

Rural land and activities

This information sheet summarises some of the key planning provisions relating to rural land and rural activities in the proposed planning scheme.



What is the role of planning in managing rural land and rural activities?

Rural land has a range of important values and uses, including agricultural production, environmental management, landscape character and tourism. Planning has an important role in protecting these values, which can be compromised by inappropriate development.

The current planning scheme, the *State Planning Policy* (SPP) and the [‘Shaping SEQ’ South East Queensland Regional Plan 2023](#) (SEQ Regional Plan) recognise these values and provide key planning directions for rural land. This approach is continued in the proposed planning scheme, which seeks to identify and protect agricultural land so that it remains available for rural production, as well as providing opportunities for complementary value-adding rural enterprises.

It is important to note that the proposed planning scheme will not apply to established existing lawful rural activities - it will only apply to new development.

What measures are proposed to manage new development on rural land?

The planning intent of the current planning scheme in relation to rural land has been largely maintained in the proposed planning scheme. The proposed planning scheme seeks to implement a range of measures to ensure the agricultural and other values of rural land are protected and appropriately managed, including the following:

- Inclusion of agricultural land in the Rural Zone, enabling it to be used for a wide range of rural production activities (e.g. fruit and vegetable cropping, grazing of livestock).
- The inclusion of a Rural Activities Code, which includes specific provisions for different rural land uses.
- Introduction of a new Agricultural Land Overlay that identifies the most productive agricultural land in the region (referred to as Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) – Class A and Class B land based on State mapping, as well as a new ‘Agricultural land interface area’). The new Agricultural Land Overlay Code seeks to ensure new development, including in urban areas adjoining rural land, protects and maintains the productive capacity of agricultural land.

Rural land and activities information sheet

- Ensuring agricultural land is not fragmented (e.g. subdivided) into smaller lot sizes that are inconsistent with the current or potential future use of the land for agriculture.
- Revised provisions for tourism-related accommodation in rural areas, including new provisions to allow small scale, self-sufficient camping for up to 5 campsites to establish on rural land without development approval, subject to certain requirements.
- Some changes to minimum setbacks and minimum site area required for different rural uses as specified in the Rural Activities Code.

Rural areas are also often subject to a range of other constraints and values including natural

hazards, biodiversity and scenic values. These matters are also managed through planning scheme overlays. Further information in relation to overlays can be accessed in the proposed planning scheme and supporting information sheets.

Rural Zone

The Rural Zone identifies land that is intended to provide for rural uses and activities. The Rural Zone Code contains provisions to help ensure that new development is compatible with this intent, and the other character and environmental features of land in this zone. The table below provides examples of the types of uses that can be expected in the Rural Zone.

Examples of activities that usually do not require a planning application in the Rural Zone (accepted development subject to requirements)



Animal husbandry



Cropping



Roadside stall



Small scale rural industry



Small scale transport depot



Wholesale nursery



Nature-based tourism (for limited facilities camping)



Home-hosted short-term accommodation (e.g. bed and breakfast, farm stay)



Dwelling house (including a secondary dwelling)

Examples of activities that require a planning application in the Rural Zone



Aquaculture



Intensive animal industry



Intensive horticulture



Winery



Nature based tourism (other than limited facilities camping)



Renewable energy facility



Rural industry (otherwise)



Short term accommodation (otherwise)



Tourist park

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Rural land and activities information sheet

Consistent with the SEQ Regional Plan and *Planning Regulation 2017*, there is no change proposed to the minimum lot size in the Rural Zone, which remains at 100 hectares to prevent further fragmentation of rural land.



Rural Activities Code

The Rural Activities Code provides the provisions used to regulate new rural land use activities (replacing the Rural Industries Code and the Rural Uses Code in the current planning scheme). It sets out planning provisions that relate to the form, scale and operation of specific rural uses (e.g. a rural industry), as well as rural activities generally.

It considers the suitability of a site to accommodate a proposed use as well as its potential environmental and amenity impacts. Examples of the matters that the Rural Activities Code deals with include building height, minimum site area, setbacks from boundaries, emissions, stormwater impacts and signage. Accommodation and residential activities are subject to specific use codes in the proposed planning scheme.

Agricultural Land Overlay

The Agricultural Land Overlay is a proposed new planning scheme overlay intended to protect and maintain the productive capacity of land identified as Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) - Class A and Class B land, for agricultural purposes.

Most new assessable development proposed on land subject to this overlay would be assessable against the Agricultural Land Overlay Code. The code contains provisions that seek to prevent irreversible impacts on the productive capacity of agricultural land, including limiting acceptable uses of agricultural land and preventing the encroachment of sensitive uses in proximity of agricultural land.



In the current planning scheme, agricultural land is broadly identified in the Strategic Framework mapping and is protected through a variety of codes. The proposed new Agricultural Land Overlay mapping and associated overlay code rationalise these provisions and will provide better recognition and protection of valuable agricultural land resources and rural activities that rely on this resource, whilst balancing the potential for some complementary rural uses to also locate on this land.

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How can I find out more?

- Go to the following [information sheets](#):
 - Nature and Rural Based Tourism
 - Short-term Accommodation
- Go to the following parts of the [proposed planning scheme](#):
 - Rural Zone Code
 - Agricultural Land Overlay Code
 - Rural Activities Code
 - Nature and Rural Based Tourism Code
 - Find out the zoning and overlay mapping that is [proposed for your property](#)
- 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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