

# Use of Rural Land for Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

Prepared for the Office of Urban Management  
The Coordinator-General

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*Not representative of Commonwealth, State or Local Government policy – for discussion purposes.*

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*It is crucial to note that no level of Government, nor the private sector, nor the various sectoral groups have had sufficient opportunity to consider the content or recommendations of this report. Thus the production of this report does not, and should not be construed to imply that any stakeholder group supports this report, but rather that this report forms part of ongoing discussion by the Rural Futures Committee and Regional Landscape and Open Space Advisory Committee to enable further detailed assessment and consideration of the reports' recommendations. There will be specific recommendations which individuals, groups or Government – Commonwealth, State or Local may legitimately question or reject.*

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## Executive Summary

This report on the 'Use of Rural Land for Tourism and Outdoor Recreation' was prepared by Sharon Boyle and Associates and ROSS Planning Pty Ltd as information to the Office of Urban Management to assist in work of the SEQ Regional Plan. This report is not representative of the views of Commonwealth, State or Local Government policy, or non-government groups or organisations.

The purpose of this report is to illustrate the constraints from the planning and regulatory system to the potential economic development opportunities.

### Issues and findings:

- The overlap between outdoor recreation and tourism is established through the competing uses of publicly accessible open space.
- Both the provision of outdoor recreation activities and the development of tourist and outdoor recreation facilities have the potential to address the issue of economic development opportunities in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production areas.
- Each outdoor recreation activity has its own space or place requirements and its own set of actions and skills, and different regulations will come in to play.
- Outdoor recreation activities are regulated by a number of public sector agencies which sometimes overlap with those of other public sector agencies.
- The findings of the *2001 Outdoor Recreation Demand Study* are that large numbers of people currently participate in a variety of outdoor recreation activities in a range of settings, but the potential demand is likely to put more pressure on places that are perceived as being substantially natural.
- The major and obvious difference between outdoor recreation and tourism is the essentially commercial nature of the latter activity.
- Domestic tourism forms the largest component of the industry, but generates a lower economic impact and is subject to far lower rates of growth than that created by international tourism.
- The intrusion or visibility of tourists in rural Australia has recently increased with the "Grey Nomads" and other groups travelling around the country, however the dominant impacts and benefits of tourism are generally quite concentrated into either large cities or coastal tourist locations.
- There appears to be some opportunity for improved communications and possible potential commercialisation of the abundant outdoor recreation activities in the rural areas of SEQ.
- It is likely to be more rewarding for outdoor recreation enterprises or properties to concentrate their marketing efforts on the Bed and Breakfast and farmstay tourism component to overcome the tendency of the integrated resorts to prevent leakage outside their establishment.

- The industry participants and other stakeholders from both outdoor recreation and tourism indicated that they were well aware of the planning system and other State regulations, but that these of themselves were not the critical stumbling blocks to their enterprises.
- The issues of the costs and accessibility of the planning system, transport regulations, public liability insurance and the raft of other compliance issues remain constraints to the further development of outdoor recreation and tourism.
- Each of the issues identified in the case studies are impacted upon by cultural and community expectations. Within rural areas it is not always accurate to assume that new development proposals, particularly those related to outdoor recreation and tourism will be welcomed unreservedly.
- The strategies from the *Destination Marketing Plan* for Brisbane Country clearly identified “policy, planning and regulatory decisions” as key areas requiring attention. When this issue was discussed at the workshop it became clear that:
  - There were few examples which could be quoted.
  - Few participants understood even the rudimentary structure and processes of the planning and regulatory system in Queensland
  - “Policy and planning” was more likely to mean industry policy and planning with a particular focus on marketing and funding.
  - The scale of projects and funds available to many particularly, potential new entrants, was quite low level, that is well below 20 accommodation units.
  - Any costs which were incurred during the planning and development process were seen as unjust but when questioned a little further the participant recognised this was a government requirement of business and probably not restricted to the tourism industry.
- It is difficult to identify where tourism and outdoor recreation projects in rural areas may have been specifically disadvantaged. It should be noted that the Queensland planning system, has by the Minister’s own admission, an urgent need for review to improve processes and to develop a system which is more “user friendly” Ministerial Press Release 22 February 2006.
- The submission provided by the Executive Director of the Caravan Parks Association of Queensland which represents members who control in excess of 73% of the caravan parks in Queensland and over 83% of the sites expressed the association’s concern that the SEQ Regional Plan “...will almost certainly spell the ‘death knell’ of any future tourist based Caravan Park in Queensland”.
- In a submission provided by Dillon Folker Stephens there is a contention in this submission that the Office of Urban Management’s interpretation of the SEQ Regional Plan is quite restrictive, particularly in relation to golf courses and that this interpretation is based on “... an attitude that there is a glut of such developments.”
- Within an enterprise looking at outdoor recreation or tourism there are several areas which are critical to success and these encompass the cultural, financial and managerial context for these enterprises to operate within.

- We have argued in this report that the constraints on outdoor recreation and tourism are no more severe than other types of proposals. Outdoor recreation and tourism should be considered for their potential impact on community building and regional prosperity.
- Recommendations were grouped around three major areas; planning and infrastructure, industry planning and financial assistance.
- **Planning and Infrastructure**

- SEQ Regional Plan – OUM

The major constraint identified in rural areas to the development of outdoor recreation and tourism is the SEQ Regional Plan. The following recommendations are made:

*Tourist Accommodation*

The thresholds for tourism accommodation at 20 units would have no impact on farmstays as they are generally well below this capacity. Interesting re-use of larger properties such as Hiddenvale, an integrated resort with 30 accommodation units would not be possible.

**Recommendation**

**A more sophisticated approach would be to recognise these two segments and provide a definition for each industry component.**

*Golf Courses*

A case was put to the consultants that golf courses should be allowed however it is still difficult to see that a golf course can ever be anything but an urban activity. Therefore the current interpretation which does not allow golf courses is supported.

**Recommendation**

**Any definition to encourage tourism based re-use of existing properties should be able to demonstrate a clear linkage to the “rural natural or resource value of the surrounding area”.**

*Caravan Parks*

Caravan parks cannot satisfy widely accepted definitions of outdoor recreation, however they have a far lower level of infrastructure and have the potential to minimise impacts in rural areas.

**Recommendation**

**Consider inclusion of caravan parks within the SEQ rural lands subject to detailed investigation of environmental conditions which can be imposed**

- South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program (SEQIPP) - OUM

*Minor infrastructure*

Keeping daytrippers or tourists in a rural area longer increases the chances of their spending in these locations. This can be encouraged by the provision of appropriate low level infrastructure such as public toilets and parks.

**Recommendation**

**Infrastructure investment in the rural areas for relatively minor infrastructure such as public toilets and parks be placed as a priority within the SEQIPP.**

### *Protected Areas*

The shortage of protected areas is a regional problem and should be addressed through the regional SEQIPP.

