1. The risks to agricultural productivity and the environment associated with rising groundwater tables and salinity in the Lower Burdekin area have been recognised since the development of the Burdekin Haughton Water Supply Scheme. A number of management strategies have been put in place over time but have had limited success in curbing the issue. A new and coordinated approach is needed to secure existing production and jobs, provide for agricultural expansion and minimise impacts on the environment, particularly the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.
2. The Queensland Government completed the Lower Burdekin Catchment Development project that identified considerable demands to expand agricultural production in the area. The project also found that the rising groundwater issue could limit production in parts of the area, and that this should be addressed prior to the release of new water allocations for agricultural development in the Lower Burdekin.
3. In September 2016, the government commenced a project to identify, analyse and prepare cost analysis options to address the issues associated with rising groundwater in the Lower Burdekin catchment.
4. The project has identified a range of potential management actions that could be undertaken to effectively address the rising groundwater tables. It also identified that no single management action alone will adequately return the groundwater table to levels that support sustainable irrigation production and the environment.
5. Cabinet approved the public release of the Lower Burdekin Groundwater Strategy project - discussion paper.
6. *Attachment*
* [Lower Burdekin Groundwater Strategy project—discussion paper](attachments/Paper.PDF)