, which provide good fishing and crabbing
- . national parks, which are varied, interesting and plentiful
- . offshore islands and reefs, which provide some of the most easily accessible coral diving, snorkelling and viewing on the Queensland coast
- . sparse population, leaving many opportunities for further development in a variety of ways - both rural and coastal.

Tourism development will be facilitated due to the fact that the Bruce Highway and the major north-south railway line pass through the Shire. Present tourism activities are minor by other area's standards; however, they demonstrate that the potential is real and realisable. So far, only a fraction of the potential has been tapped.

For tourism development to occur, major infrastructure developments are necessary, in particular:

- . road works to provide easier access
- . jetty facilities for access to the Great Barrier Reef islands
- . accommodation facilities
- . tourist infrastructure in national parks
- . promotion - in particular, signage.

There is potential for significant residential development in the Miriam Vale Shire because of its location and assets. Residential development will only occur as services in the Shire, especially roads and water supply, improve. This residential development will be based on three groups:

- . those working in the neighbouring Shires and wishing to live in the Miriam Vale Shire, especially those workers in the rapidly expanding Gladstone City and adjacent Calliope Shires
- . those with independent or alternative means of support wishing to reside in the area because of its attractiveness
- . those who are prepared to put up with difficult conditions in return for freedom and the chance to be self-sufficient.

Involvement of Miriam Vale Shire Council in Economic Development

The Miriam Vale Shire Council has assisted economic development as far as has been practicable to date; however, pressure for the Council to do more will grow rather than decline. It will be necessary for the Council to take a positive but firm line with developers to ensure that there is orderly development in the Shire. It must be made abundantly clear to prospective developers, residents and ratepayers alike that uncontrolled development, which some residents and developers espouse, is not in the long-term interests of the Shire, with ratepayers being saddled with debts for developments which in any case will not produce the desired economic benefits.

It is possible to take immediate steps to alleviate the serious unemployment which prevails in parts of the Shire; in particular, training and assistance should be provided to the long-term unemployed via available government programs.

Community Involvement in Economic Development

Members of this small but fast growing community should realise that fast growth in population without complementary growth in economic activity has placed and will continue to place a huge burden on its Council - both councillors and staff. Community members must assist their Council in every way possible, and must take responsibility for their own future as far as possible. Negative, divisive and destructive criticism, though apparently justified in the eyes of some, must be avoided at all costs, as all it will do is waste already scarce resources in useless argument and, in some cases, expensive and time-consuming litigation.

On the issue of community involvement, action groups formed to date should be directed by their leaders to channel their energies into producing change which will benefit all, and work with the Council to attract resources from private enterprise and from government sources to assist with the development of the Shire. Efforts must be made to distinguish between those from outside the Shire who have the overall good of the Shire and its residents and ratepayers at heart and those motivated by personal self interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are provided for the benefit of the Miriam Vale Shire Council to assist in planning a viable economic future for the Shire and availing of any industrial or business opportunities that may arise.

1. Tourism as the main provider of economic growth

Tourism should be established as the main provider of economic growth.

The main recommendation of this Study is that, given the assessment of the Shire's asset base, the only option in the short term to provide economic growth and to create employment in this Shire is to develop a diversified tourism base. The selection of this strategy is based on the abundance of natural assets in the Shire, including:

- . magnificent surf beaches
- . excellent ocean and coastline fishing
- . a variety of National Parks
- . the offshore islands and reefs of the southern Great Barrier Reef
- . the major arterial route, the Bruce Highway, which traverses the Shire
- . the major north-south railway line, which also traverses the Shire
- . proximity to the coastal centres of Gladstone and Bundaberg.

2. Initial focus on the Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy Area

Development should initially focus on the Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy Area.

The 'spearhead' of this development should be boating trips to Lady Musgrave Island and other islands and reefs. This will provide for the middle to upper end of the tourist market and will generate traffic into and out of the Shire, publicity and general interest in the Shire. Jetty access of some form must be provided for this to occur. The section on tourism industry opportunities in this Report provide further details on these proposals.

To support this key recommendation, the following infrastructure must be given priority:

- . provision of jetty facilities at Round Hill Head
- . improved road access from Bundaberg to Agnes Water, with the first stage a sealed all-weather road provided from Agnes Water to the southern end of the Shire

- . as a second stage, sealing of the road from Miriam Vale to Agnes Water should be completed, and brought up to all-weather standard to provide access for charter bus operators
- . an all-weather airstrip provided to service the Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy Area
- . provision of better water supplies through exploration of alternative means of providing water; for example, domestic tanks being made mandatory, drilling of bores, extension of trenches.

3. Secondary development based on lower end of tourism market

With the 'spearhead' developed, there must then be:

- . *provision of family style accommodation to cater for mainly Queensland tourists wanting holidays in the area*
- . *developments of the National Parks with packaging and promotion of the parks which surround the Shire.*

The strength of the Miriam Vale Shire is in its relatively undeveloped state, its location, only five hours' drive from the population of the major southeastern region, and its proximity to the rapidly growing area of Gladstone and, to some extent, the rest of Central Queensland. The declaration of the ten National Parks in the Shire provides an excellent basis for the promotion of eco-tourism in the Shire. This is virtually an untapped tourism resource at this stage.

National Parks Developments

The following developments are recommended for the National Parks:

- . link and integrate the scenic rim of the Shire through development of a 'network' of National Parks
- . develop overnight cabin and camping facilities and/or day facilities, using private enterprise where practicable
- . stress the use of Miriam Vale products and services by tourists; for example, use local guides and operators for horse riding, bush walking, four-wheel driving and so on
- . service artists, educational groups, community youth groups, backpackers, general four-wheel drive fraternity

- . liaise and negotiate with National Parks and Wildlife Services to ensure that their programs for development of the parks in the Miriam Vale Shire allow for the developments proposed above
- . provision of emergency services where needed
- . all developments must be self-sufficient and non-intrusive on the natural surrounds
- . link up with Gladstone population centres through access provided from Turkey Beach to Agnes Water - four-wheel drive at first followed by two-wheel drive access as usage grows

4. **Residential development should be maintained**

Improve the potential for residential developments in all parts of the Shire by maintaining the quality of existing and future developments.

This will involve:

- (a) pressuring owners to abide by the by-laws
 - . ensuring that all land already developed is kept free of noxious weeds and is maintained so that the value of neighbouring land is not decreased
 - . pressuring speculative owners to utilise their land
 - . pressuring developers (including the State Government) to act on existing approvals, with a clear policy of enforcing time limits on approvals
- (b) continuing to accept and assist lower cost development
 - . to encourage and assist the development of land which is accessible to middle and lower income earners, allowing for those wishing to come to the area for possible employment opportunities as they arise
- (c) proactively encouraging developments in various parts of the Shire
 - . allow and, if possible, encourage small acreage developments in the northern-most part of the Shire to attract Gladstone residents wishing to avail themselves of cheaper and cleaner country style living

- . investigate the establishment of a light industry estate to attract spill-over developments from industrial developments in Gladstone and Calliope Shires
- . encourage controlled development of hobby farming in the lower end of the Shire and coastal regions
- . assist with small cropping where practicable, especially through allowing local markets
- . ensure that all abide by the by-laws in relation to pest and erosion control
- . should mineral sand development proceed, push for Awoonga Dam link up.

5. **Marketing/promotional efforts needed**

The Miriam Vale Shire community, organised and supported by the Council, must make greater efforts to promote the Shire.

This will involve the following specific activities:

. **New Name**

Adopt the Coral Isle Coast concept for the Miriam Vale Shire coastline from Rules Beach to Hummock Hill island

. **Major Event**

Further establish the historic connection of Captain Cook with an annual Captain Cook festival involving historical displays, a country music festival and diving and fishing competitions. This could be held on the anniversary of Cook's visit, if appropriate. At this festival, promote sales of local land, local produce, locally produced arts and crafts.

. **Signage**

Provide signs which will attract the motorists travelling along the Bruce Highway to 'save \$\$\$\$ by stopping on the way to northern points'. Signs must extend along the Bruce Highway from the north to the south.

Direct Promotion

Use key promotional vehicles such as automobile associations' magazines, and perhaps in-flight magazines

Information Centre

Voluntary and cooperative groups should be organised to look after information centres at strategic points in the Shire.

Use of Existing Development Boards

Evaluate final contributions to the Gladstone and Bundaberg promotional bodies, and elicit as much support as possible from these bodies with above proposals. Work towards setting up an independent Shire promotional body using contributions from the community and any government funding which may be available.

6. General development of the Shire

Use community groups as far as possible to assist with the development of the Shire - encourage ratepayers and residents to take responsibility for planning their own futures.

Responsibility for the orderly development of the Shire should be shared between the Council and the ratepayers and residents. An Economic Development Officer should be appointed when practicable. The role of this officer would be to work with and through the community groups.

A more proactive approach should be adopted to attract entrepreneurial activity into the Shire. This could be through lower charges to those genuinely wishing to set up small business operations in the Shire, and could also be by encouraging land developments in appropriate parts of the Shire which have been identified as desirable areas for development to occur.

Development Control Plans should be made public so that objections can be made and heard by an appropriate committee of councillors and members of the public where desirable.

As we now live in a generation experiencing 10% + unemployment, it is imperative that the Council accept that some members of the community are forced to accept unemployment as a way of life. The Miriam Vale Shire has been selected as a haven for many 'refugees' from the workplace. This trend should be accepted and, at the same time, turned to advantage. In this vein, the Council must continue to provide sporting facilities and community services, and continue to

canvas the involvement of these people in voluntary schemes which can make the Shire more prosperous and a better place in which to live. Use of Skillshare and Office of Labour Market Adjustment funds are strongly recommended. At the same time it is important to pressure all residents to place themselves on the electoral rolls and take a responsible role in the community activities of the Shire.

Constructive reporting of the Shire's achievements, plans, problems and difficulties should be provided. The Shire has, undeservedly, been given bad press coverage.

Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development (DBIRD) funds should be accessed to provide a strategic development plan for the Shire and, if available, promotional funds to enact this plan.