#### **Recommendation**

**Increasing the land available through acquisition with particular focus on non viable farms with scenic values or other characteristics which may be useful for outdoor recreation for example 4wd and trail bike activities.**

- Local Government Initiatives

### *Voluntary Private Access Agreements supported by State Treasury*

Ipswich City Council is considering **Voluntary Private Access** Agreements and this concept could receive State government support through cross subsidising rate relief and perhaps light infrastructure such as fences and signage. The cross subsidising could come from highly urbanised local governments to the rural shires in the form of funding.

#### **Recommendation**

**Voluntary Private Access Agreements to receive State government support through cross subsidising from through out the region in the form rate relief and perhaps light infrastructure such as fences and signage.**

### *IPA Summit*

Local government should be encouraged to participate in the upcoming summit in relation to IPA amendments as they are in best possible position to **lobby on behalf of the future of their rural communities.**

#### **Recommendation**

**Invitations to go to local government to seek their input into IPA reform with a view to supporting Rural Futures.**

### *Regular Tourism and Outdoor recreation Forums*

There is often a lack of dialogue and understanding between local government planners, the economic development officers/branches and the tourist industry participants and key stakeholders. QORF and TQ to also be involved in the encouragement and agenda forming of these fora.

#### **Recommendation**

**Regular forums should be encouraged at a local level with a view to forming closer partnerships between each of the stakeholders and industry participants.**

### *Motorised Outdoor Recreation*

Current interpretations suggest that no additional 4wd parks would be allowable. This may cause some problems due to the very high level of demand for this activity and the tendency for these participants to resort to entering areas with higher environmental values such as State Forests or National Parks.



### **Recommendation**

**Consideration should be given to monitoring the demand and supply of these sites and activities, bearing in mind that the Ipswich Motor sports Precinct provides an unusual opportunity for this use.**

### *Thresholds*

Planners should be required to investigate the **thresholds required** for various types of infrastructure and the nature of conditions imposed so as not to discourage fledgling outdoor recreation and tourism enterprises.

### **Recommendation**

**Further work be carried out to identify the most relevant and critical infrastructure thresholds to encourage outdoor recreation and tourism enterprises in rural areas.**

- **Industry Planning - TQ, Regional Tourism Organisations & QORF and other relevant professional associations**

*Transition from events to investment in facilities- Local government, QT, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

The hurdles to entry into outdoor recreation and tourism will depend on the level of investment and infrastructure required. One strategy which may be adopted is to begin with events and after a series of successful events which can provide input into business planning and then possibly to full scale investment in permanent facilities. This may require further investigation of **temporary use permits** and **defined but limited life thresholds**. This would require education of potential industry entrants and negotiation with local government planners.

### **Recommendation**

**Further investigation is made re mechanisms to provide for temporary use permits and limited life thresholds for associated infrastructure.**

*Assessment tool for outdoor recreation opportunities – TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

The farmstay component has an excellent resource available in the form of the *Farm & Country Tourism on your property; Stage 1 Assessment Tool*. A similar tool should be developed for outdoor recreation in rural areas and linkages to the tourism industry should also be included.

### **Recommendation**

**An assessment tool for outdoor recreation opportunities be developed to allow potential entrants to understand scope of commitment and initial critical success criteria.**

*Hub and spoke model – TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

The investment required for a full scale integrated resort – even one with less than 20 units and which has a direct and valid connection to the rural, natural and resource values is very substantial. An alternative approach could be a series of properties with a sensible geographic relationship cooperatively involved in the supply of the various aspects of an integrated resort. For example one property could provide

accommodation, another rock climbing and a third water-based activities. This is similar to the way smaller food and wine producers co-operate in the Barossa and Yarra Valleys.

**Recommendation**

**That further investigation into the hub & spoke model as it could potentially relate to outdoor recreation and tourism in SEQ rural areas and prepare educational materials to support this concept.**

*WOOFers World-wide Opportunities Organic Farmers- TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

Organic farmers have a loosely organised international alliance based on the web and this can provide visitors for farmstays. The objectives of the organisation include:

- to enable people to learn first-hand about organic growing techniques
- to enable town-dwellers to experience living and helping on a farm
- to help farmers make organic production a viable alternative.

The constraints here are that the farm should be an organic operation and the farm management needs to be quite flexible as accommodation is provided in exchange for farm labouring. Matching labour needs to the availability of WOOFERS could be difficult and this scheme does not involve exchange of money, therefore the cash flow of the farm would not be improved.

**Recommendation**

**Material providing details relating to World-wide Opportunities {for} Organic Farmers is included in educational kits circulated to interested rural landholders.**

- **Financial Assistance**

*Strategies to reduce resistance to change – State Government, local governments, TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

Rural areas even within SEQ have demonstrated reluctance and occasional resistance to change, particularly around outdoor recreation and tourism enterprises. Financial incentives to consider change could take the form of **grants, taxation or relaxation of planning fees and infrastructure contributions**. This could be seen as similar to the program instituted by Brisbane City Council in relation to provision of affordable housing.

**Recommendation**

**Further investigation of the feasibility of various financial incentives designed to reduce resistance to outdoor recreation and tourism in rural areas to include grants, taxation and relaxation of planning fees and infrastructure contributions.**

*Industry re-structuring programs – TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

Industry re-structuring programs aim to move redundant participants from one industry to another. The next likely re-structuring program within rural SEQ is in the cane industry. Education kits highlighting the potential for outdoor recreation and tourism should be prepared ready for this influx as often considerable amounts of capital to facilitate the movement from one industry to another are required.

**Recommendation**

**A watching brief on industry re-structuring programs likely to impact on rural SEQ and preparation of education kits encouraging consideration of outdoor recreation and tourism projects.**

*One stop shop for licensing – Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation, QT, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

One stop shops carrying details for the above strategies should be placed inside the Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation offices and rural organisations such as NFF and Agforce.

**Recommendation**

**One stop shops for dissemination of all education materials recommended in this report placed in Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation, TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce offices.**

*Increasing professionalism & insurance*

While several linkages appear to be in place, further development of relationships between the insurance industry and outdoor recreation professional organisations should be developed. This would be with a view to reducing premiums for establishments with accredited leaders and practitioners or even licensed work environments.

**Recommendation**

**Investigation of improving relationships between outdoor recreation professional associations, the tourism industry and insurance firms.**

# **1. Introduction & Context**

## **1.1. Purpose and Scope of Study**

Improving the access to the regional landscapes of South East Queensland (SEQ) is critically important as this region is not particularly well-endowed with public owned and accessible open space. This is very clear when compared to other cities such as Sydney or Adelaide. Strategies to improve this access will become increasingly important as the region's population grows.

This review of the constraints on tourism and outdoor recreation in rural areas is part of wider research to be carried out as part of the development of a *Rural Futures Strategy* and Regional Landscape planning for the region. Although the exact timing cannot be known at this stage it is anticipated that this study will provide input to the following studies:

1. Outdoor Recreation Strategy; and
2. the proposed in-house review of urban activity from Schedule 3 of SEQ Regional Plan.

The project brief for this study required "...a review of planning and legal constraints on the use of rural lands for *tourism* and *outdoor recreation*."

The briefing provided by the Project Manager, Mr Stephen Macdonald, indicated that the appropriate approach for this project was that of an overview rather than a detailed dissection of the 17 relevant planning schemes. It was also made clear that this study was to highlight innovative approaches to the issues identified and the areas for further investigation.

