

Clermont

Community Development Action Plan



December 2024

Foreword



Clermont, a jewel set in the rugged crown of Central Queensland, is a vibrant and historically rich community that embodies the perfect blend of rural charm and progressive growth. As one of the oldest inland settlements in the region, Clermont's celebrated past is matched only by its promising future.

Surrounded by breathtaking natural beauty, including the striking silhouettes of the Peak Range and sprawling pastures, Clermont offers an idyllic lifestyle. The region's rich soil and favourable climate have made it a hub for agriculture, while the mining industry continues to provide robust economic opportunities. Yet, beyond its economic strengths, Clermont captivates with its heritage, outdoor recreation, and a welcoming spirit that attracts families, professionals, and visitors alike.

Clermont is a place that wears its history and heart on its sleeve. It's a community built on grit, resilience, and a healthy dose of pride. From the gold rush days to the roaring mining and farming industries, Clermont has always been about rolling up your sleeves and getting the job done.

One of the most defining moments in Clermont's story came in 1916, when the town was struck by a catastrophic flood

that swept through with an unforgiving force. Lives were lost, homes destroyed, and the community faced devastation that could have broken lesser spirits. Yet, the people of Clermont did not falter. With unparalleled resolve, they banded together and undertook the monumental task of shifting the entire town to higher ground—a testament to their unyielding commitment to survival and growth.

Clermont is a place where stories, people and landscapes intertwine, creating a town that hums with quiet magic. It's a community where history whispers through the streets and the warmth of friendly smiles turns strangers into friends.

This action plan is a tribute to all that makes Clermont unique. It is a blueprint for nurturing the heart of the town while planting seeds for the future. As the future unfolds, Clermont's legacy will depend on the boldness of those ready to push beyond the horizon. From preserving the echoes of yesterday to building pathways toward tomorrow, this plan honours the delicate balance of heritage and progress. With this plan, the town's next chapter is poised to be its most compelling yet—a story of vision, community and hope.

Our Story

Our Clermont community has a colourful past, rich in drama and laced with tragedy. Located on Wangan and Jagalingou country, Clermont was the first inland settlement in Queensland and is now the historic heart of the Isaac region. Today, Clermont is a rural service centre with a population of 3,000 and strong connections to its pastoral and mining roots.

The discovery of gold in 1861 triggered an influx of miners, with the town gazetted as 'Clermont' in 1864. Throughout the 1860s, the town and community grew, including the establishment of a newspaper, post office, state school, and Catholic Church. The discovery of copper near Clermont attracted migrant miners from Europe and China, leading to the establishment of the neighbouring town of Copperfield. Race riots resulted in the removal of the Chinese population in 1888. Between 1913-1916, and into the 1920s, local Wangan and Jagalingou people were also forcibly removed from the area and sent to missions like Woorabinda and Barambah (Cherbourg).

Alongside gold, copper, and coal mining, pastoral activities continued in the Clermont region. The Shearers' Strike of 1891, one of Australia's most significant industrial disputes, began when the manager of Logan Downs Station near Clermont asked shearers to sign a contract that would reduce their working conditions and entitlements. The strike quickly spread across surrounding stations but was ultimately unsuccessful. Despite this, the Shearers' Strike led to the foundation of the Australian Labor Party and played a key role in the history of Australian Unionism.

The most prominent event in Clermont's history is the horrific 1916 flood, traces of which can still be seen around town today. Now replaced by plantings, the original settlement was located on low-lying ground next to the lagoon, making it vulnerable to flooding. After four substantial floods between 1864 and 1896, the devastation of the 1916 flood — which killed 65 people in a town of roughly 1,500 — prompted the surviving community to relocate the remaining town buildings to higher ground using steam traction engines. The 1916 flood

remains one of Australia's worst in terms of lives lost.