1.0 ANALYSIS OF KEY OPPORTUNITIES BY INDUSTRY

1.1 AGRICULTURE

The agriculture base of the Miriam Vale Shire is predominantly cattle grazing. Although there are a mixture of other agricultural activities, these are generally only on a small scale, and, in the case of dairy cattle and pigs, the activity is declining. The potential for an increase in agricultural activity in the Miriam Vale Shire could come from an increase in vegetable and fruit growing; however, the distance of the Shire from markets puts the growers at a disadvantage compared with growers closer to Bundaberg. Growers in the Miriam Vale Shire are at a distinct disadvantage also with poorer quality soil and no irrigation scheme such as that from the Fred Haigh dam.

Macadamia nuts have been grown in the Shire for 25 years; however, production has declined and there have been no new plantations for a number of years. Turf farming has been fairly successful; however, again, distance from markets will work against the expansion of this activity.

1.2 TOURISM

Tourism provides the greatest opportunity for the future economic development of the Shire. The Shire has great tourism assets and is located only five hours' drive from Brisbane and the large population areas around Brisbane. In addition, the Central Queensland Region to the north, although not heavily populated, is experiencing growth and will provide a market for the Shire. The current tourism industry is very small, with five motels, four hotels (with very simple accommodation facilities) and eight caravan or cabin parks. There are a few rental units at Turkey Beach and Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy. Clearly there is a need for much more accommodation if a real industry is to emerge; nonetheless, the potential is enormous.

There are no tourist activity parks, only a few cafe/restaurants and a limited number of tourist areas with amenities. The Shire relies almost entirely on natural features to attract tourists.

The key tourist attraction is provided by the offshore islands and coral reefs, especially Lady Musgrave Island. The current operation of a regular service to this island needs a proper jetty facility in order for expansion to occur. Everything else is in place, with approvals to use the island already granted by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and, with connections already being made to the Gold Coast, bringing overseas tourists to the area. If this can be expanded, then the flow-on effect could be tremendous. It will put the Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy area on the map, and will impact on the rest of the Shire as well, simply

because tourists must drive through the rest of the Shire to reach the island access point. Developers are prepared to invest heavily in this venture, supplying larger boats and more accommodation as required. Hence it is seen as an opportunity which the Shire should grasp. Problems associated with the application to establish a jetty facility must be worked through, and either agreed or an alternative supplied. This venture is seen as the 'spearhead' for tourist development in the Shire. It will have flow-on effects to all the Shire.

Following the establishment of a regular boat service to Lady Musgrave Island, the next most promising assets are the National Parks. These need considerable development and, likewise, promotion. The Council needs to establish a good working relationship with the officers of the Department of Environment and Heritage responsible for the plans for development of these parks. The current Curtis Coast Study should be expanded to include the Miriam Vale Shire coast, and a suggestion along these lines was made to the principals of that Study. Community involvement should be sought and Council should not take it upon itself to do all the liaison work. Residents in the vicinity of each park could form a committee or working group to determine what is best for that park.

Access is the first issue; it would seem advantageous to have access to Mt Colosseum Park from the Bruce Highway. Currently it is accessed from the 'back' road behind Miriam Vale.

Signs in the Shire are notable because of their absence! The coastal area is signposted only by the Main Roads signs, so traffic on the Bruce Highway is not enticed to divert from the journey north or south. In addition, even in areas with particular attractions, such as Rules Beach, there is little encouragement to take the trouble to travel to these scenic points. Considerable work needs to go into signposting the roads and attractions throughout the Shire. This includes signs indicating the start and end of the Shire itself on the key roads.

1.3 MINING

The two main mining prospects are sand mining and shale oil mining. Sand mining could occur in the medium term; however, it depends on a number of factors:

- . world prices rising
- . other sand mining in the Shoalwater Bay area proceeding and processing facilities being shared
- . water supply being provided from Awoonga dam
- . road access being provided from Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy to Turkey Beach
- . environmental studies being accepted.

Should sand mining proceed, it will have a dramatic effect on the Shire, including:

- . accelerated development of the Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy area because of the availability of the water supply, and better road access to the north
- . increased tourist traffic, as the road will provide 'through access' for south to north tourists
- . make practical the residential development proposed for Hummock Island, which cannot proceed because the water supply is too expensive. At this stage, it would be unwise to bank on this project going ahead in the near future. If it does, it will be a bonus.

1.4 SERVICE

Servicing the residents, travellers and visitors to the Shire is a significant part of the economic activity of the Shire. As the traffic on the Bruce Highway is inevitably going to increase, the servicing of that traffic will also grow. However, significant increase in service activity will only come from increased population and/or increased tourism.

1.5 CONSTRUCTION

As the population grows, and as tourist activity grows, the construction industry will also grow. This is seen as one industry which will soak up a considerable amount of unemployment as it expands.

1.6 MANUFACTURING

Little potential for manufacturing exists, except for light engineering which could be established to cater for the spillover development planned to occur in the Gladstone area.

2.0 SURVEY OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 SURVEY DESIGN

2.1.1 Questionnaire

To ensure a high response rate, the questionnaire consisted of five simple, open ended questions. Questionnaires were administered by experienced interviewers. Space for additional comments was provided. A response rate of approximately 90% was achieved.

2.1.2 Sample

For sampling purposes, the Shire was divided into three areas:

- (a) North East Turkey Beach area, abutting Calliope and Gladstone Shires
- (b) Eastern Coastal Developed Strip, including Agnes Water, Town of Seventeen Seventy and Baffle Creek
- (c) Western area of Shire, including Miriam Vale, Bororen and Bruce Highway strip.

To ensure representative coverage, a clustered random sampling technique was used. In effect, a virtual census of all key stakeholders took place because of the small numbers involved.

Lists of stakeholders were identified by the Shire staff, and selected from the ratepayers' database.

2.1.3 Analysis

Answers were coded and the analysis was conducted by an experienced computer analyst. Tabulated results were verified. Answers were grouped into a maximum of nine common responses.

2.2 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

For the purposes of this report, the findings of the coastal areas have been amalgamated. This Report contains analysis by local area and by industry.

2.2.1 Industry Opportunities

What industries do you see provide the greatest opportunities for economic development of the Miriam Vale Shire?

List at least three (3) industries.

Responses:

GROUPED RESPONSES OF COASTAL, NON-COASTAL AND TOTAL RESIDENTS

INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

	Coastal Resident		Non Coastal Residents		Total Residents	
01 Tourism Industry	31	30.4%	18	26.09%	49	28.65%
02 Rural Industry	18	17.6%	17	24.64%	35	20.47%
03 Sand Mining	16	15.7%	8	11.59%	24	14.04%
04 Light Industry	17	16.7%	6	8.70%	23	13.45%
05 Port/Marina/Fishing	9	8.8%	4	5.80%	13	7.60%
06 Timber	2	2.1%	9	13.04%	11	6.43%
07 Building	5	4.9%	3	4.35%	8	4.68%
08 Shopping Facilities	1	1.0%	3	4.35%	4	2.34%
09 Non-Response	3	2.9%	1	1.45%	4	2.34%
Total	102	100.00%	69	100.00%	171	100.00%

Detailed and in-depth responses were provided by respondents. In summary, the major industry opportunities of the area identified by the respondents are tourism, rural (mostly cattle), sand mining and light industry. Timber, building, shopping facilities and fishing are considered almost insignificant. As reported in Project 1, tourism is identified as having the greatest potential, based on the unspoilt environment and National Parks, the historic connections, closeness to the most southerly section of the Great Barrier Reef, extensive good beaches and rock and estuary fishing. As could be expected, coastal residents rated the tourism potential relatively higher than non-coastal residents, while the reverse held for sand mining and light industry.

2.2.2 Changes/Improvements

What changes/improvements to the Shire and/or its resources are needed to ensure that the Miriam Vale Shire develops so as to reach its greatest potential?

Responses:**GROUPED RESPONSES OF COASTAL, NON-COASTAL AND TOTAL RESIDENTS: DESIRED CHANGES/IMPROVEMENTS**

	Coastal Residents		Non Coastal Residents		Total Residents	
01 Road Development	22	25.9%	15	21.43%	37	23.72%
02 Assistance from Council	22	25.9%	7	10.00%	29	18.59%
03 Industry Development/ Sand Mining	14	16.5%	10	4.29%	24	15.38%
04 Upgrade Basic Services	8	9.4%	12	17.14%	20	12.82%
05 Development/Marketing	5	5.9%	7	10.00%	12	7.69%
06 Tourism	4	4.7%	7	10.00%	11	7.05%
07 Business District	4	3.5%	6	8.57%	10	6.41%
08 Beautification	2	2.4%	5	7.14%	7	4.49%
09 Non-Response	5	5.9%	1	1.43%	6	3.85%
Totals	86	100.00%	70	100.00%	156	100.00%

The changes and improvements suggested by the respondents placed road development as the most needed, with assistance from the Council, industry development and the upgrading of basic services following in that order. Clearly, the unsealed roads between Bundaberg and Agnes Water and between Miriam Vale and Agnes Water are a major obstacle to expansion of tourism and residential developments in the affected parts of the Shire. This was confirmed by answers to this question. Expectation that the Council is important in the process of economic development is clearly demonstrated also, with 18.6% of respondents selecting this as a necessary key change or improvement.

2.2.3 Business Opportunities

What business opportunities do you see in the Miriam Vale Shire?

The list of opportunities selected, together with the number selecting these from the coastal areas, are as follows:

COASTAL RESIDENTS SELECTED BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Tourism	23
Shopping Facilities/Commercial	12
Cottage Industries	11
Quarrying/Mining	7
Building	5
Light Industry	5
Non-Response	5
Cattle/Rural Industry	4
Camping/National Parks	4
Retirement	3
Fishing Charters	2
Harbour	1
Timber	1
Total	83

These have been grouped by coastal and non-coastal respondents as follows:

GROUPED RESPONSES OF COASTAL, NON-COASTAL AND TOTAL RESIDENTS: BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

	Coastal Residents		Non Coastal Residents		Total Residents	
01 Tourist/National Parks	27	29.4%	16	29.63%	43	31.39%
02 Other (Harbour, Retirement, Fishing)	6	8.2%	18	33.33%	24	17.52%
03 Shopping Facilities	12	16.5%	8	14.81%	20	14.60%
04 Building/Light Industry	10	14.1%	6	11.11%	16	11.68%
05 Cottage Industries	11	12.9%	2	3.70%	13	9.49%
06 Quarrying/Mining	7	8.2%	2	3.70%	9	6.57%
07 Cattle/Rural Industry	5	4.7%	2	3.70%	7	5.11%
08 Non-Response	5	5.9%	0	.00%	5	3.65%
Total	83	100.00%	54	100.00%	137	100.00%

Tourism opportunities are clearly given the top ranking; however, it was difficult to determine any further pattern in responses, except for shopping facilities, building and light industry and cottage industries. The 'other' category included many varied proposals, as might be expected. The lack of support for opportunities relating to the cattle and sand mining industries reflect the fact that the first involves only a small number of the Shire's residents, and the latter is either viewed as a non-event or, in some sense, nebulous or too far away. While the lack of any clear consensus except for tourism may be seen as negative, the variety of opportunities should be seen as encouraging.