## **1.2. Definitions – Outdoor Recreation and Tourism**

There is some practical and conceptual overlap between the terms tourism and outdoor recreation. The definitions below show that tourism is associated with travel AND recreation of some sort, but it is an activity undertaken during leisure hours. Clearly recreation, outdoor recreation and tourism are all conducted for pleasure and/or challenge.

Tourism is more likely to be associated with commercial enterprises required to transport and sustain as well as entertain visitors.

Outdoor recreation activities can be provided on an economic basis or purely within the volunteer sphere. The definition below specifically excludes outdoor activities involving rules and competition.

## RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

### Recreation

Recreation activities are those:

- People undertake for enjoyment in their own free time;
- Not based on formal competition and/or organised administration;
- That lack a formal set of rules.

### Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor Recreation activities:

- Are undertaken outside the confines of buildings (ie in the outdoors); and
- Do not involve organised competition or formal rules; and
- Can be undertaken without the existence of any built facilities or infrastructure; and
- May require large areas of land or water; and
- May require outdoor areas of predominantly unmodified natural landscape.

Note: Built facilities, site modification or infrastructure may be provided to manage the impacts generated by the activities. However, outdoor recreation activities are not dependent on built facilities, site modification or infrastructure. Activities that involve organised competition based on formal rules are, by definition, sports.

Source: *Appendix A: Open Space for Sport and Recreation – Planning Principles and Implementation Notes*

### Tourism

Tourism can be defined as the act of travel for the purpose of recreation, and the provision of services for this act. A tourist is someone who travels at least eighty kilometres (fifty miles) from home for the purpose of recreation,

Source: *World Tourism Organization (a United Nations body).*

For the purposes of this project *Outdoor Recreation* has been expanded to include *Outdoor Sport*. This is to ensure that occasional events which could bring significant economic benefit, and improve the range of opportunities available for a particular outdoor recreation, are not over-looked. With the requirements of liability insurances and local government licensing, and where an economic benefit can be identified, there are unlikely to be many pure outdoor recreation activities, i.e. many outdoor recreation activities will have some aspect of outdoor sports.

The constraints imposed upon tourism will be restricted to those allowable under Schedule 2, Part H *SEQ Regional Plan 2005-2026*, in particular:

- (d) tourist accommodation, including, for example – farmstay and bed and breakfast accommodation; other tourist accommodation up to a maximum of 20 accommodation units.

The other aspects of tourism such as transport or entertainment of visitors and the business of running a tourism enterprise are generally beyond the scope of this project.

### 1.3. Issues Beyond Scope

During the conduct of this study several critical issues came to light and while technically beyond the scope of this study these have been noted for reference by OUM. The major issues in this category are:

#### 1. District sporting fields and other community facilities in the Regional Landscape & Rural Project area

The current interpretation suggests that district level sporting ground and community facilities are not to be located outside the urban footprint. This has been a very significant issue for many of the local government recreation planners who were contacted during this study. It was agreed with OUM that these issues should be collated and presented as part of this study. A summary of these collated issues is shown at Appendix 1. In their submission the SEQ sport and Recreation Officers Professional Forum requested a written response from OUM.

#### 2. Relative shortage of Protected Areas in SEQ

A brief discussion highlighting the shortage of areas suitable for outdoor recreation in suitable protected tenures is presented in Section 2. Options for addressing this issue are included in the innovative strategies presented in Section 7.

#### 3. Financial & Business Planning

This theme is developed through the case studies and then again in Section 7 as one of the innovative approaches to be considered.

### 1.4. Methodology

The information presented in this report was collected as proposed and featured the following:

- Internet based literature searches
- Interviews with:
  - State and local government planners and recreation planners
  - Greater Brisbane Tourism Workshop held 14 December, 2005 at Brisbane Marketing's offices
  - operators of a variety of events & tourist facilities with “*direct connection with a rural or natural resource value of the surrounding land*” – SEQ Regional Plan Schedule 2 Dictionary
  - Staff from OUM office – telephone calls
  - Several of the Working group members and their input helped shape the selection and execution of the case studies (see below)
- Meeting and submission from Gary Dillon principal of Dillon Folker Stephens, planners representing several interests including Resort Golf Course Estates and Caravan Park Owners and Developers. (See Appendix 2.)
- Received a submission from Caravan Parks Association of Queensland. (See Appendix 2.)

- Invited positions from recreation planners and interested land use planners in respect of the use of land outside the urban footprint for community purposes and district sporting fields. (See Appendix 1.)
- Each project team member carried out several case studies each of which required an interview and in most cases field visits.
- Several of the Working group members were interviewed and their input helped shape the selection and execution of the case studies.

In the original brief from OUM and during subsequent meetings the reports from the SEQ Regional Trails Planning project were promised, however these were not available for release during the conduct of this study. These reports, when available, will provide relevant additional knowledge to that provided in this report and are recommended to the reader.

### **1.5. Reports and presentations supporting this report**

In addition to this draft report the other items presented to either OUM staff or Working Group members are listed below:

1. Verbal and PowerPoint presentation 25 November 2005
2. Work program 28 November 2005, modified to include issues raised by Working Group members
3. Written interim report presented to Mr Stephen Macdonald 23 December 2005
4. Verbal progress report and PowerPoint presentation 25 January 2006.

Each of these presentations has been provided to OUM and are not included in this report.

## 2. Context & planning framework

### 2.1. SEQ Regional Plan – the relevant links

#### Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area & Rural Futures Strategy

The SEQ Regional Plan is the over-arching planning document for the 18 local governments in SEQ. In the context of this report there are several principles, policies and strategies which provide direction.

The various and inter-related aspects of the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area are acknowledged in Principle 3.1 (see box) and collaborative planning and management is proposed in the related policies.

The notes around this Principle link the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area and the proposed Rural Futures Strategy (see SEQ Regional Plan 2005-2026:37.)

Later in the Plan the Rural Futures Strategy is further described as “...the basis for an integrated rural planning framework in SEQ across State and local government. It will build upon existing strategies, policies and programs and provide a whole-of-government approach to the future needs of rural SEQ.” SEQ Regional Plan 2005-2026:48.

#### Scenic Amenity

While a balance between the competition for land and natural environmental resources will be an objective of the Rural Futures, the issue of economic development opportunities is identified as one of the five major issues effecting rural communities.

The use and exploitation of the scenic amenity for both outdoor recreation and tourism is also anticipated in the Plan at Principle 3.2 Scenic Amenity (see box).

The notes around this Principle include “... access to significant and popular viewpoints are important for

#### 3.1 Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area

##### Principle

Maintain and manage the values and function of the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area to enhance the environmental, **economic**, cultural and lifestyle benefits to the region.

##### Policies

3.1.1. Recognise important environmental, landscape, cultural and **economic links** between the rural and urban areas of the region.

3.1.2. Define, plan for and manage lands within the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area in collaboration with state agencies, local government, regional natural resource management bodies and local communities.

3.1.3 Support the integrated management prudent use of the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area by developing a regional landscape planning framework.