Coal was discovered near Clermont at Blair Athol in 1864, with the coal used to fuel copper smelting at Copperfield and, later, to power trains once the railway arrived in 1884. In 1909, Blair Athol Coal and Timber Company absorbed nearby small collieries, and in 1922 the Blair Athol Coal Mine became Australia's first open-cut mine. By the 1970s, the Blair Athol Coal Mine had expanded so much that the township of Blair Athol was relocated to Clermont to allow for further mining. Today, the Clermont Mine, located 12 kilometres north-west of Clermont, is the dominant employer in the region, producing thermal coal for international markets.

Set against this turbulent history, Clermont has produced extraordinary people. For example, Rose Harris is believed to be the first female commercial saddler in Australia—a remarkable musician and sportswoman who, along with her father, rescued five people from the deadly 1916 flood. Another icon is Billy Sing, known as 'The Gallipoli Sniper', a Chinese-Australian soldier famed for his extraordinary marksmanship in World War One. Today, Clermont is home to Frank Finger of ABC TV's Muster Dogs fame.

The story of Clermont is one of community, ingenuity, industry, and resilience. From the intrepid optimism of early pastoralists and miners to the determination of flood survivors, and the resilience of the community torn apart by industrial disputes in the 1990s, Clermont has demonstrated time and again that its people will rise to challenges and forge new futures.

Clermont continues to be home to remarkable individuals, bonded through a complex shared history of persistence and community. As conversations around coal mining continue, our community is strengthening its traditional business service centre, as well as its pastoral and agricultural industries, while embracing the rise of renewable energy and critical minerals. Additionally, we are enhancing the growing tourism appeal of our heritage, unique events, physical attractions, and arts and crafts.

Our Vision

A Vision Statement is a vivid description of what our community aspires to become, without its current barriers, but tied to what we value as a community.

The statement below is our intended outcome:

A vibrant, family-friendly, united and safe community that creates social, business and employment opportunities for all generations to live, work, play & age well.

Our Goals

Community goals are broad statements of intent that direct our efforts towards accomplishing our vision in line with our guiding principles.

Below are the eight community goals which guide our community aspirations, namely:

- To actively promote and showcase Clermont as a great place to stop, stay, experience, and reside, especially through a renewed, vibrant and welcoming town centre.
- To become a community of choice for new families who help grow our population and reverse business and employment opportunity decline.
- To actively pursue new economic and entrepreneurial opportunities that strengthen and diversify our local economy and create new employment opportunities.
- To develop the Dam as a community and visitor recreational facility.
- To discover and utilise the unique talents and skills of local community members.
- To create an environment where our young people feel involved, supported and empowered, and will consider staying in or returning to our community for work, business, family and lifestyle opportunities.
- To retain strong sporting and cultural clubs, events, competitions, facilities and traditions.
- To preserve, maintain and strengthen our heritage and unique environment.



Our Guiding Values

Guiding values are the fundamental, moral, and ethical beliefs that we share as a community. They represent core principles and capture what our community considers important. They help foster trust, respect, collaboration, and unity.

The following seven guiding values and attitudes provide the context for our community's identified actions and initiatives, namely:

- **Sense of Community** – Ensuring all our community members experience a deep sense of welcome, inclusion, connection, contribution and pride in our history, uniqueness, achievements and future.
- **Small Town Charm** – Retaining our unique sense of country way of life, local connections and rural landscapes.
- **Safety** – Maintaining high levels of community safety with low rates of crime and anti-social behaviours.
- **Embracing New Opportunities** – Building upon our local assets, capacities and creativity; and facilitating opportunities that enable all our community members to see and experience their community as a place of opportunity.
- **Positive Mindset** – Fostering community attitudes that embrace change, proactive 'can-do' behaviours, optimism and hopefulness.
- **Intergenerational Connections** – Creating opportunities for all ages in our community to share, support and learn from each other.
- **Collaboration** – Appreciating community and stakeholder involvement, partnerships, volunteerism and active citizenship.

