

Nature and rural based tourism

Why it is important to manage nature and rural based tourism?

Nature and rural based tourism, when conducted with an appropriate form, scale and location, makes a positive contribution to the local tourism industry and rural economy. In order to help ensure good outcomes, it is important for nature and rural based tourism to be regulated through the proposed planning scheme. This helps to ensure the development of high quality facilities that protect and maintain rural production values and landscape amenity. Development for nature and rural based tourism activities may require a development application to be made to Council.



What are the different types of nature and rural based tourism uses in the proposed planning scheme?

There are a number of different defined uses in the proposed planning scheme that potentially cover nature and rural based tourism activities in rural areas.

Nature-based tourism is a tourism activity for the appreciation, conservation or interpretation of the environment, with environmentally responsible accommodation as a component of that activity. Examples include accommodation in cabins, huts, lodges and tents.

Short-term accommodation provides accommodation for less than 3 consecutive months to tourists or travellers. The accommodation may be hosted (for example, a bed and breakfast or farm stay) or non-hosted (for example a holiday house or cabins).

A **tourist park** is the use of premises for holiday accommodation in caravans, self-contained cabins, tents or other similar structures. Ancillary amenity facilities, a food and drink outlet, manager's residence, offices, staff accommodation and recreation facilities may be proposed.

Small scale camping (up to 5 campsites) within the Rural Zone will generally not require a planning application to be submitted to Council for approval, where compliance with the Nature and Rural Based Tourism Code is achieved.

Hosted accommodation within a dwelling house (such as bed and breakfast or farm stay) will also generally not require a planning application, where compliance with the Short-Term Accommodation Code is achieved.

Other small scale, low intensity forms of tourist accommodation, such as a holiday house, a campground with up to 20 campsites, or up to 8 holiday cabins are consistent uses within the Rural Zone and will generally require a code assessable development application to be submitted to Council for approval (where public notification is not required).

Larger scale tourism uses, such as an eco-resort or function facility, are potentially consistent uses within the Rural Zone and require an impact assessable development application to be submitted to Council for approval (where public notification is required). Potential impacts on the rural or natural setting and the preferred character of the locality will need to be carefully considered by Council.

For full details in relation to the level of assessment for nature and rural based tourism uses in the Rural Zone, refer to Part 3 - Tables of Assessment.

What planning provisions are proposed to regulate nature and rural based tourism?

The Nature and Rural Based Tourism Code is a use code in the proposed planning scheme that provides the planning provisions used to assess proposals for nature-based tourism, short-term accommodation, tourist park and resort complex uses where they are proposed in the Rural Zone or Tourism Zone.

The intent of the Nature and Rural Based Tourism Code is to ensure nature and rural based tourism activities are small scale and low intensity. They should also have a clear connection with, and provide for appreciation of, items or places with environmental, heritage, cultural, or rural and landscape values. The code requires these activities to be located and designed to sensitively respond to their site. Amenities and facilities need to be consistent with the setting, the scale of the use, the types of accommodation supplied and the maximum length of stay.

The code requires that nature and rural based tourism activities be ancillary to any rural activities undertaken on the site. It also requires that they do not adversely impact on the amenity of rural and residential areas or the viable operation of rural activities, either on the site or adjoining sites.

The Short-Term Accommodation Code is a new use code in the proposed planning scheme. This code applies to bed and breakfast and farm stay uses in the Rural Zone.

Other requirements and assessment benchmarks, including the Rural Zone Code and overlay codes (e.g. relating to the protection of biodiversity, scenic amenity and agricultural land), may also apply to development for nature and rural based tourism activities, depending on the specific location and nature of the activity.



What are the key changes relating to nature and rural based tourism in the proposed planning scheme?

- New provisions for 'limited facilities camping', allowing up to 5 campsites to be provided as accepted development on rural land, provided certain requirements are met.
- Alignment of assessment levels for code

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assessable tourist accommodation activities in the Rural Zone, such as cottages or campground, ensuring the levels of assessment are the same regardless of the defined use (nature-based tourism, short-term accommodation or tourist park).

- No change to the general maximum number of holiday cabins on land in the Rural Zone as code assessable development.
- Introduction of a minimum lot size for uses involving more than 4 free standing cottages, holiday cabins or permanent tents, making proposals for more than 4 cabins on smaller rural lots subject to impact assessment and public notification.
- Tighter controls on the number of freestanding cottages, holiday cabins or permanent tents allowable via code assessment in the Blackall Range - Maleny Local Plan area, making larger proposals (more than 4 free standing cottages, holiday cabins or permanent tents) subject to impact assessment and public notification.
- A proposed change to the level of assessment for non-hosted holiday house from impact assessment to code assessment in the Rural Zone.



How can I find out more?

- There are a range of planning provisions that may be relevant, depending on the site and the rural activity that is proposed.
- Go to the following [information sheets](#):
 - Rural land and activities
- Go to the following parts of the [proposed planning scheme](#):
 - Nature and Rural Based Tourism Code
 - Short-term Accommodation Code
 - Rural Zone Code
 - Scenic Amenity Overlay Code
 - Online mapping
- If you have a question, contact Council's planning scheme team:
 - Email: newplanningscheme@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
 - Phone: 07 5409 0570

To explore the proposed planning scheme or make a submission, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://haveyoursay.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/newplanningscheme>



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