See Appendix C for graphical summaries of the Survey's findings.

2.2.4 Other Development Aspects

Many very useful and positive comments were provided, with almost all respondents opting to make some suggestions. Although there are too many to list here, a sample of the comments has been attached in Appendix D.

3.0 COUNCIL WORKSHOP

3.1 OBJECTIVES OF WORKSHOP

Objectives of the Council Workshop were to:

- . report on the research project to date
- . provide Council members, key staff and consultants with a Profile of the Miriam Vale Shire as established by the first Project
- . provide a broad overview of the economic base of the Shire
- . present a profile of overall CQ economic developments
- . present key statistical information, including analysis of the ratepayers' database
- . reach agreement on current economic status of Shire resources, special conditions
- . discuss the role of the Shire Council in the economic development of the Shire
- . report on the Public Workshop held at Agnes Water

- . report on the Survey of Residents and Ratepayers to determine impediments, changes and improvements needed
- . discuss the role of local government in strategic economic development
- . discuss and analyse the Miriam Vale Shire Council's role in the Shire's strategic economic development
- . consider proposals for direct and indirect action to assist the economic development of the Miriam Vale Shire
- . consider proposals for direct and indirect action to promote the economic development of Miriam Vale Shire.

3.2 ORGANISATION AND ATTENDANCE

The Workshop was facilitated by the Consultants for the Study, Ken Dooley and Liam Ryan, and was attended by all councillors for the whole day, and by senior staff and the consultant town planner, engineer and legal adviser for the morning session. The Workshop took place on Monday, 30 November 1992.

3.3 KEY ISSUES ADDRESSED

Key issues addressed were as follows:

- . key areas of economic development
- . removing impediments to development
- . public relations/communication with residents, ratepayers and key stakeholders
- . specific community initiatives
- . the role that staff can play in assisting development
- . the role that councillors can play in assisting development
- . communications with staff, residents, ratepayers and key stakeholders

3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Amongst a number of recommendations, specific initiatives to alleviate unemployment were to be considered as soon as practicable. In particular, it was recommended that a community group be formed so that an application for a Skillshare facility in the Baffle Creek or Agnes Water/Town of Seventeen Seventy area could be made.

The attitude to economic development was to be determined at Council meetings along a proactive line. If possible, Council was to take the initiative in developments.

4.0 AGNES WATER-SEVENTEEN SEVENTY RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS WORKSHOP: SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

While not well attended, the Workshop was very successful in the view of the Consultants. Very useful and constructive input was obtained.

A summary of the economic development ideas arising out of this Workshop is presented below.

- . The relationship between Miriam Vale Shire Council and the community must improve. Better consultation by the Council and a supportive attitude towards free enterprise (small business) would overcome most of the current friction.
- . Access road improvement is necessary for the future economic development of the Shire.
- . Conservation of natural attractions - beaches and National Parks - will protect the Shire's attractive life style and help sustain its unique ecosystems.
- . Integrated planning and selective development was needed.
- . It was important to utilise existing human resources by developing local expertise and providing job opportunities.

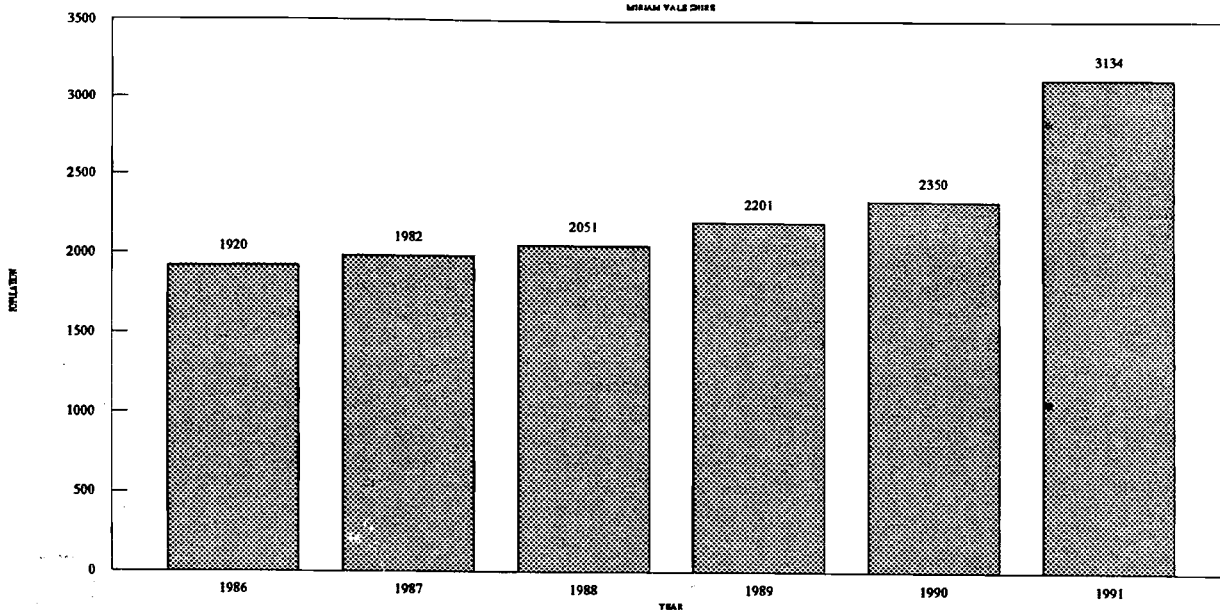
The three most important matters confronting the Shire were:

1. The need for small business development and job creation.
2. Implementing sound strategic planning covering social, economic and lifestyle issues.
3. A change in the Shire Council's attitude towards economic development.

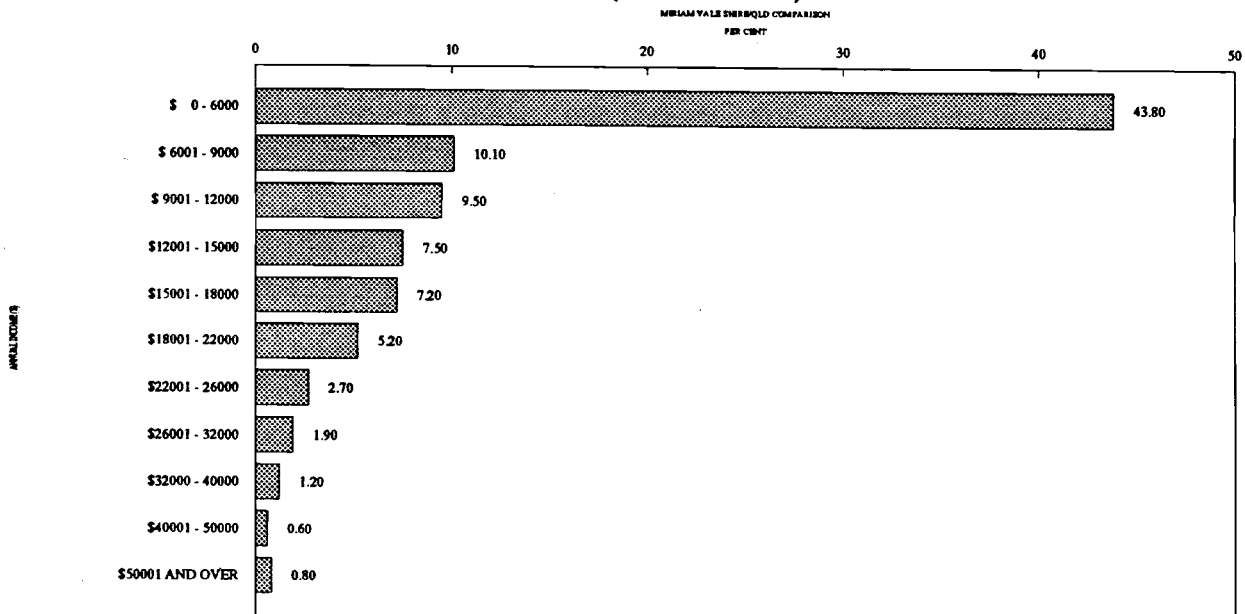
APPENDIX A

STATISTICAL PROFILE: MIRIAM VALE SHIRE

POPULATION CHANGE 1986-91



INDIVIDUAL INCOME (ANNUAL)



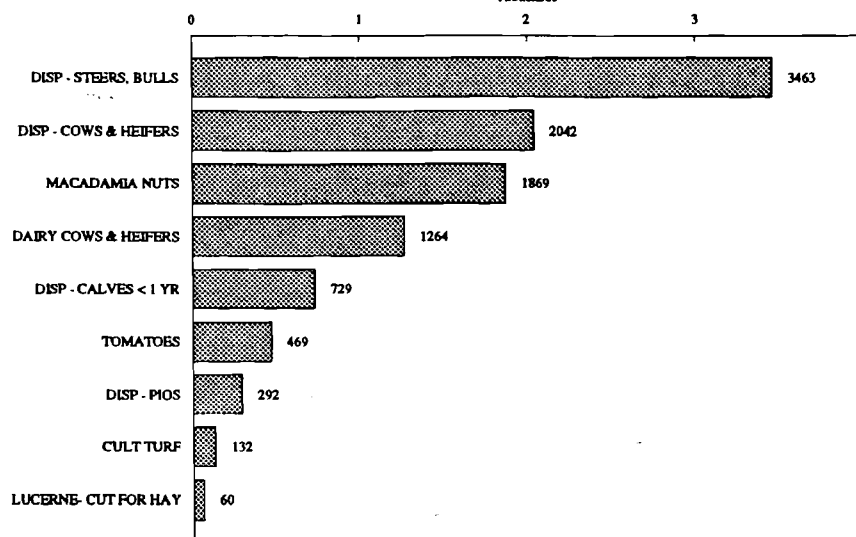
VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