Our Challenges

Like many small inland rural communities, our community needs to respond creatively to a series of demographic, social, economic and environmental challenges. These issues include:

- Volunteer fatigue and declining numbers
- Ageing population
- Retention of secondary students
- Eventual mine closure and new mine openings
- Tired signage
- Business and service gaps
- Lack of early childhood services
- Limited childcare, after-school care and vocational care
- Attraction and retention of suitably qualified staff
- Staffing competition with mining wages
- Alcohol culture
- Limited non-sporting entertainment options
- Limited recreation options
- Mining purchasing outside of community
- Poor directional signage
- Bland mainstreet
- Limited park facilities
- Limited place-based mental health support services
- Online shopping
- Drive-in retailers
- Poor road conditions
- Limited affordable rental accommodation
- Limited seasonal opening hours of the swimming pool



Our Assets

Culture, Stories & Sources of Pride

Rail Heritage – Railway station, murals

Heritage sites – Flood Memorial, Anzac Lane, Piano Tree, Railway mural, Blair Athol (oldest mine)

Heritage buildings – RSL, cinema, Gentleman's Club, Copperfield Store, Commercial Hotel

Heritage stories – Pastoral, rail, mining, timber

Historical significance – Oldest town in Northern Australia/town that moved/Great Shearers' Strike (started at Logan Downs) connection

Events – Beef Expo, Christmas in the Park, St Joseph's Fair, Elders Charity Ball, ANZAC Dawn Service, shooting competitions, rodeo championship, Wombat Festival, races, camp drafts, Clermont Show, Coal and Gold Festival, campdraft, regatta, Beyond Blue Ball, Battle of the Mines

Arts culture

Museum, library

Wirdi People, NAIDOC Yarning circle

QR code trail/walk

Bora Ring Sandy Creek

Bush Heli-Services joy flights over Peak Range

Physical

Natural – Lagoon, Tabletop, Wolfgang Peak, farmland, Dam, Theresa Creek Dam, state forest

Key Recreation facilities – Swimming pool, skate park, bike track, playground, motor X circuit & club, sports fields, gym & sporting complex, golf course & club, gun club, BA Hall, showgrounds, pony club, Rose Harris Park, Centenary Park, raceway, GPA's Park, Pioneer Place

Historical Buildings – Hotels, shops, Clermont Club

Built Facilities – Caravan Park, Airstrip & Airport, railway tracks & train murals, retail shops

Churches

Tourist attractions – Museum, murals, hiking trails, prospecting, mountain climbing

Institutions

Isaacs Regional Council – Local office, Library

Police Station, Courthouse

Schools – Clermont State High School, St Joseph's Catholic School, Clermont State School

TAFE, Distance Education, Country University Centre

Kindy, Day Care

Health Services – Hospital, Allied Health Services

Emergency Services – Ambulance, Fire Station, SES, Police

Blair House, Monash Lodge

Senior living/Montcler

CCHAOSI

Lagoon

CHSP (HACC)

Our Assets

Economic

Agricultural and pastoral properties

Retail businesses – Supermarket, post office, butchers, Mitre 10, newsagency, IGA, real estate agents, hardware, fuel stations x3

Arts & Culture businesses – Yoga studio, Clermont Historical Centre

Health Services – Doctors surgery, pharmacy, hospital, chiropractor, dentist, allied health services

Agricultural support businesses – Saleyards, cattle sales, Nutrien, Belyando Produce, GR Motors

Accommodation and hospitality businesses – hotels x4, motels x3, caravan park, Chinese restaurant, cafes x3

Professional services – Hairdressers, vet, gym

Mining companies – Terracom, Bravus, Clermont Coal, Blackridge Gold

Manufacturing businesses – Gregory Fabrications, Diamond Diesel

Markets, Facebook buy, swap & sell

Bush Heli Services, JJ Richards,

Social Networks

Cultural Groups – Sewing group, dance school (CPA), Artslink, craft groups

Sporting groups – Bowls, golf, football, basketball, soccer, rugby, race, rodeo, ski, fishing, tennis, swimming, cricket, netball, pony, clay target, gun

Youth groups – Youth Club, Blue Light disco, Scouts

Service Groups – CCBG, CCDS, Rotary, Garden Club, CWA, Men's Shed, RSL/ Clermont Serviceman Group, Hospital Auxiliary Group, Montcler volunteers, ICPA