#### 3.2 Scenic amenity

##### Principle

Acknowledge, protect and manage significant scenic amenity areas and features.

##### Policies

...3.2.2 Improve knowledge and understanding of the region's scenic amenity and its contribution to the liveability and sense of place for residents and the attraction for visitor and tourists.



both local residents and visitors. Access to viewpoints may include public access to privately-owned lands where voluntary arrangements have been formally established to effectively manage public access and use”. SEQ Regional Plan 2005-2026:39.

Again the interests of both tourists or visitors and local residents are recognised as important within the context of planning for Scenic Amenity.

### Outdoor Recreation & tourism needs

The twin foci of this assignment are Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. In terms of the SEQ Regional Plan Outdoor Recreation is addressed in Principle 3.4 (see box) which links the outdoor recreation opportunities to the needs of the community and the liveability of the region.

The policies address the need for networks, the balance that is needed between community needs for recreation and other values, and the requirement to incorporate outdoor recreation activities and opportunities in wider planning contexts.

The Principle of Regional open space (3.5 within the Plan) highlights the need for a high-quality and accessible network and one of the policies (3.5.1) identifies both community and tourist needs.

The overlap between outdoor recreation and tourism is established through the competing uses of publicly accessible open space. Both the provision of outdoor recreation activities and the development of tourist and outdoor recreation facilities have the potential to address the issue of economic development opportunities in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production areas. The purpose of this report is to illustrate the constraints from the planning and regulatory system to the potential economic development opportunities.

#### 3.4 Outdoor Recreation

##### Principle

Provide a range of enjoyable outdoor recreation opportunities to meet the diverse needs of the community and enhance the liveability of the region.

##### Policies

3.4.1 Establish and maintain a network of accessible outdoor recreation areas, including regional parks, trails and waterways, as well as private land with the voluntary agreement of the landowners.

3.4.2 Manage outdoor recreation activities to provide for community needs and expectations whilst protecting and maintaining ecological, scenic and cultural values.

3.4.3 Coordinate planning and delivery of outdoor recreation

#### 3.5 Regional open space

##### Principle

Provide for a high-quality and accessible regional open space network.

##### Policies

3.5.1 Identify and develop publicly accessible open space that meets community and **tourist** needs...

## 2.2. Planning schemes, local laws and other state regulations

Most outdoor recreation activities, almost by definition occur independently of built structures (this is further developed in the following chapter). Buildings may be needed for support or accommodation functions but until this is required most outdoor recreation activities are unlikely to intersect with the planning system.

Outdoor sporting activities, particularly those involving some type of competition are more likely to involve some type of building and this would require approval from the local government through the planning system. A development approval for such facilities is likely to entail:

- satisfying the requirements of the local planning scheme and policies
- addressing all issues raised by referral agencies in relation to the proposal
- meeting the infrastructure charges and other conditions imposed by local government
- possibly triggering the on-going involvement of several State government agencies or through functions delegated to local government – these would be for licensed activities such as environmental relevant activities such as septic systems greater than 20 equivalent population
- occasionally meeting the requirements of Federal agencies but this is generally restricted to areas adjacent to World Heritage listed areas or national listed endangered species.

By contrast tourism, with the requirement to capture income for the operators, is far more likely to require negotiation of the planning system. This process is the same as described above and several tourism projects proposed in Queensland have triggered the involvement of the Federal government through the Environmental Protection and Biological Conservation Act, 1999, often due to the location proximity of a World Heritage area.

### **2.3. Protected Area Tenure**

SEQ is not as well served for protected open space as many other cities. This is noted by NRMSEQ with:

The majority in SEQ is freehold tenure with publicly owned open space (national park, and conservation reserves etc) comprising 16% of the region. This compares poorly with other interstate regions, for example Sydney where public lands make up 45% of that region.  
NRMSEQ 2004:55

This is not to suggest that there is only 16% of open space available in SEQ, but rather that only this proportion is protected by its tenure. Many rural areas provide extraordinary and important open space and scenic amenity. This issue has been recognised through the SEQ Regional Plan and the earlier associated issues paper with the following:

Rural communities and industries make an important and often under-recognised contribution to our way of life. While some of us make it our home, many of us enjoy relaxing in the country at weekends. Rural land adds to the beauty of SEQ and it provides us with much needed open space.  
SEQ 2021:10.

Through their planning schemes local government identifies open space within their city or shire. As the graph shown below illustrates this varies significant across the region from less than three percent in Logan and Ipswich to 42.6% in Brisbane and 36.33% in Kilcoy.

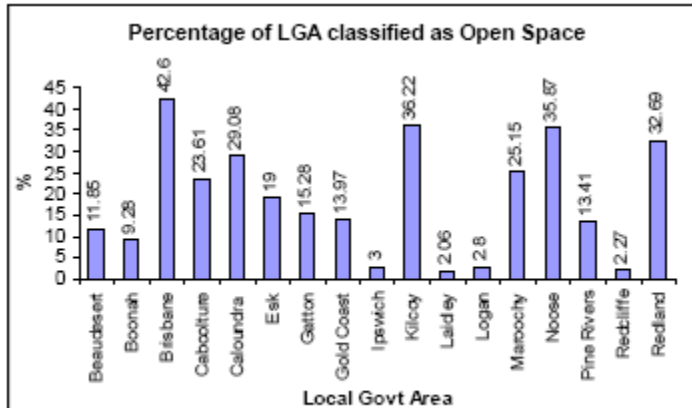


Figure 5.1

Source: NRMSEQ 2004:10.

The type of open space for each of the SEQ local governments is broken down by category in the table below. The nature of the constraints operating on the areas identified as State Forest and National Park are well known, these are controlled under the Nature Conservation Act, however the other titles used in this graph are not tenures but description of zones which are part of the relevant planning schemes.

The constraints imposed by these various zones vary from local authority to local authority and may possibly include Conservation Parks which is a tenure protected under the Nature Conservation Act but administered sometimes by local government. Two examples where an “Open Space Zone” based on land uses, definitions and intents can be found are in the planning schemes from Gatton and Boonah. Another approach is found in the Redland Shire planning scheme which has 23 zones with three environmental zones and an Open Space zone.

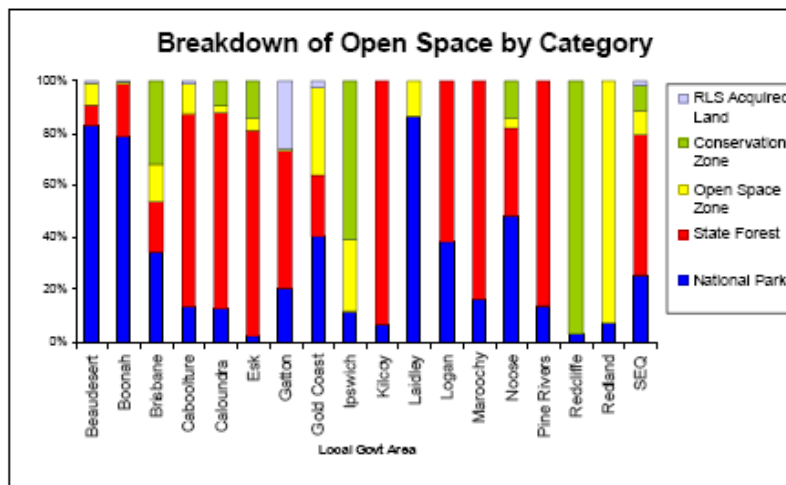


Figure 5.2

### 3. The Context and Characteristics of Outdoor Recreation

#### 3.1. Characteristics of Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation includes all activities and processes undertaken in, or relying on the natural environment, during non-obligatory time. Outdoor recreation activities are therefore those activities that:

- Are undertaken outside the confines of buildings;
- Can be undertaken without the existence of any built facility or infrastructure; and
- May require large areas of open space (in the form of land, water and/or air).