MIRIAM VALE 1986-87

\$'000

Thousands

COMMODITY



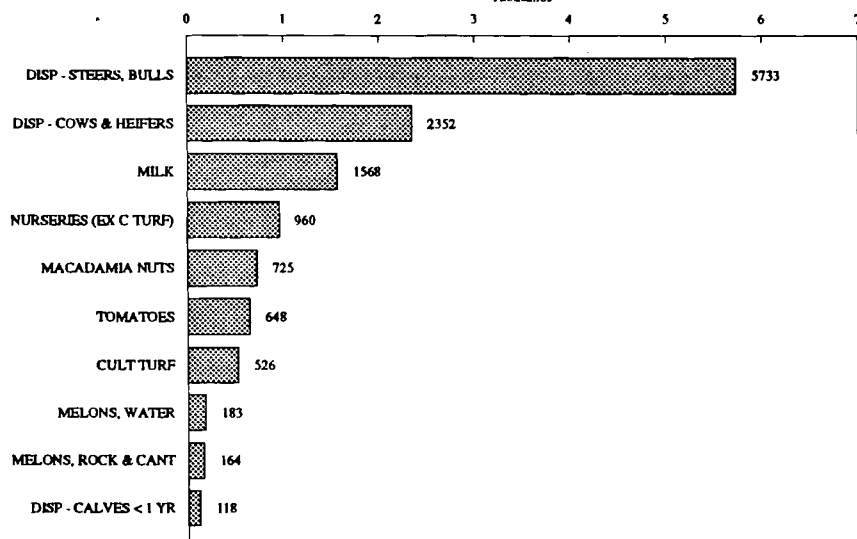
VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

MIRIAM VALE 1990-91

\$'000

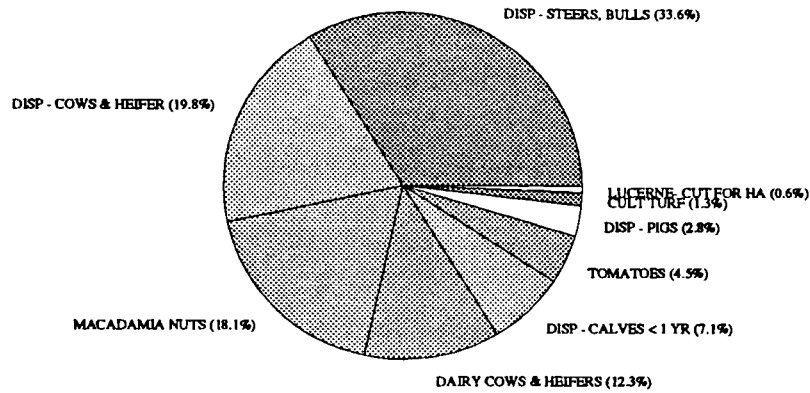
Thousands

COMMODITY



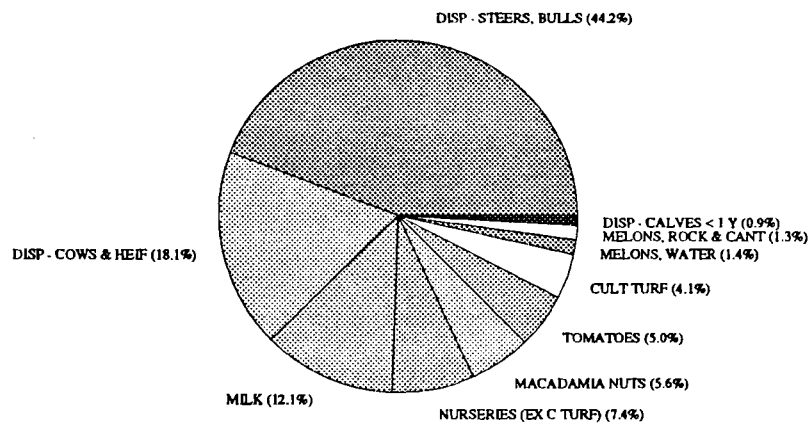
VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

MIRIAM VALE 1986-87



VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

MIRIAM VALE 1990-91



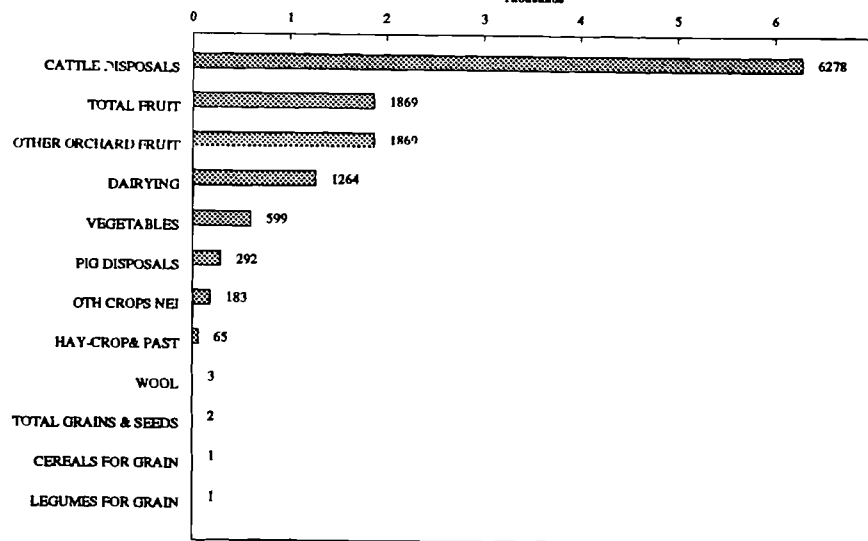
VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL MINOR GROUPS

MIRIAM VALE 1986-87

\$'000

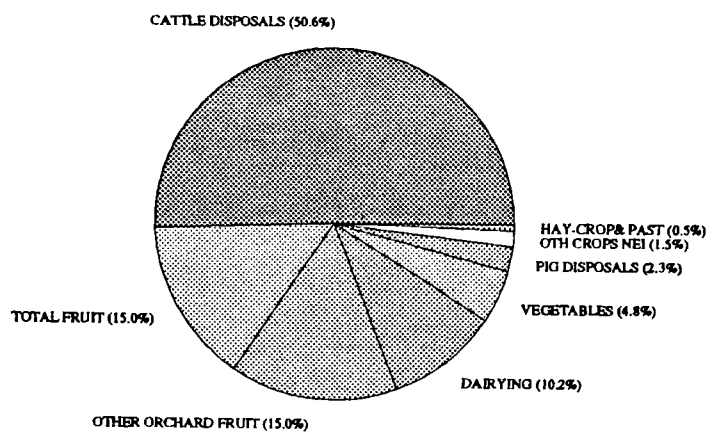
Thousands

MINOR GROUPS



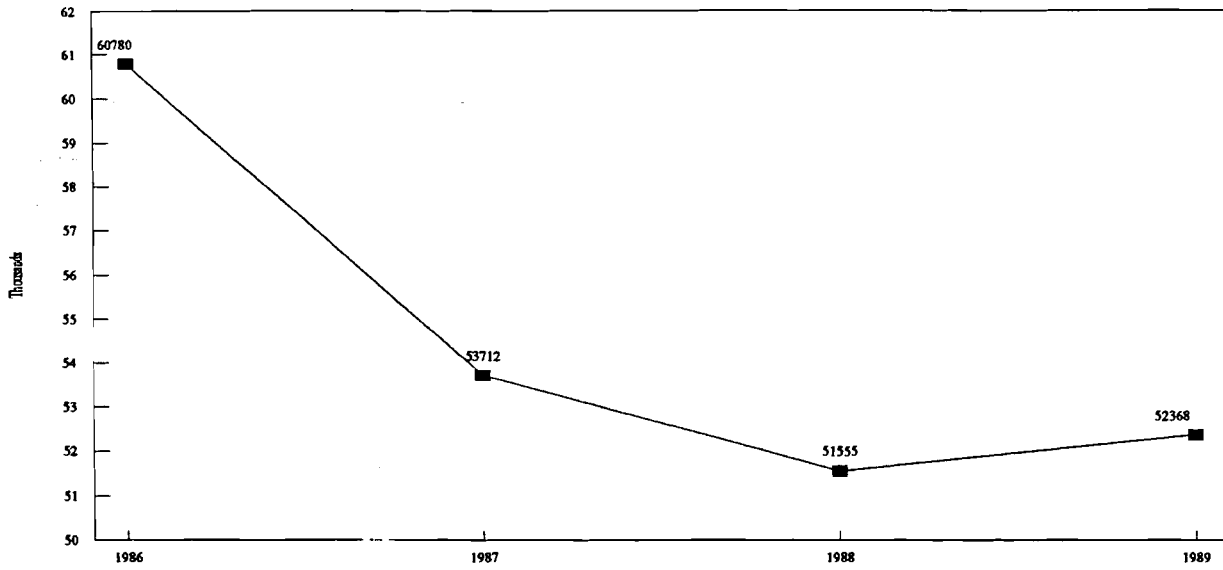
VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL MINOR GROUPS