Event Committees – Campdraft Committee, Show Committee

Churches – Catholic, Anglian, Uniting, Life Church

Clermont Community Facebook group, BA Bush Sports Club, ICPA sports camp, Parkrun, yoga, aqua aerobics, CSHS Facebook group

Meals on Wheels, Heart Support, Twin Hills, Op shop x2

People

Local government councillors and staff, State and Federal MPs

Farmers, local business owners, tradespeople

Retirees, young men and women

Former residents committed to the town

Volunteers, committees, dedicated locals, fire fighters, ambulance officers, artists, police

Billy Sing, Beatrice Huston, Frank Finger – Muster Dogs

Clermont Telegraph

Driving School





Our Strategies & Actions

Theme One

Building a More Engaged & Connected Community

ACTIONS

1

1. Instigate a **Community Hub facility and community programs** through the following actions:
 - Form a Community Hub Formation Task Team.
 - Research and learn from successful community hubs in other rural communities.
 - Develop a Community Hub Action Plan that outlines structure, budget, funding opportunities, programs and promotion.
 - Design and implement a 'Community Asset Mapping Exercise' that identifies and connects resident gifts, talents and needs.
 - Identify a community space to provide an initial operating space.
 - Identify, create, promote and operate a set of initial regular and one-off events to attract community interest and involvement, including a calendar of simple and low-cost family events and 'Meet and Greet' occasions (see below).
 - Increase program and connection options based on offerings within 'Community Asset Map'.
 - Promote membership.
 - Form Community Hub Structure and leadership Team.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

2. Promote **volunteering and community engagement** through:
 - Continual invitation to community members to voice ideas, suggestions and actively volunteer.
 - Recognition and celebration of community volunteers, through media exposure and an annual '*Volunteer Appreciation Event*'.
 - Seeking support from Queensland Volunteering and utilisation of their resources.

Timeframe: Short – Immediate to Ongoing

3. Form a **"Welcome to Clermont" Task Team** of the Community Hub who develop and distribute an **'Welcome Kit'** and coordinate **'Welcome to Clermont'** events.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

4. Identify a volunteer to coordinate the **promotion of positive messages** of our community through radio, print and social media.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme One

Building a More Engaged & Connected Community

ACTIONS

1

5. Improve **intra-community communications** including:
- Clermont Facebook site and Instagram.
 - Regular stories in 'Clermont Telegraph'.
 - Weekly email newsletter that shares events, positive stories, sport's results, profiles of residents and groups etc.
 - Weekly podcast series that introduces local residents and groups.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

6. Instigate a **calendar of low-cost events that connect residents and build community relationships** e.g. Family Fun Day, Good Neighbour Day, street parties, local talent nights, Christmas event in Mainstreet etc.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

7. Form a Task Team to organise a **calendar of celebration and community connection events during the Christmas and New Year period.**

Timeframe: Immediate

LEAD GROUP

CCBG
IRC
Community Hub Formation Task Team
Christmas/New Year Events Task Team
'Welcome to Clermont'

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Clermont Rotary Club
Clermont community organisations
Volunteering Queensland
Arts Queensland funding - RADF
Queensland Government youth grants
NASCP
RA
BOI
FRRR - SRC S&V
GWC
Clermont Men's Shed

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Two

Developing Tourism & Business Potential

ACTIONS



1. Instigate a **specific Tourism Sub Committee of CCBG.**

Timeframe: Immediate

2. Develop a **‘Clermont Tourism Strategy’** through the formation of a Clermont Tourism Strategy Task Team that:
 - Audits current tourism attractions, facilities, events, public art, trails and the town’s key events.
 - Reviews regional tourism links, activities and trails.
 - Identifies opportunities to enhance existing products and offerings.
 - Develops Clermont’s unique brand.
 - Identifies opportunities to create new tourism products, especially cultural tourism, nature-based tourism, astro-tourism and building upon the strong local heritage and arts assets.
 - Identifies possibility for central tourist information centre.
 - Provides insights into greater connection with Silo Art Trail and Lake Dunn Sculpture Trail.
 - Recommends ways to enhance marketing, customer service, community storytelling and operator networking.