Outdoor recreation encompasses many different outdoor recreation activities. One consequence of this variety is that the space or place required for each outdoor recreation activity is different. For example, surfing requires a combination of underwater topography, a shoreline terrain and wind condition that produces waves and provides safe places to launch and land. That same place probably would not be suitable for sailing or water skiing or motor boating. A camp site for a hike tent may too small for a large dual axle caravan and tow vehicle. A motocross circuit can fit into a four hectare site while trail bike riders can cover over 400 kilometres in a day without riding in the same place twice.

To add to the complexity of this situation, outdoor recreation activities may be either non-competitive or competitive. Table 1 shows the difference between non-competitive and competitive outdoor recreation.

Non-competitive	Competitive (Outdoor Sports)
Picnicking	
Camping	
Swimming in the sea, lakes or streams	Marathon open sea swimming event
Bushwalking	Orienteering & Rogaining
Rockclimbing	
Unstructured children's play (eg. climbing trees outside suburban backyards, chase, hide & seek games, building cubbies, playing in or near creeks or other water bodies)	
Recreational white water rafting, kayaking and canoeing	Slalom kayaking competition on natural white water streams
Recreational trail bike riding (ie. QT licensed riders of road-registered off-road motorcycles)	Enduros - cross-country off-road motorcycle racing
Recreational horse trail riding	Endurance horse riding competition
Recreational mountain biking	Cross-country mountain bike racing Downhill racing

**Table 1 Comparison of outdoor recreation activities**

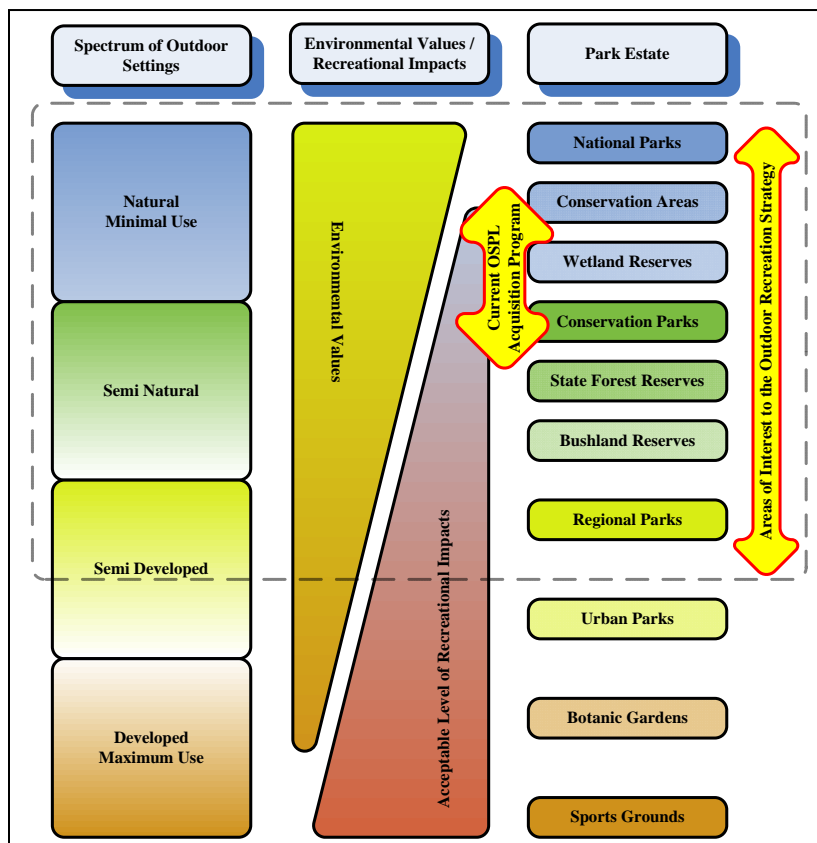
While competitive activities have much in common with non-competitive activities, policies, planning outcomes, infrastructure and initiatives that support competitive activities do not necessarily support non-competitive activities. For example, competition often focuses on speed, technical difficulty and increased risk-taking – each of which reduces safety margins.

Consequently competition often requires exclusive use of areas that could otherwise be concurrently available for several non-competitive outdoor recreation activities.

The implications are that competitive outdoor recreation tends to be event-based involving a range of event coordinators, event officials, spectators and ancillary facilities. Non-competitive outdoor recreation activities, while still notionally event based, have much less ancillary structure associated with them.

Also, as each outdoor recreation activity has its own space or place requirements and its own set of actions and skills, different regulations come in to play. Outdoor recreation activities are regulated by a number of public sector agencies which sometimes overlap with those of other public sector agencies. Complex, and sometimes inconsistent, legal, policy and jurisdictional frameworks, financial resources and funding sources – among other factors - may also influence the ability of anyone to provide outdoor recreation services or as a minimum shape the way they are delivered (QORF, 2005).

The complex relationship between open space and the various components of recreation is cleverly shown in the graphic representation below. This comes from the Gold Coast Outdoor Recreation Strategy and was provided by Gold Coast City Council.



Source: Gold Coast Outdoor Recreation Strategy

### 3.2. Regulations relating to Outdoor Recreation

Each outdoor recreation activity has its own space or place requirements and its own set of actions and skills, and different regulations will come in to play. Outdoor recreation activities are regulated by a number of public sector agencies which sometimes overlap with those of other public sector agencies. Complex, and sometimes inconsistent, legal, policy and jurisdictional frameworks, financial resources and funding sources – among other factors – may also influence the ability of anyone to provide outdoor recreation services or as a minimum shape the way they are delivered (QORF, 2005).