MIRIAM VALE 1986-87



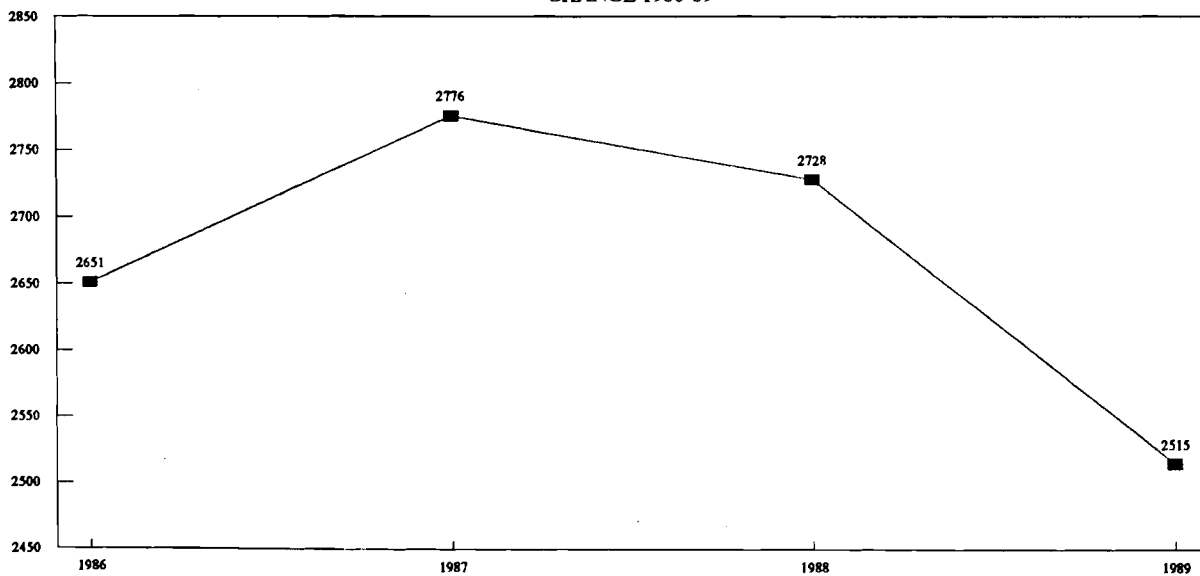
BEEF CATTLE

CHANGE 1986-89



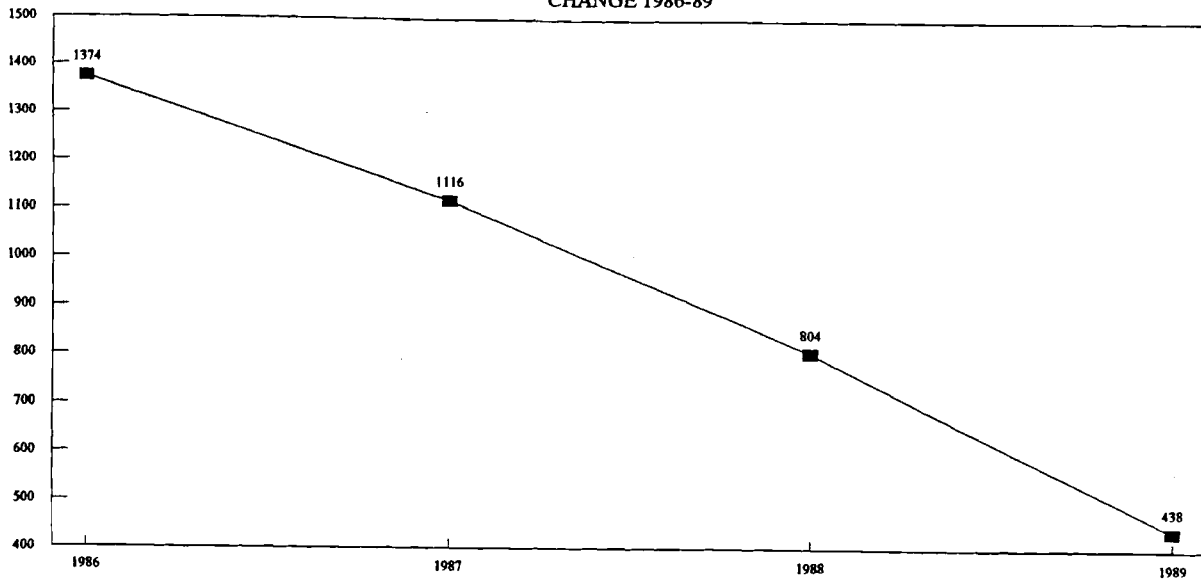
DAIRY CATTLE

CHANGE 1986-89



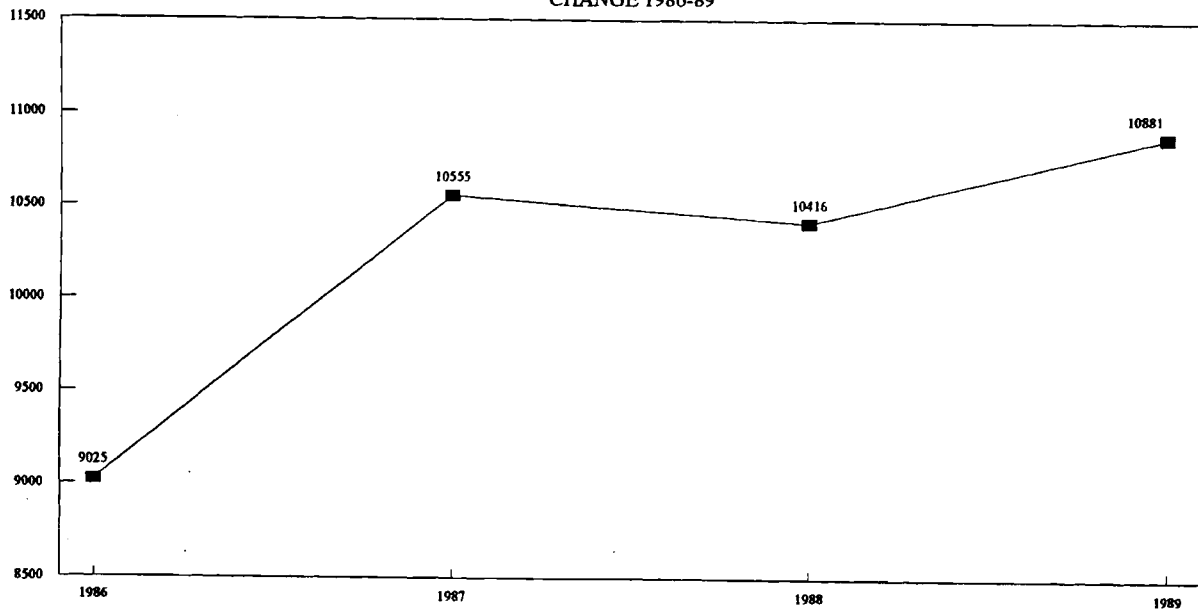
PIGS

CHANGE 1986-89



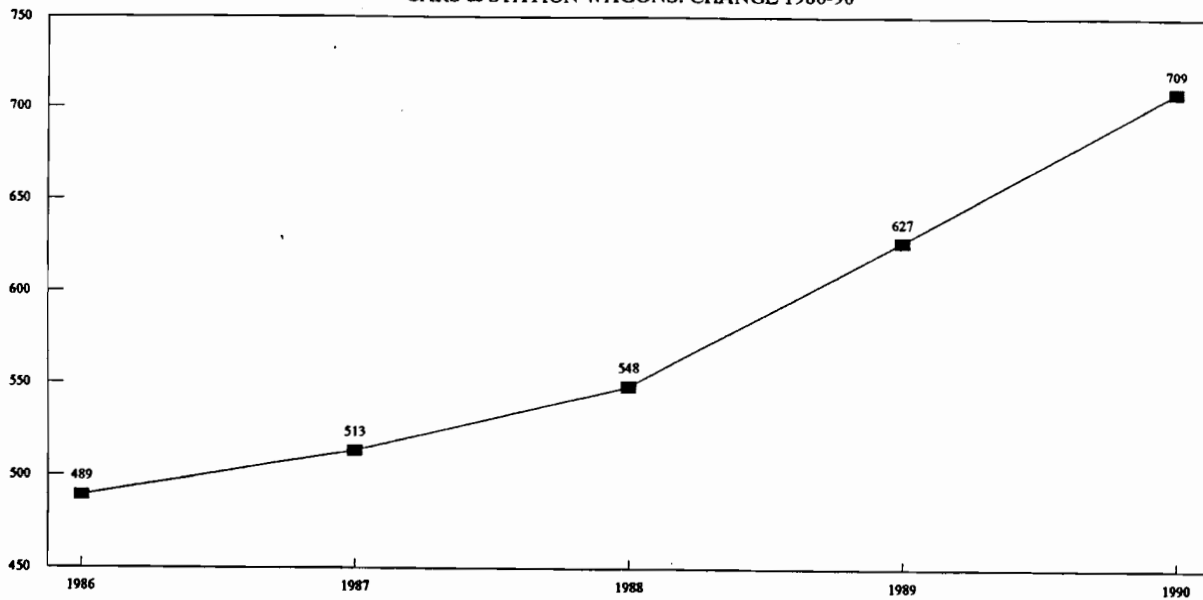
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION (\$)

CHANGE 1986-89



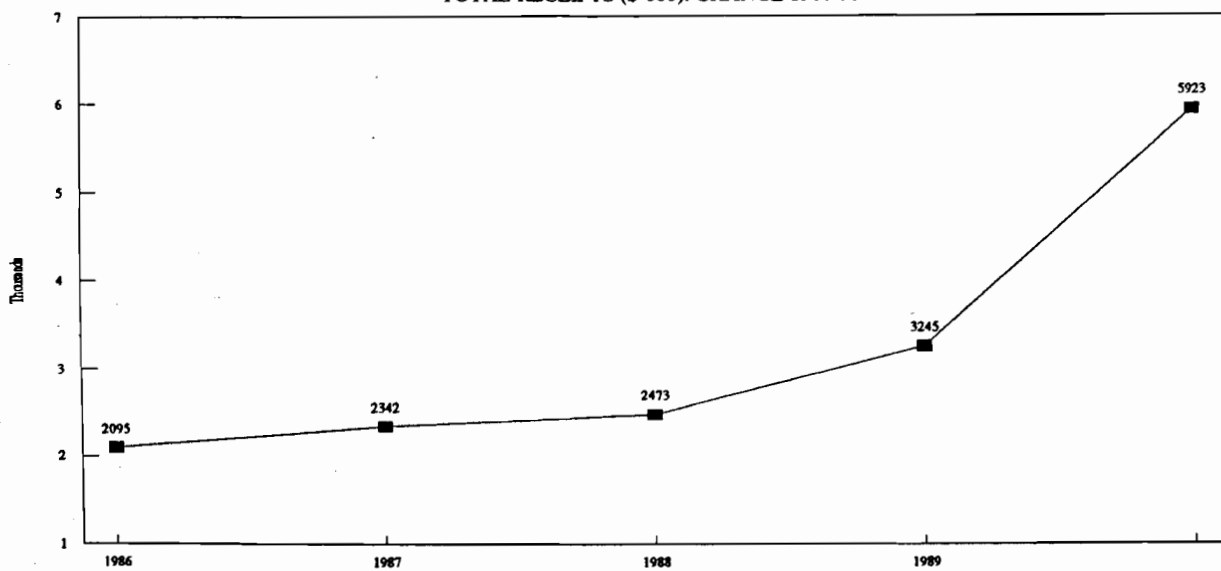
MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION

CARS & STATION WAGONS: CHANGE 1986-90



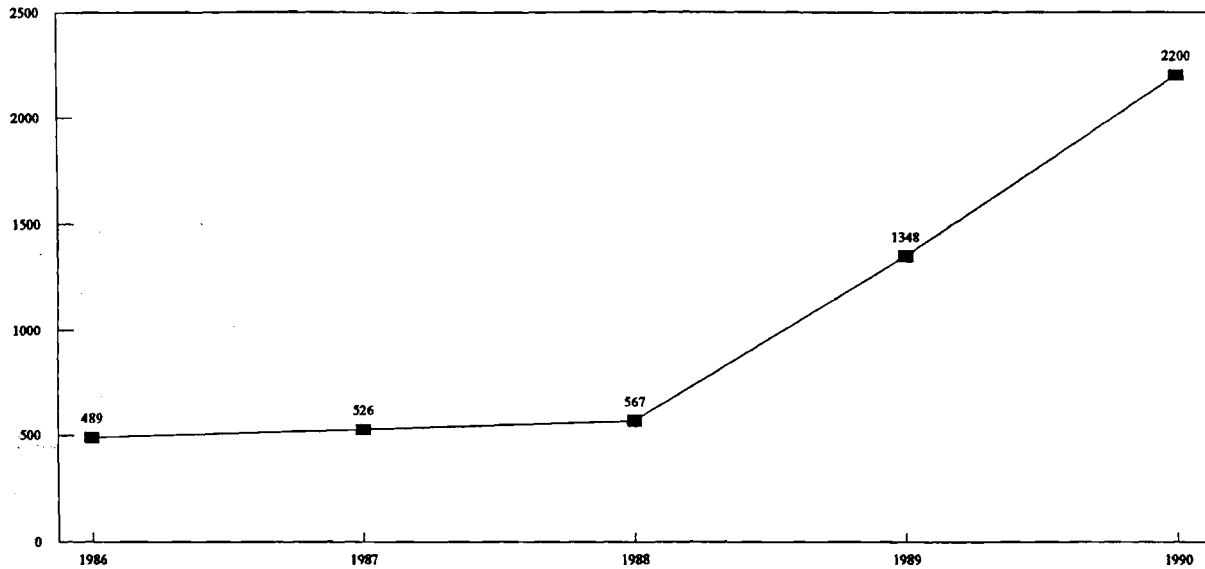
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

TOTAL RECEIPTS (\$'000): CHANGE 1986-90



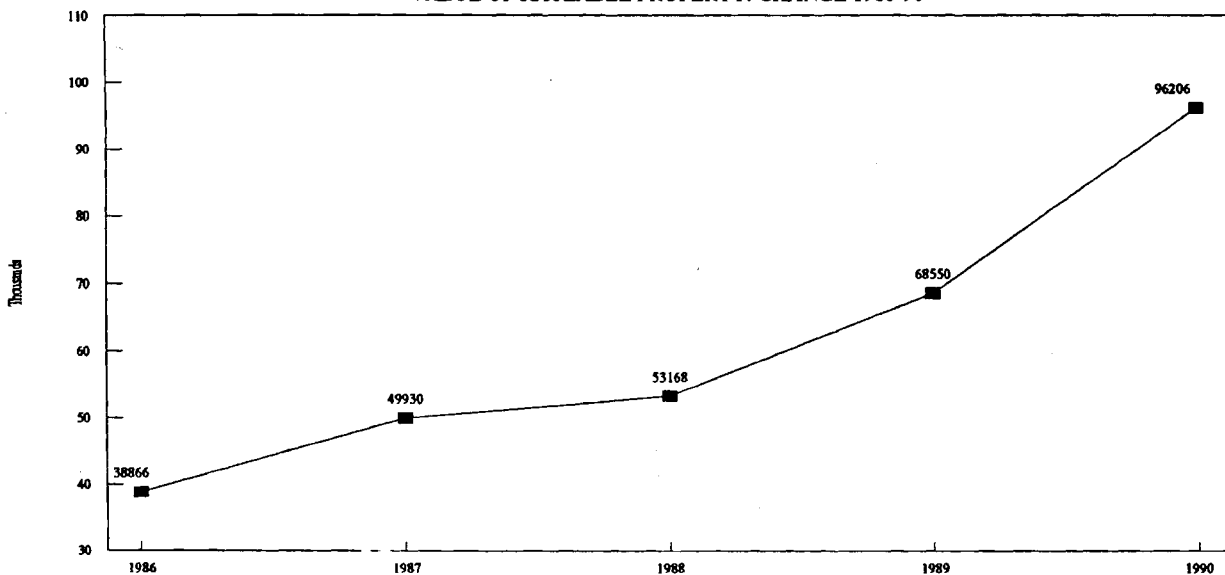
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PREMISES WITH SEPTIC: CHANGE 1986-90



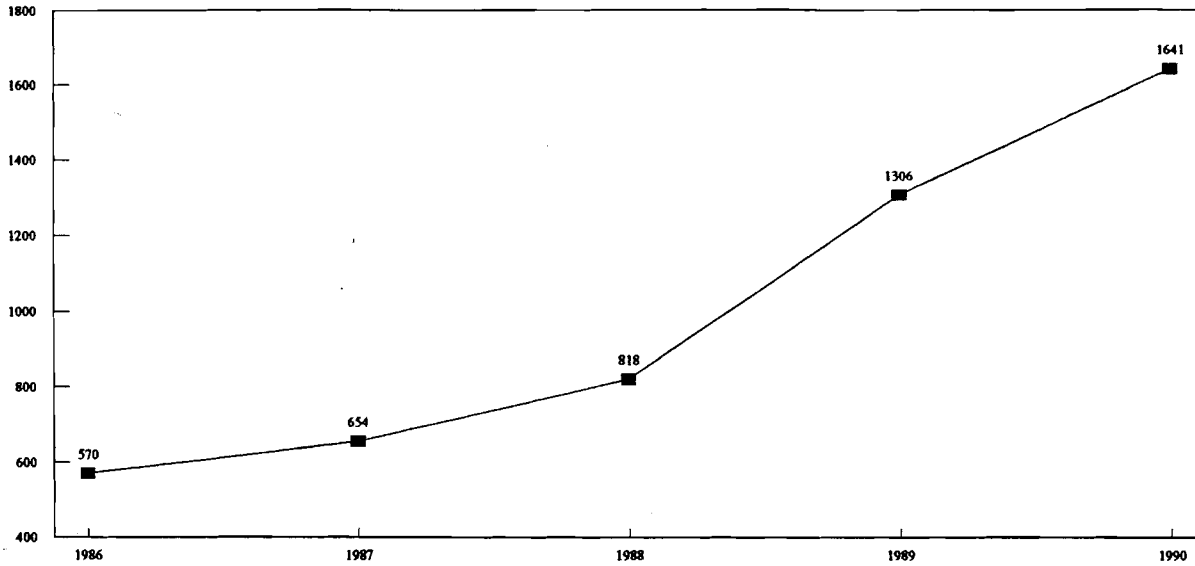
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

VALUE OF RATEABLE PROPERTY: CHANGE 1986-90



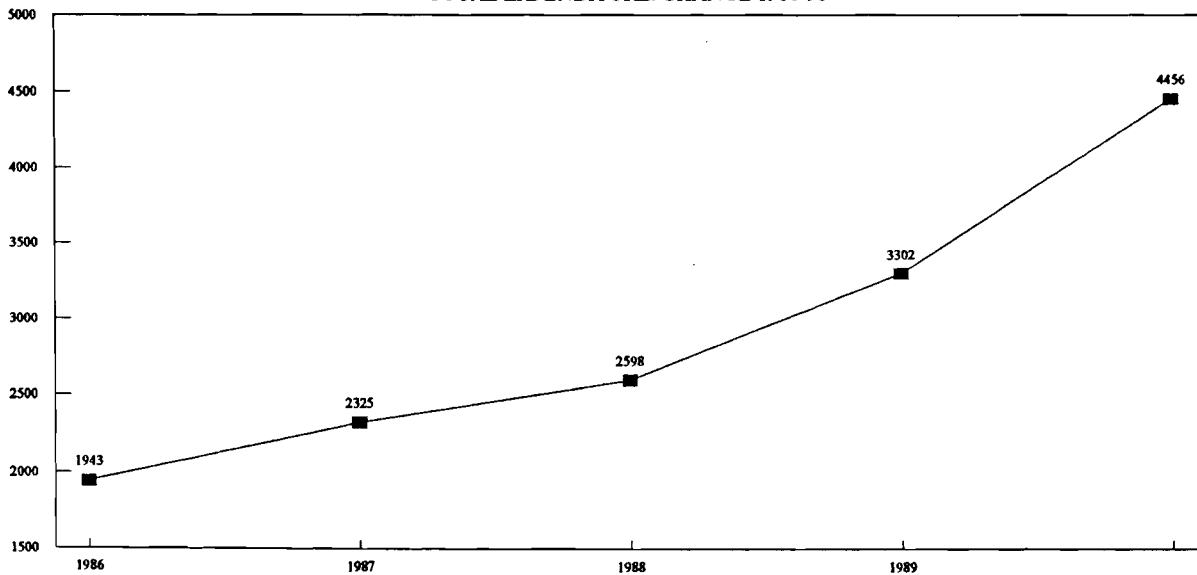
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