Timeframe: Immediate – Medium Term

3. Instigate a **calendar of regular business after-hours networking events.**

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

4. Advocate to IRC the introduction of **24-hour free camping at the Lagoon.**

Timeframe: Short – Immediate Term

5. Explore the interest and opportunity to conduct a **‘Clermont Business Expansion and Retention’ (BEAR) Program** as a means of holding an intensive conversation with local businesses about what helps and hinders their businesses, and ideas to improve the Clermont business environment.

Timeframe: Medium Term

6. Undertake a shire-wide **Signage Audit** and implement improvements, including out-of-town advertising, town entry statements and directional signage.
 - Form Signage Task Team.
 - Develop assessment tool.
 - Undertake audit.
 - Review and determine recommendations for improvement including the 30km entrances to town and a more attractive and informative signage arrangement at the Roundabout.
 - Share impressions and suggestions with IRC and wider Clermont community.

Timeframe: Short Term

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Two

Developing Tourism & Business Potential

ACTIONS



7. Identify and advocate for the implementation of **improvements to the Clermont Caravan Park** including more cabins, weekly 'Happy Hour' and tourism information.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

8. Identify location and install **'Sunset Selfie' photographic frame**.

Timeframe: Medium Term

9. Instigate an **entrance sign targeting Clermont's need and opportunity for specific trades**.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

10. Develop a **Town Walking Trail** with map highlighting Clermont's heritage.

Timeframe: Short Term

11. Explore options for the **re-introduction of a drive-in theatre option** in Clermont.

Timeframe: Medium Term

12. Explore options to enhance the **dog-friendly appeal** of Clermont and **develop a dog park**.

Timeframe: Medium Term

13. Promote and support the opportunity for a **coffee wagon at the Lagoon**.

Timeframe: Immediate

LEAD GROUP

CCBG
Clermont Tourism Strategy Task Team
Mackay Isaac Tourism
IRC

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

RDAGW
BBRF
IBC
GW3
TEQ
Clermont businesses
Clermont Rotary
Clermont mines
Arts Queensland funding-RADF
DETSI
BOI - BEAR Program
GWC

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Three

Improving Physical Spaces & Lifestyle Options

ACTIONS



1. Form Mainstreet Beautification Task Team to undertake **Mainstreet Beautification Development and create street “Wow” factor** including:
 - Undertake an audit of existing street presentation including shade, seating, greenery, public art, parking and traffic management.
 - Seek ideas & suggestions from Clermont residents and businesses.
 - Create prioritised beautification options.
 - Identify changes and additions to the street related to zebra crossings and traffic signage, including changes to blind corner at Commercial Hotel.
 - Focus on improvements to Rose Harris Park as an attractive focus of the mainstreet and key children and family gathering space, including equipment and facility improvements.
 - Seek funding support for opportunities.
 - Participate annually in the ‘Tidy Towns-Queensland Awards’ of KABQ.
 - Continually celebrate especially with ‘Welcome Events’ for new businesses.
 - Liaise with Town Teams Movement for technical assistance.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

2. Form **Pool Redevelopment Task Team** to work with IRC to implement the chosen **Pool Master Plan** including possibilities for:
 - Heating of pool.
 - Extension of pool season and hours.
 - Introduction of Splash Pool.
 - More amenities and activities on site.
 - Improvement to the shape of pool.
 - Hydrotherapy pool.
 - ‘Welcome Events’ for new businesses.

Timeframe: Short to Medium Term

3. Work with families and carers of children to identify **improvements to existing parks** to make more child and family friendly and bat safe.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

4. Form **Dam Enhancement Task Team** to implement the Dam Master Plan and oversee improvements to Dam facilities that improve both resident and visitor usage, with a focus on:
 - Water availability
 - Power
 - Toilets
 - Camp kitchen
 - Hire facilities
 - Promotions

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Three

Improving Physical Spaces & Lifestyle Options

ACTIONS

5. Convene community conversations around the **reuse and revitalisation of the old Railway Station as a community asset.**
Timeframe: Ongoing
6. Advocate to IRC for a **long-term Maintenance Plan for Clermont.**
Timeframe: Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