On private land, outdoor recreation activities are regulated by:

- **Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service** Regulation (including education and enforcement) of both recreational and commercial hunting and taking of native wildlife.
- **Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPIF)**  
Management of diseases and movement of livestock (including horses, donkeys, camels, alpacas, etc that are ridden or used as pack animals for recreation).  
<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/thematiclists/2263.html> and  
<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/health/3991.html>  
Laws and policies governing both recreational and commercial fishing including recreational fishing permits, setting seasonal closures, gear restrictions and bag limits.  
<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/fishweb/>
- **Queensland Transport (QT):**  
Developing and managing the land, air and sea transport environment in Queensland.  
Motor vehicle registration. <http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/licensingrego>  
Licensing of motor vehicle drivers. <http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/licensingrego>  
Laws governing motor vehicle use (including recreational uses); and  
<http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/>
- **Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ):**  
Recreational vessel registration and regulation of motor vessels (including personal water craft); Laws governing maritime safety and marine pollution.  
<http://www.msq.qld.gov.au/qt/msq.nsf/index/legislation>  
Waterways Transport Management Plans developed under the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994. [http://www.msq.qld.gov.au/qt/msq.nsf/index/legislation\\_waterways](http://www.msq.qld.gov.au/qt/msq.nsf/index/legislation_waterways)  
  
For further information about Maritime Safety Queensland, <http://www.msq.qld.gov.au/>
- **(Queensland) Department of Natural Resources and Mines (NRM):**  
Management of recreational fossicking in Queensland.  
<http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au/mines/fossicking/>
- **Queensland Police Service:**  
regulation of recreational shooting including firearms licenses and certification of firing ranges;  
Enforcement of laws relating to bicycle, vessel and motor vehicle use (including recreational uses) in public areas and on roads.
- **Local Governments**  
Local governments also have the power to use Local Government Act 1993 local laws to manage outdoor recreation activities in areas for which they are responsible. For further information, refer to the Local Government Act 1993 Chapter 12.

### **3.3. Recreation Demands in SEQ**

The 2001 South East Queensland Outdoor Recreation Demand Study investigated the nature and extent of participation in outdoor recreation activities by the residents of South East Queensland. This study was based on a similar survey of people living in South East Queensland published in 1998. In late 2001, a total of 2,820 people participated in a telephone survey that recorded details regarding their participation in a range of outdoor recreation activities, how often they participated, the desire to participate further, and their motivation. In addition, this survey examined the different types of recreational environments or settings in which people chose to recreate, and the characteristics of these recreational settings.

The participants in the 2001 study were a randomly chosen sample of the population of South East Queensland, and fitted broadly into the demographics of this population with respect to location, age and gender.

The findings of the 2001 Outdoor Recreation Demand Study are largely similar to those of the 1998 study. Like the 1998 study, the 2001 study found that large numbers of people currently participate in a variety of outdoor recreation activities in a range of settings, but the potential demand is likely to put more pressure on places that are perceived as being substantially natural.

#### **Key Findings**

The key findings of the South East Queensland Outdoor Recreation Demand Study (2001) were:

- Participation in outdoor recreation activities in South East Queensland is high.
- Choice of activity is influenced by factors such as location, age and gender.
- Participants prefer to engage in outdoor recreation activities in as natural a setting as possible, given constraints of time and other commitments.
- Participants expressed concern about encroaching urban development and the resultant loss of natural areas, with consequent crowding of remaining sites.
- Participants prefer to engage in outdoor recreation activities for leisure reasons, rather than for competitive or goal-focused reasons.
- Amongst non-participants, there exists a strong interest in becoming involved in outdoor recreation activities, with “a lack of time due to other commitments” cited as the major constraint to participation.
- Other constraints on participation, which show an increase since the previous 1998 study, are “costs” and “a lack of places in which to recreate”.

#### **The Frequency and Levels of Participation**

Table 1 provides details of 2001 participation and the median frequency of participation for each activity investigated. The product of the actual South East Queensland population represented by the percentage of participation in the median participation gives the number of activity events that occurred during the 12 months previous to the survey. In addition, it provides details of the recreational settings that are currently used for these activities.

**Table 2: Incidence and frequency of participation over the past 12 months, and the recreational settings in which this occurred**

Outdoor Recreation Activity	% who participated in previous 12 months	Actual population represented (based on ABS 2000 data)	Frequency (median)	Activity events per year (population multiplied by median)	Recreational settings		
					Somewhat natural %	Very natural %	Totally natural %
Picnicking	67	1,273,476	4	5,093,904	59	33	8
Walking or nature study	49	931,348	12	11,176,176	49	34	17
Camping	33	627,234	2	1,254,468	29	51	20
Bicycle riding	26	494,185	11	5,436,035	83	15	2
Horse riding	7	133,050	2	266,100	27	46	27
Water activities	56	1,064,398	12	12,772,776	62	31	7
Driving 2WD vehicles	24	456,170	5	2,289,850	35	57	8
Driving 4WD vehicles	23	437,163	4	1,748,652	19	63	18
Driving other vehicles	7	133,050	5	665,250	39	52	9
Riding on motorised watercraft	27	513,192	4	2,052,768	40	46	14
Riding on non motorised watercraft	19	361,135	2	722,270	39	47	14
Abseiling or rock climbing	6	114,043	2	228,086	52	24	24

As depicted in Table 1, picnicking remains the most popular activity in South East Queensland, with 67% of respondents having participated in the previous year. However, the median rate of participation was only 4 times per year. Walking or nature study and water activities, on the other hand, was slightly less popular (49 % and 56% respectively), were engaged in much more frequently, both having a median of 12 times per year.

The number of activity events that have occurred during the 12 months previous to this survey, for each activity, indicate the scale of outdoor recreation participation in South East Queensland. For example, there were 11,176,176 walking or nature study events during the year. Assuming these participation rates remain constant, if the population of South East Queensland increases by one million people over the next 20 years, the problems of creating places to go, already been reported by participant's as a problem, will be exacerbated.

Participation in activities also differed significantly across the sub-regions within South East Queensland. Picnicking, camping, and driving both two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive vehicles were most popular with people from NorsROC. Water based recreation was most popular amongst SouthROC and NorsROC, both of which include a number of coastal shires



and cities. The WestROC population appeared to be more involved in horse riding and driving other vehicles on unsealed roads, though neither of these differences proved to be statistically significant. WestROC also shared with the NorsROC population a higher incidence of driving two-wheel drive vehicles on unsealed roads. Bicycle riding was most popular amongst the Brisbane based population, a result that may reflect the Brisbane City Council's continued investment in an extensive system of bikeways.

### **Motivation**

The motivations of participants and potential participants were also investigated, once again with similar results to the 1998 study. The predominant motivation for participation was for leisure (defined as some combination of all or some of the following - sightseeing, learning, looking, unwinding, escaping, relaxing, experiencing peace and quiet – but may still involve hard physical exertion), and the least popular reason was competition. Participants expressed no desire to make their participation more competitive.

### **Outdoor Recreation Settings**

Participants also expressed a strong desire to see further development of local green spaces that are perceived to be relatively natural. Given the constraints of time, family, health and money, many participants were unable to frequently access the more remote areas (although these remained important as places for special holidays). “Quick-fix” areas that are local, safe, and still retained a sense of naturalness were seen to be extremely important in the lives of busy people who did not have the time to organise long trips for themselves or their families. Although the results of the 2001 survey are broadly similar to the 1998 survey, some important trends have emerged over the four years that separated these studies.

Outdoor recreation activities remain popular with the population of South East Queensland, and show evidence of increasing in popularity. In addition, strong evidence exists to indicate a higher rate of usage of very natural and totally natural recreational settings. The increasing scarcity of these settings, and the consequent need to travel large distances to access them, contribute to two of the major constraints on participation: the lack of time and the general lack of places to go.