RATES AND CHARGES: CHANGE 1986-90



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

TOTAL EXPENDITURE: CHANGE 1986-90

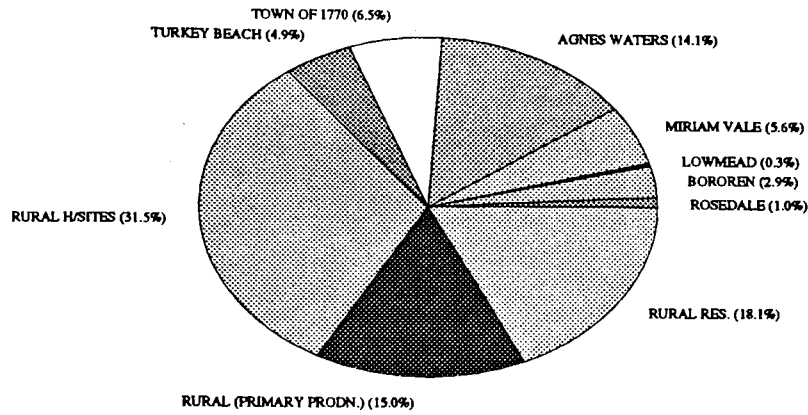


APPENDIX B

ANALYSIS OF MIRIAM VALE SHIRE RATEPAYER DATABASE

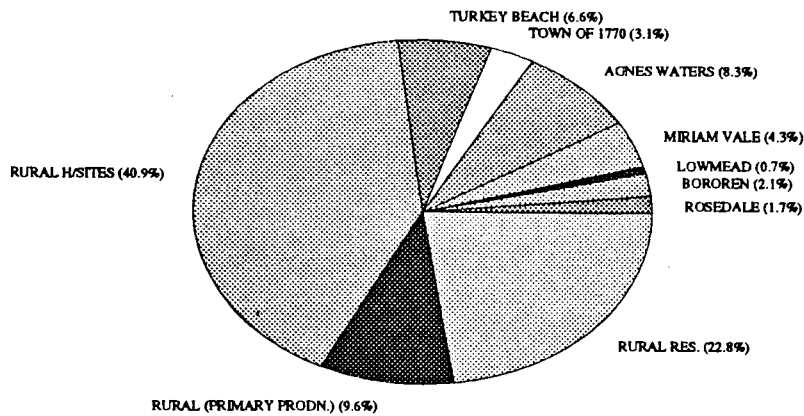
TOTAL RATES PAID BY CATEGORY

TOTAL RATES



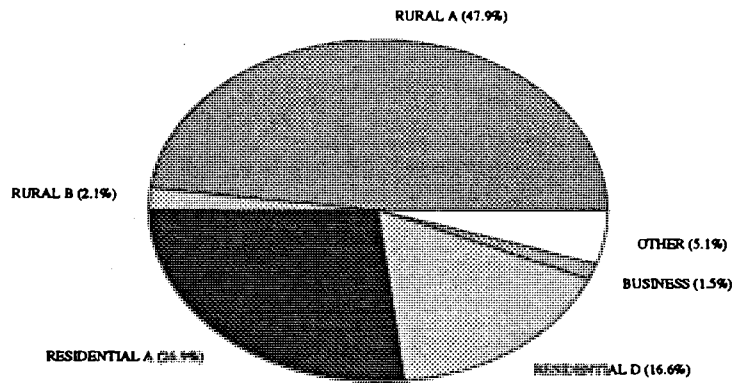
TOTAL RATES PAID BY CATEGORY

NO. OF RECORDS



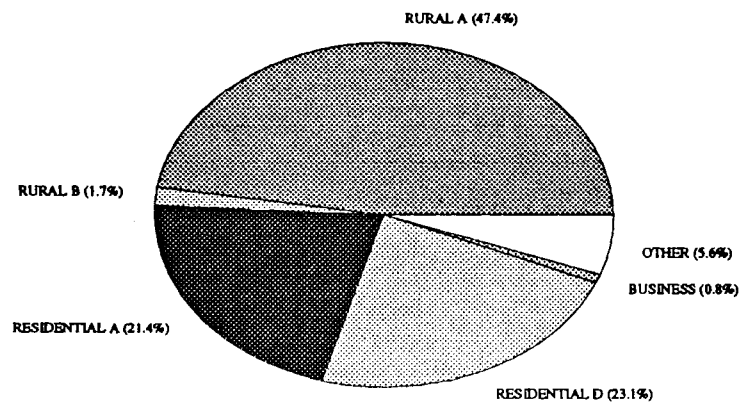
TOTAL RATES PAID BY ZONE

TOTAL RATES



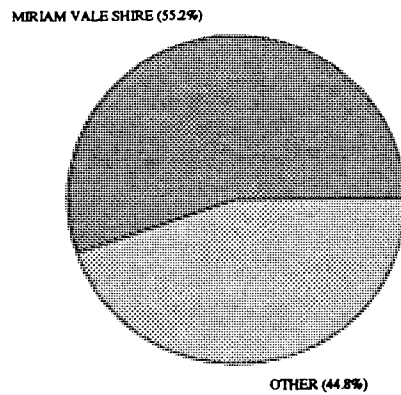
TOTAL RATES PAID BY ZONE

NO. OF RECORDS



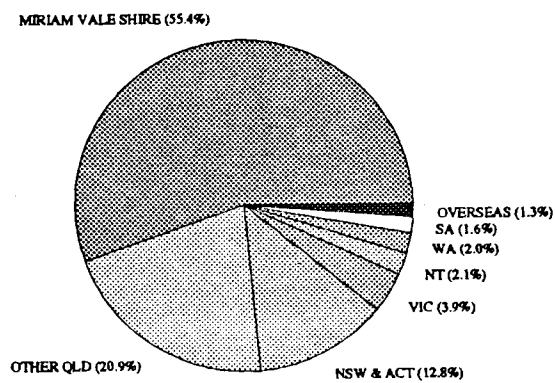
MIRIAM VALE SHIRE

SOURCE OF RATES PAID



MIRIAM VALE SHIRE

SOURCE OF RATES PAID

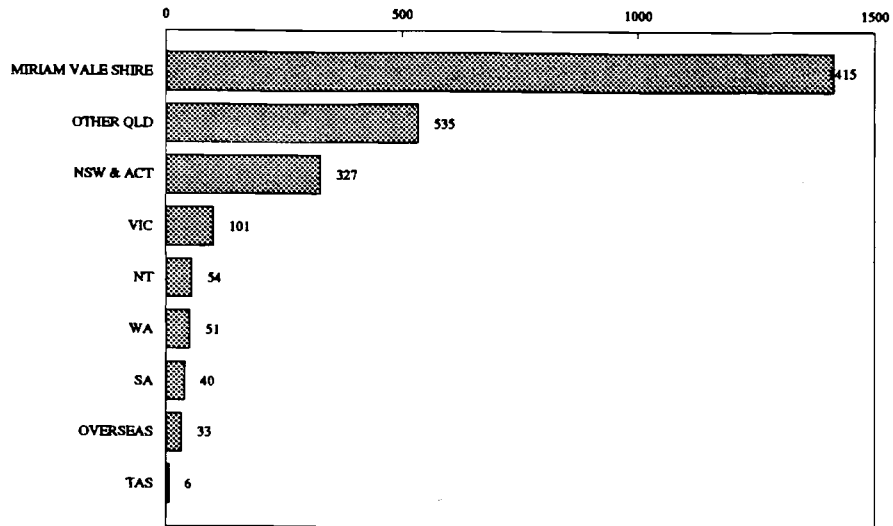


MIRIAM VALE SHIRE

SOURCE OF RATES PAID

\$'000

ADDRESS OF RATEPAYER

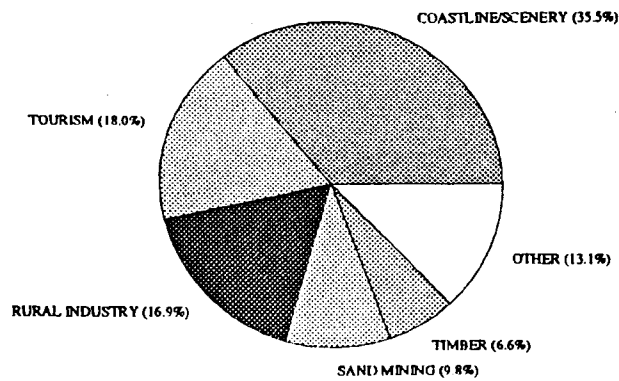


APPENDIX C

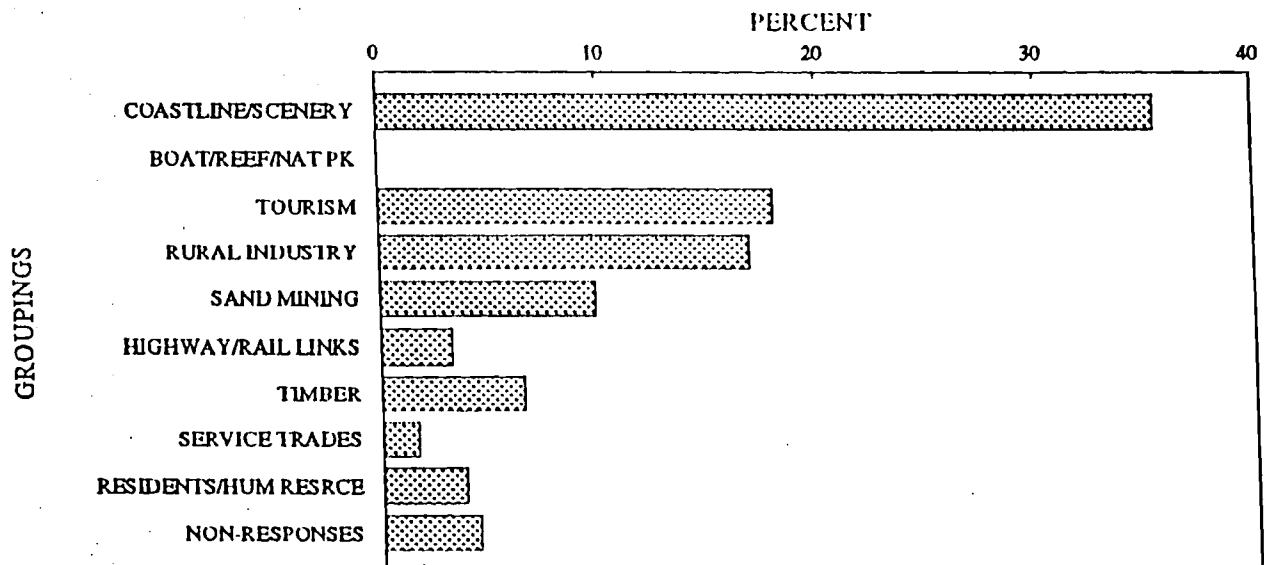
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS' SURVEY