CCBG
Mainstreet Beautification Task Team
Pool Redevelopment Task Team
Dam Enhancement Task Team
IRC

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

IBC
Tidy Towns – Queensland Awards of KABQ
Clermont businesses
Clermont playgroups
Clermont Rotary
Clermont mines
RDAGW
BBRF
Arts Queensland funding- RADF
FRRR – SRC – S&V
NASCG
Town Teams Movement
GWC



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Four

Enhancing opportunities for our Children & Young People

ACTIONS



1. Encourage local schools to explore the implementation of the BOI **'RuMAD? Program'** to grow youth engagement in community development.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

2. Explore **new youth recreation options**, especially new sporting and cultural activities, after-school and vacation opportunities and more visiting arts activities.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

3. Connect Clermont young people with **volunteer tasks** within the community through the activities of the new Community Hub (see above).

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

4. Identify **new local youth training and job options including possible traineeships and more after-school employment opportunities.**

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

5. Maintain **regular contact with young people who leave the community** via social media, regular newsletters and organisation of a calendar of school and sporting reunions.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

6. **Identify and support young leaders** through linking them to regional, state and national leadership development experiences including annual nomination of Clermont young people for Rotary's RYLA Program.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

7. Maintain support for the **Clermont Community Driving School.**

Timeframe: Ongoing

8. Advocate for the introduction of **School Nurse at the CSHS** and **new allied health services** related to youth mental health.

Timeframe: Ongoing

9. Continually promote the **Clermont State High School as the secondary education choice of the town.**

Timeframe: Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

CCBG
IRC

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

St Joseph's School
Clermont State High School
Clermont State School
Clermont community & sporting groups
Clermont Rotary - RYLA
CCDS
ABC Haywire
ICPA

BOI
RACQ
RA
DESBT
NASCGP
FRRR
Queensland Government youth programs
GWC

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Five

Improving 'Ageing in Place'

ACTIONS

5

1. Form an "Ageing in Place" Task Team to explore and pursue options and funding possibilities to develop a **Clermont community-managed aged care service model**, based on the town of Bell's 'Staying in Place' initiative - Bell Cares.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

2. Encourage and coordinate **services to help seniors better navigate health and ageing options.**

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

3. Advocate for the establishment of **more beds at Montcler Aged Care facility**

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

**Clermont Connect
'Ageing in Place' Task Team - BENI
NQPHN**

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

**Bell Cares
Queensland Health
Clermont Aged Care
Trilogy Cares
Mable platform
IRC
Visiting health service groups
Montcler Aged Care facility
GWC
Clermont Men's Shed**



Abbreviations

BBRF	Building Better Regions Fund of the Australian Government
BEAR	Business Expansion and Retention Program of BOI
BENI	Belyando Network Enterprise Initiative
BOI	Bank of I.D.E.A.S.
CCBG	Clermont Community Business Group
CCDS	Clermont Community Driving School
CCHAOSI	Clermont Community Housing & Other Services Inc
CHSP	Commonwealth Home Support Package
CPA	Clermont Performing Arts
CSHS	Clermont State High School
DESBT	Queensland Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
DETSI	Queensland Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science & Innovation
FRRR	Foundation for Regional and Renewal Renewal
GW3	Greater Whitsundays Alliance
GWC	Greater Whitsundays Communities
HACC	Home and Community Care
IBC	Issac Business Chamber
ICPA	Isolated Childrens' Parent's Association
IRC	Isaac Regional Council
KABQ	Keep Australia Beautiful Queensland
NASCGP	Nutrien Ag Solutions Community Grants Program
NQPHN	North Queensland Primary Health Network
RA	Rural Aid
RACQ	Royal Automobile Club
RDAGW	Regional Development Australia Greater Whitsundays
RADF	Regional Arts Development Fund Program
RYLA	Rotary Youth Leadership Award Program
SRC S&V	Strengthening Rural Communities – Small & Vital grants program of FRRR
TEQ	Tourism and Events Queensland





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CLEERMONT

QUEENSLAND

