Cairns

Residential Property Market Insights Half 1 2026

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Welcome to the Cairns residential property market insights for the first half of 2026.

Cairns remained the highest-priced mainstream detached housing market within the North Queensland regions reviewed, with values continuing to increase across houses, units and vacant land. Market conditions were supported by lifestyle and coastal demand, established local buyer depth, constrained new housing supply and the difficulty of replacing quality established property at current construction costs.

The Cairns Regional LGA recorded 873 house sales during the first half of 2026, with a median price of $810,000. This represented an increase of approximately 8.7% against the 2025 annual median. Demand remained evident across southern family-home corridors, northern beaches locations and established inner suburbs where available land and quality housing stock are limited.

Units continued to form a significant component of the Cairns residential market, recording 652 sales at a median of $465,000. The sector remained attractive to investors, first-home buyers, downsizers and lifestyle purchasers seeking a more affordable and lower-maintenance alternative to detached housing. Cairns North, Manoora, Woree, Cairns City and Westcourt were among the highest-volume unit markets.

Vacant land remained the least frequently traded segment but continued to appreciate, recording a median of $418,500. Structural limitations arising from geography, servicing requirements and restricted residential release areas continued to support pricing for well-located and readily buildable sites.

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Cairns

Dwellings

The Cairns detached hou sing market remains the premium mainstream segment, with the 2026 YTD median house price reaching $810,000. This reflects a further uplift from the 2025 annual median of $745,000 and is materially above the $655,500 median recorded in 2024.

The market is being driven by established family housing demand, lifestyle and coastal appeal, and the difficulty of replacing quality established homes at current construction costs. Activity is particularly evident through southern family-home corridors, beachside and northern beaches locations, and established inner suburbs where land supply is naturally constrained.

- The Cairns Regional LGA recorded 873 house sales in 2026 YTD / first half, with a median of $810,000.
- The house median is approximately 8.7% above the 2025 annual median and approximately 23.6% above 2024.
- The monthly house median remained close to or above $800,000 from December 2025 through May 2026, peaking at $837,500 in April.
- The highest-volume detached housing suburbs include Mount Sheridan, Edmonton, Kewarra Beach, Redlynch, Bentley Park, Gordonvale, Mooroobool and Trinity Beach.
- Selected strong-growth house results include Manoora, Whitfield, Westcourt, Machans Beach, Redlynch and Brinsmead, noting suburb-level results should be treated carefully where sample sizes are modest.

Suburb	2026 median	2026 sales	Growth vs 2025
Mount Sheridan	$760,000	61	10.9%
Edmonton	$748,000	54	11.1%
Kewarra Beach	$920,000	45	11.1%
Redlynch	$982,000	44	19.0%
Bentley Park	$755,000	39	11.9%
Gordanvale	$720,000	35	6.2%

Units

The unit and strata segment is a major component of the Cairns residential market and remains comparatively affordable against detached housing. Cairns Regional recorded 652 unit sales in 2026 YTD / first half, with a median of $465,000. This is above the 2025 annual median of $433,000 and significantly above the $370,000 median recorded in 2024.

Demand for units is being supported by affordability, investor interest, tourism-linked accommodation fundamentals and buyer demand for lower-maintenance property. Established units in inner, coastal and amenity-rich locations continue to appeal to investors, downsizers, first-home buyers and lifestyle purchasers.

- The Cairns Regional LGA recorded 652 unit sales in 2026 YTD / first half, with a median of $465,000.
- The unit median is approximately 7.4% above the 2025 annual median and approximately 25.7% above 2024.
- The highest-volume unit markets include Cairns North, Manoora, Woree, Cairns City, Westcourt, Trinity Beach, Parramatta Park and Edge Hill.
- Selected unit suburbs showing stronger growth include Mooroobool, Edge Hill, Parramatta Park, Cairns North, Earlville, Whitfield and Manoora.
- Affordability relative to detached housing should remain a key demand driver, although body corporate, insurance and short-stay/letting settings remain important considerations.

Suburb	2026 median	2026 sales	Growth vs 2025
Cairns North	$460,000	63	10.8%
Manoora	$394,000	44	9.1%
Woree	$314,000	40	4.7%
Cairns City	$650,000	37	4.5%
Westcourt	$405,000	35	7.4%
Trinity Beach	$535,000	31	0.9%

Vacant Land

Vacant land remains the thinnest of the three major residential segments, but values have continued to move upward. Cairns Regional recorded 98 vacant land sales in 2026 YTD / first half, with a median of $418,500. This is above the 2025 annual median of $369,000 and materially above the $290,000 median recorded in 2024.