MAIN RESOURCES

GROUPINGS

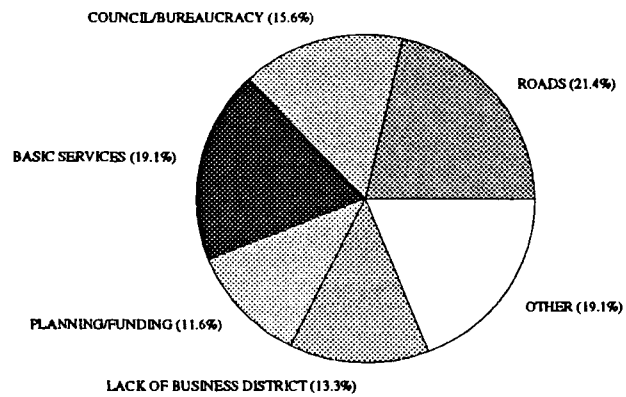


MAIN RESOURCES

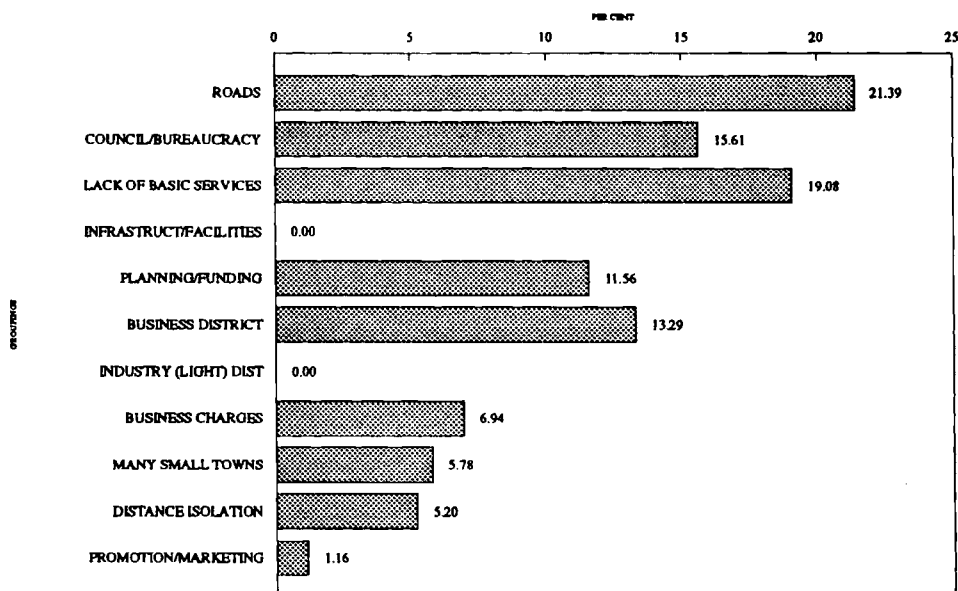


MAIN IMPEDIMENTS

GROUPINGS

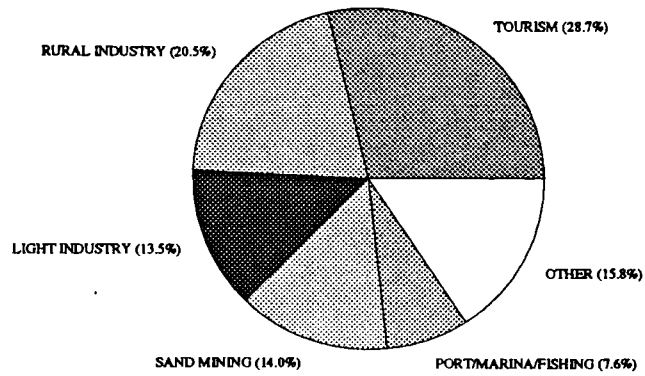


MAIN IMPEDIMENTS

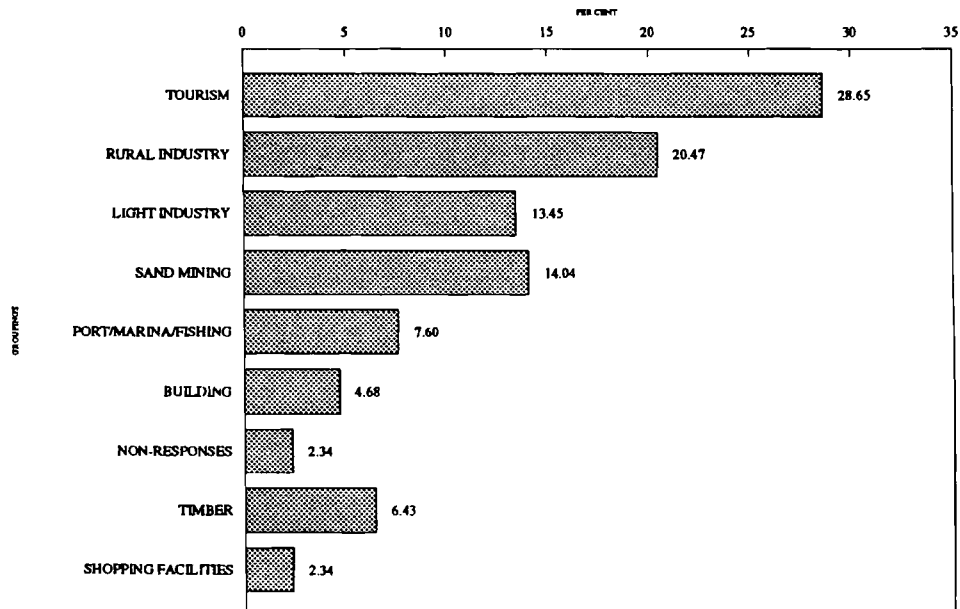


INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

GROUPINGS

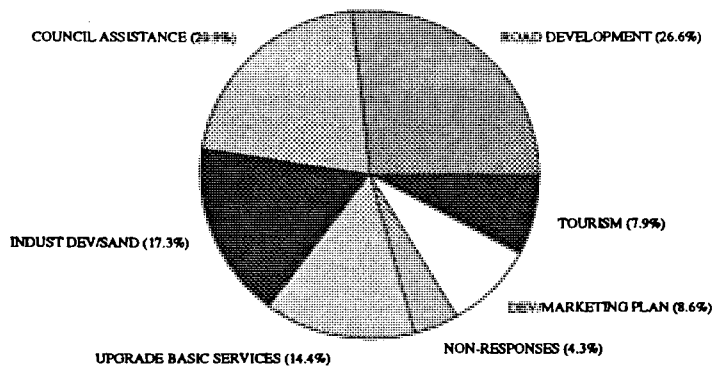


INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

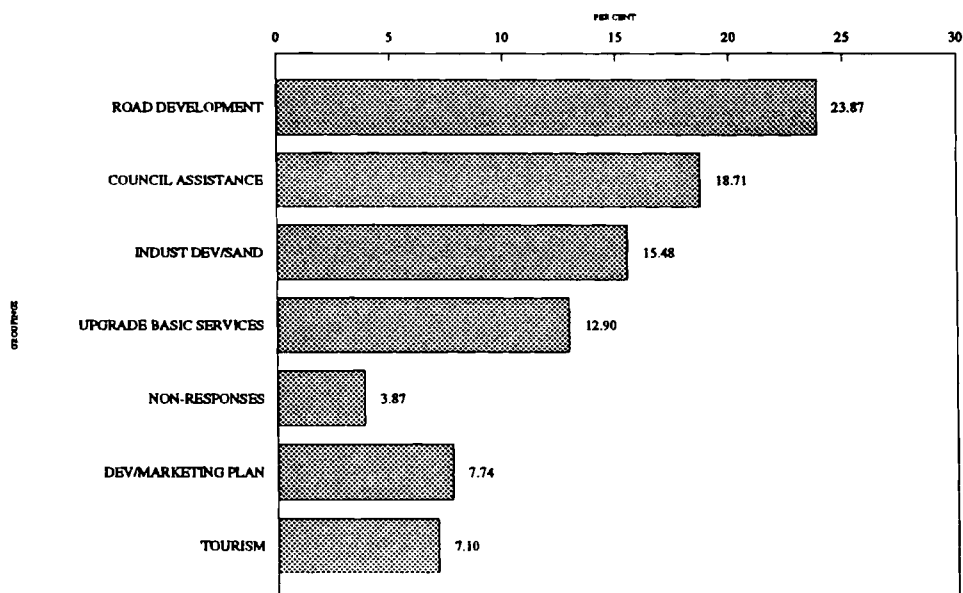


CHANGES/IMPROVEMENTS

GROUPINGS

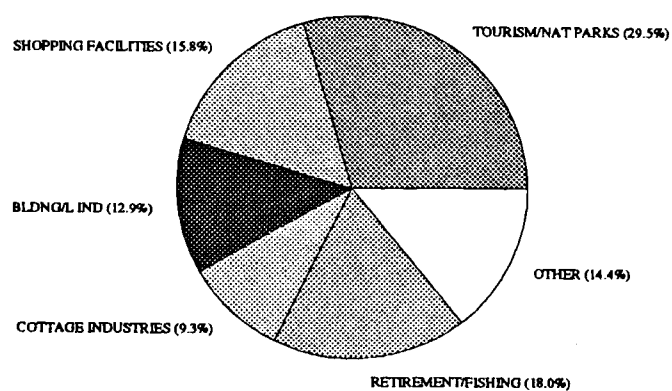


CHANGES/IMPROVEMENTS



BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

GROUPINGS



BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