## **3.4. Major Management Issues**

QORF (2005), describes the process by which the quality or condition of recreation settings deteriorate and/or change as a consequence of the impacts of recreational use and/or the actions of management as recreation succession. It is further stated that this is the primary outdoor recreation issue facing land managers, especially in areas where demand for outdoor recreation is highest and that all outdoor recreation activities, even the so-called “*passive*” ones, cause biophysical and social impacts.

The result is that without careful site management, there is an inevitable loss of site quality. If all of the sites in a large area degrade over time, there can be large scale loss of recreation quality and diversity. (QORF, 2005)

Recreation succession can be accelerated by attempts by management agencies and other landholders to mitigate or control the impacts of recreational use. Typically, management agencies and other landholders attempt to mitigate or control the impacts of recreational use

through a range of means including access restrictions, provision of built facilities, on-site supervision, signage and site hardening. Recreation succession can also be accelerated by land use decisions that change the character of the places where people recreate.

Furthermore, the evidence indicates that the rates (in terms of numbers of users, length of stay etc.) at which impacts occur is much faster than the rate at which sites can recover to their pre-impact condition. Short term (say less than 5 years) closure of sites to allow recovery is usually not successful.

From a land or natural resource management perspective, outdoor recreation, adventure tourism, outdoor education, adventure therapy and eco-tourism present very similar issues. This is because outdoor recreation, adventure tourism and eco-tourism frequently involve the same types of outdoor recreation activities. These outdoor activities generate the same types of social, managerial and biophysical impacts even though they may be undertaken for quite different purposes.

For example, orienteering, rock climbing, canoeing, bushwalking, camping etc. generate the same types of biophysical, managerial and social impacts whether they are part of an outdoor education program undertaken by school students, part of an adventure therapy program for children at risk, part of a commercial tour undertaken by tourists, undertaken by members of a club or simply an informal outdoor recreational activity undertaken by local residents.

## **4. The context of tourism**

### **4.1. Characteristics**

The major and obvious difference between outdoor recreation and tourism is the essentially commercial nature of the latter activity. Recreation actually sits inside the definition of tourism by international agencies as...

...the act of travel for the purpose of recreation, and the provision of services for this act. A tourist is someone who travels at least eighty kilometres (fifty miles) from home for the purpose of recreation,  
Source: World Tourism Organization (a United Nations body).

In the context of this assignment and the above definition an outdoor recreation activity such as bushwalking on Mt Barney can also be an important and perhaps motivating aspect of a guest at Mt Barney Country Lodge.

As this report is to provide input into the Rural Futures work, the inter-dependent and broad ranging nature of tourism within the economy should be recognised. Tourism Australia, the national body responsible for tourism research and promotion provides the following description of the shape of international tourism within the Australian economy.

In 2003-04, the industries which accounted for the largest share of tourism exports for international visitors were long distance passenger transportation (16%), shopping (including gifts and souvenirs) (16%), accommodation services (10%), takeaway and restaurant meals (15%), food products (8%) and fuel (7%).  
Tourism Australia website

Domestic tourism forms the largest component of the industry, but generates a lower economic impact and is subject to far lower rates of growth than that created by international tourism. However the impact of domestic tourism is similar in its distribution across the various sectors of the economy but with a reduced impact in terms of passenger transport.

### **4.2. Context in Rural areas**

The major tourism destinations in SEQ and Australia generally are focussed on seaside or lakeside locations where domestic holiday visitors dominate. International visitors are also focused on these established tourism locations in addition to the major capital city gateways of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Many tourists are also prepared to travel to iconic locations such as Cairns and Uluru.

The intrusion or visibility of tourists in rural Australia has recently increased with the “Grey Nomads” and other groups travelling around the country, however the dominant impacts and benefits of tourism are generally quite concentrated into either large cities or coastal tourist locations.

### 4.3. Tourism in Rural SEQ

In areas outside the urban footprint of SEQ there are major resorts which rely on the natural beauty of the location, the proximity of large protected areas and the outdoor recreation opportunities available. These include O'Reilly's, Binna Burra, the resorts on South and North Stradbroke Islands and Tangalooma on Moreton Island.

In contrast, Hidden Vale at Grandchester provides a very high standard of accommodation across 30 units and is located on a working cattle station. Several of the resort functions are located within the original homestead buildings.

While not necessarily exhaustive the *SEQ Country Touring Guide* provides a high quality overview of the tourism establishments through out the rural areas of SEQ. The majority of the locations in this publication are within SEQ boundaries. There are eight touring itineraries with the following titles

1. Characters & Culture
2. Trails, Trains & Touring
3. Mountains & Moons
4. Food, Wine & Fossicking
5. Country Charms & Cellar Doors
6. Flower & Falls
7. Granite, Gorges & Galleries
8. Murals, Memorials & Merlot

In addition to these themes National Park information including details relating to camping, walks and nature appreciation are listed adjacent to the town or city. It is interesting to note that none of these trails include outdoor recreation and rely more on historic, cultural, good food, wine growing and gem stone fossicking activities. Forty seven separate festivals and events are shown on a 12 month calendar and four are associated with outdoor sport or recreation events, namely:

- 3-11 September Cycle Queensland
- 1-2 October Bjelke-Petersen Dam Fishing Competition
- 14-15 November FEI Eventing World Cup "Equestrian Triathlon"
- 13-13 Boondooma Dam Yellowbelly Fishing Competition

There appears to be some opportunity for improved communications and possible potential commercialisation of the abundant outdoor recreation activities in these rural areas. Entry into these guides is on a commercial and competitive basis and is more appropriately considered by well-established enterprises rather than fledgling ventures.

### 4.4. Farmstay Tourism

The farmstay segment is smaller again than say, Hidden Vale, and tends towards 10 accommodation units per establishment. No figures were available for SEQ but Tourism Queensland (TQ) provided the following estimates of participation in farmstay tourism.

Figure 2.1 Participation in Farmstays

Country	% of farms involved in farmstays
West Germany	8%
Netherlands	8%
France	4%
Italy	2%
Austria	10%
Sweden	20%
Switzerland	20%
Peri-urban Sydney	14% currently 28% at some time in the past

Source: Knowd, et al 1999 in TQ 2002.

These wide ranging results are likely to be attributed to

- Cultural differences, including farming approaches and philosophies
- Organisational capacity and effectiveness of the national tourism organisations
- Aptitude and interest of farm owners and managers
- Transport networks into peri-urban areas.

For the balance of this report the farmstay tourism component will be the focus as this is closest to the scope of the Rural Futures project. It should be recognised that commercially run outdoor recreation activities are also likely to appeal to tourists regardless of their style of accommodation. For example, tourist, staying at say, Hiddenvale may wish to undertake rock climbing. This may or may not be encouraged by such an integrated resort as this business model is designed to capture the recreational spend as well as that spent on accommodation and food.

Bed and Breakfast and farmstay tourism are similar components within the tourism industry and in April 2004 a peak body to represent both groups was formed. This move was strongly supported by the *National Farmers' Federation* "...to promote both farmstay and traditional B&B experiences {and} will enhance the opportunities for small operators to gain income from tourism across regional areas." NFF 2004/2005:81. It is interesting to note that the NFF acknowledged the challenge to these rural tourism businesses will lie in "consistently providing a high quality of service in a tough economic climate".