Land supply in Cairns is structurally constrained by geography, established urban form, servicing requirements and the limited availability of larger-scale residential release areas. Where buyers can secure titled or readily buildable land in established growth or lifestyle locations, pricing remains well supported despite construction-cost and feasibility pressures.

- Cairns Regional vacant land recorded 98 sales in 2026 YTD / first half at a median of $418,500.
- The 2026 YTD median is approximately 13.4% above the 2025 annual median and approximately 44.3% above 2024.
- Active land results in the include Edmonton, Gordonvale, Mount Sheridan, Goldsborough, Bentley Park and Kewarra Beach.
- The segment remains highly sensitive to lot size, title timing, estate stage, location and individual transaction characteristics.
- Construction costs remain a constraint, but limited availability of residential land should continue to support pricing for well-located lots.

Suburb	2026 median	2026 sales	Growth vs 2025
Edmonton	$266,000	13	6.4%
Gordonvale	$365,000	10	25.9%
Mount Sheridan	$384,000	8	9.7%
Goldsborough	$425,000	7	23.9%
Bentley Park	$415,000	7	59.0%
Kewarra Beach	$482,000	6	3.9%
Trinity Park	$1,510,000	3	51.0%
Mooroobool	$340,000	3	19.3%

Conclusion

The Cairns residential market remained firmly supported through the first half of 2026, with elevated values across detached houses, units and vacant land.

Detached housing is expected to remain the premium mainstream segment, supported by demand for established family homes, coastal and lifestyle appeal and limited replacement supply. Competition should remain strongest for well-presented properties in established inner suburbs, northern beaches locations and southern family-home corridors. As affordability pressures increase, purchasers are likely to become more selective where properties require renovation or significant near-term expenditure.

The unit market should continue to provide an important affordability pathway and remain a significant source of transaction activity. Well-located apartments and townhouses with practical layouts, manageable body corporate arrangements and clear rental appeal are expected to remain attractive. However, insurance, management arrangements, body corporate costs and short-stay letting considerations will continue to influence buyer decisions.

Vacant land values are likely to remain supported by structural supply constraints, particularly for titled and readily buildable sites. Construction costs, site preparation requirements and development feasibility will nevertheless limit purchaser capacity and may contribute to greater variability in reported median prices.

The outlook for the second half of 2026 remains positive, although future growth is expected to become more measured and quality-led. Cairns retains strong lifestyle appeal and a comparatively deep residential market; however, rising values mean purchasers and investors will increasingly differentiate between properties based on location, condition, holding costs and capital expenditure risk. Quality established housing and well-positioned strata property are therefore expected to remain the most competitive market segments.

The 2026–27 Federal Budget introduced the most substantial changes to residential property taxation in approximately three decades, including changes to negative gearing and capital gains tax treatment. The immediate effect has been increased investor caution, softer enquiry and longer decision-making periods, with early signs of a slowdown already evident across parts of the market. For North Queensland, the impact may be less pronounced than in highly leveraged capital-city markets due to comparatively stronger rental yields and persistent supply constraints; however, reduced investor participation is likely to moderate sales volumes and price growth, particularly for established investment-grade houses and units. While the policy may progressively redirect capital toward new housing, elevated construction costs, development feasibility constraints and limited delivery capacity mean any meaningful supply response is likely to take time.

For further property insights regarding Cairns or a discussion about how Opteon can support you with our wide range of valuation and advisory services, please feel free to reach out.

Source: PriceFinder, accessed July 2026; RP Data (Cotality/CoreLogic), accessed July 2026.

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Formal Qualifications

- Certified Practising Valuer
- Associate Member of the Australian Property Institute (API Member No. 104559)
- QLD Registered Valuer (QVRB No: 5047)
- Bachelor of Property – Central Queensland University (2019)

Industry Experience

Milly joined Opteon in 2025 and has been a registered valuer since 2019. As part of a full-service property consultancy supporting regional Queensland, she combines strong technical expertise with deep local market insight. Her valuation experience spans residential, rural, commercial, and industrial properties, with a strong focus on first mortgage security and family law matters. Milly also undertakes valuations for acquisition and disposal, insolvency, capital gains tax (CGT), and fringe benefits tax (FBT) purposes.

Based in Mackay and servicing the wider Whitsundays and Isaac regions, Milly is committed to delivering accurate, timely and practical valuation advice. She takes pride in building trusted client relationships and staying across the ever-evolving dynamics of the regional property market. Grounded in local knowledge and driven by a passion for client service, Milly provides valuation solutions that are compliant, reliable and genuinely useful.

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