

# Water, barra lure MacBanker to remote Cape

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By NARELLE HINE

**LURED** by the top end's abundance of water, Macquarie Bank interest rates strategist Rory Robertson is buying a 250,000ha working cattle station on Cape York.

Strathburn station, about 80km south-west of Coen in the heart of the Peninsula and believed to be worth between \$4 million and \$6 million, is under contract for an undisclosed figure and expected to settle within the next week.

Vendor Greg Jenkins said the sale of the Holroyd River property did not include stock or plant, and he hoped he and his young family could remain on the working station via a sub-lease.

Mr Robertson, who is regularly featured in the media as an expert on economics, told the *Local News* he was "in the process of taking the biggest financial swing of the bat in my life in taking on board this asset".

But he said it was "pretty easy not to be up-beat about the future of northern Australia – particularly given that there seems to be a reliability of rain".

"All over the world, everywhere is struggling with more people and less

**'Well-watered rural properties are increasingly rare in Australia and the world'**  
- Macquarie Bank's Rory Robertson

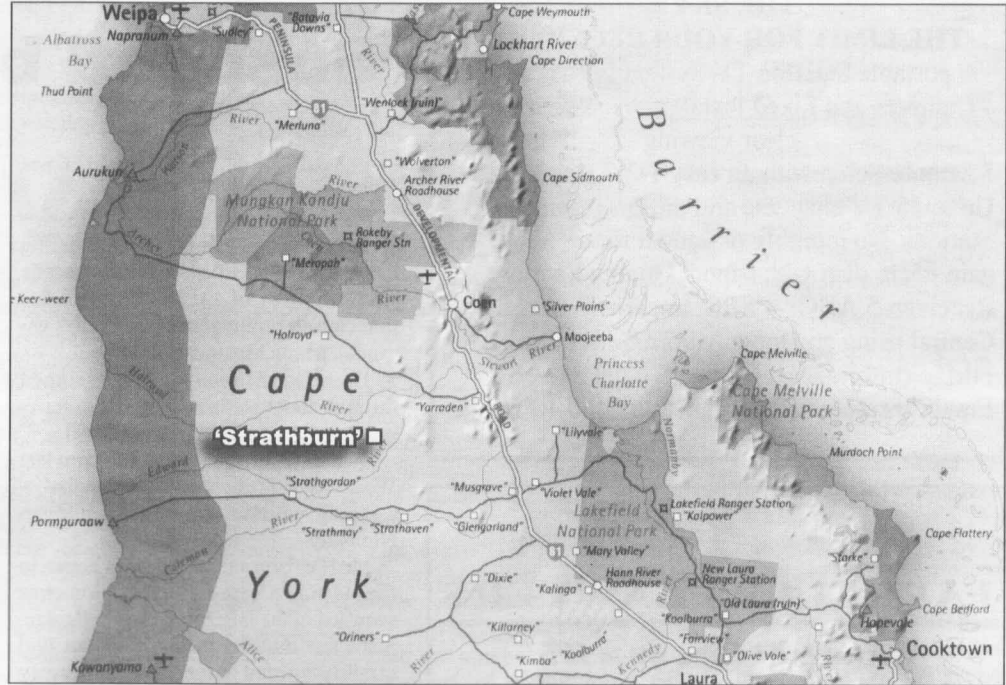
rain, and there's lots of anxiety about climate change and ongoing drought," he said.

"And well-watered rural properties are becoming increasingly rare in Australia as well as around the world."

But it was not just the promise of plentiful water that lured the avid barramundi fisherman and feral pig hunter, who completed his economics degree at university in Townsville and described himself as a country boy at heart.

"Basically I love going bush," said Mr Robertson.

"I grew up on cattle, sheep and wheat blocks all over Australia and that was my starting point of interest (in buying Strathburn). I've probably chained myself to a desk for the next 25 years in the process of taking on this asset (but) it gives me a personally legitimate excuse to get on a plane out of Sydney



Macquarie Bank interest rates strategist Rory Robertson is buying remote 250,000ha Strathburn station near Coen (ABOVE); which takes in on the Holroyd River (TOP LEFT); and the homestead (TOP RIGHT).

to north Queensland four times a year."

The station, about 600km north of Cairns by road, has also until recently been an international tourism attraction for guests seeking adventure, lifestyle and nature-based experiences such as wild pig hunting, fishing and birdwatching.