

CUMMINGS ECONOMICS

PO Box 2148 CAIRNS Q 4870

ABN 99 734 489 175

m: 0418871011

e: cummings@cummings.net.au

w: www.cummings.net.au



July 2026

CE Ref-J3573

A FORWARD STEP FOR THE TROPICAL FAR NORTH THE MITCHELL RIVER BRIDGE

The \$22 million new bridge over the lower Mitchell River at Dunbar represents a major forward step for the Tropical (Far North) Queensland region based on the regional city of Cairns.

The 450meter-wide river crossing has long represented a major barrier for linkages between the sub-regions of the Gulf country and Cape York Peninsula. The Mitchell River basin is Australia's second largest in water runoff, just behind the whole Murray Darling. The crossing was usually closed for many months during the wet season and even during the dry season and the causeway sand crossing represented a challenge for many vehicles and drivers.

Effectively, the new bridge is a major step forward in the development of a new transport and tourism route dubbed the Dixie Way after the name of an historic station. The northern end of the Dixie Way links up the west side of Cape York from Normanton to link into the Peninsula Development Road near Artemis Station north of Laura.

This route provides a link from the Peninsula for cattle to come down to the Central West 'Downs' country.

Importantly, for tourism development, it provides a route for road-borne visitors from the south to come up through the 'Waltzing Matilda' country of the central west and proceed through to Cape York and be able to return south via the Tablelands and coastal routes (or vice versa).

The Dixie Way also provides a route for tourists wishing to experience across the whole of northern Australia - up the west coast to the Kimberleys, Top End and the Gulf coming then up to 'The Tip' before returning down the east coast.

The new bridge is scheduled to open later this year. Funding for the Project came from the Disaster Recovery Betterment Fund.

Carpentaria Shire has been pursuing the upgrading of the Dixie Way and Cummings Economics has been pleased to assist. (See following cover page of report "Upgrading the Dixie Way".)

WS (Bill) Cummings

BEcon (UQ), HonDEcon (CQU)

Upgrading the Dixie Way

ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS.

REF: CE J3363 Dec 2021



CATTLE STATIONS - INDIGENOUS CONNECTIVITY - BIG RIVERS - BARRAMUNDI FISHING
BIRD LIFE - FIRST EUROPEAN CONTACT - EARLY EXPLORERS - COUNTRY LIFESTYLE - 4WD