It is likely to be more rewarding for outdoor recreation enterprises or properties to concentrate their marketing efforts on the Bed and Breakfast and farmstay tourism component to overcome the tendency of the integrated resorts to prevent leakage outside their establishment.

#### 4.5. Constraints to developing tourism in Rural SEQ

TQ has developed a process of strategic planning which is based on "...an alignment and cohesion of corporate business with the needs of the tourism industry and key industry stakeholders (TQ2004:i). The *South East Queensland Country Destination Management Plan* (DMP) is the relevant document for the rural areas of SEQ and this was produced after extensive consultation with industry participants and other key stakeholders across the region. This region includes six sub-regions each with the common goal of:

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Enhance sustainable tourism industry growth and profitability through a strategic approach to tourism research, policy and planning and the enhancement of visitor products, services and infrastructure  
TQ 2004:75-77

Strategies to address the above goal were developed for each sub-region across a common set of issues. Policy, Planning and Regulation was the most relevant issue to this assignment and the strategies under these headings for each sub-region within the SEQ Regional Landscape and Rural Production area are reproduced below.

Sub-region	Policy, Planning & Regulation
Brisbane Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Local Councils and State Government to ensure policy, planning and regulatory decisions affecting tourism have adequate information to give maximum results for the region.</li> </ul>
Gold Coast Hinterland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Beaudesert Shire Council to ensure the decisions effecting tourism are made in an informed , accurate and timely manner</li> <li>• Work with relevant agencies to facilitate the development of CERRA World heritage Area management systems that are more reflective of tourists' needs, from a policy, planning and regulation perspective</li> </ul>
Sunshine Coast Hinterland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance coordination and prioritisation of tourism in planning and funding at Local, State and Federal levels.</li> <li>• Work with relevant agencies to reduce the impact of public liability insurance on existing operators and potential new businesses.</li> <li>• Work with industry and relevant agencies to encourage continued sustainable development, capitalising on the unspoilt and uncommercialised aspects of the region.</li> </ul>

Source: TQ 2004:75-77.

To further refine these strategies and to ensure industry support for the process the SEQ DMP was thoroughly workshopped with industry participants and key stakeholders. The findings and participant list for this event is shown at Appendix 3.

It is important to note that the strategies from the DMP above appear to clearly identify “policy, planning and regulatory decisions” as key areas requiring attention. When this issue was discussed at the workshop it became clear that:

- There were few examples which could be quoted.
- Few participants understood even the rudimentary structure and processes of the planning and regulatory system in Queensland
- “Policy and planning” was more likely to mean industry policy and planning with a particular focus on marketing and funding.
- The scale of projects and funds available to many particularly, potential new entrants, was quite low level, that is well below 20 accommodation units.

- Any costs which were incurred during the planning and development process were seen as unjust but when questioned a little further the participant recognised this was a government requirement of business and probably not restricted to the tourism industry.

Another indication that planning and regulatory constraints are not a major constraint to tourism in rural areas is in the excellent publication *Farm & Country Tourism on Your Property*. This booklet has been prepared to assist farmers and landholders decide if they should proceed with farmstay tourism and was funded jointly by the Sustainable Tourism CRC, TQ and AGforce. Neither this first booklet nor the subsequent and more detailed Stage 2 workbook identify planning and/or regulations as a major consideration or constraint. The emphasis from both publications is on:

- The business establishment requirements including financial and personal goals
- The attractiveness of the property
- Markets, pricing, competitors & partners
- Targeting a market

The barriers or constraints to farmstays which were identified by TQ and identified by major stakeholder groups include:

#### *Potential Operators*

- Costs of marketing knowledge and involvement
- The need to work longer hours, less time to spend with family and friends
- Problems due to the seasonal nature of tourism
- Public liability costs.

#### *Rural residents*

- Rural residents see that tourism has some negative elements that detract from it as a companion industry which included:
  - Damaged signs
  - Litter
  - Bad behaviour
  - Damage by vehicles to bush roads and tracks
  - The “tarting up” of places for tourist
  - The potential for in-migration
  - Increased traffic
  - Lack of respect for private land, leaving gates open and invasion of privacy.

#### *Existing on farm Infrastructure & location:*

- Many farm tourism ventures have low room numbers and consequently low revenue
- Difficulty in securing sufficient tourist numbers to be financially self-sufficient
- 2-3 hours (drive) appears to be the maximum for weekends away and 1.5 hours for an overnight stay.
- International visitors also show aversion to travel for more than an hour and fifteen minutes, particularly immediately after international arrival.

TQ 2002:5.

Again planning and regulatory issues were not on this list, but the list does provide an indication of the barriers to participation, many of which can be addressed through education and experience. Several of these issues arise again through the case studies in the next section.

## 5. A series of case studies

### 5.1. Case study approach

After consultation with Working Group members a series of case studies was decided upon. The methodological limitation of relying on existing events and facilities is acknowledged, but after examination it became clear that there was no obvious source of failed or prevented projects. Full case studies are shown at Appendix 4 with summaries and highlights of the conclusions from this work shown below.

The broad purpose of the case studies was to identify what constraints, if any, had been experienced by the event or facility in question and how had they overcome these constraints.

The purpose of each case study was to describe the facility or event in sufficient detail to:

- Identify **Constraints** imposed by
  - local government **planning system**
  - Local Laws
  - Other **regulatory requirements** imposed by State or local government
- Relevant **outdoor recreation** activities & attractive features
- List the success factors – views of operator, local tourist office, consultant.

Other issues to be addressed through the case studies included “how long it was functioning” and “what impact had the SEQ Regional plan made upon future similar projects”.

It was agreed that both outdoor recreational events and facilities established for outdoor recreation and/or tourism should be included. The basis for selection including the following criteria.

- A range of existing events & facilities from both motorised and non-motorised outdoor recreation activities.
- Located in Regional Landscape & Rural Production Area with a geographic spread across SEQ
- A range of tourist accommodation types
- Operators were available for interview
- Access possible usually supported with a field visit
- The facility or event had some outdoor recreation and/or tourism focus.

### 5.2. Events

The events selected are shown below

- Tom Quilty Endurance Horse Event
- Greenlands Motorcycle Event
- Mountain Biking in SEQ

The major findings from the events studied include the following



- Promoters/organisers enjoy considerable cooperation from local government and State agencies
- A connection between events & tourism and economic development was expected and generally delivered.
- Increased environmental or insurance costs passed onto competitors/participants
- New models operating on private property have been developed to address the shortage of venues, for example long distance motorcycle rides on private properties
- Communities can benefit from the bigger events. For example P&Cs run the catering for the larger motorcycle events and mountain bikers care for tracks
- SEQ Regional Plan – little impact all still happening.

Events generally do not attract the attention of the planning system, although Redland Shire and Gold Coast City have temporary use codes for premises. The other planning schemes in the region generally do not address this. Events are required to comply with several local laws, generally involving selling and handling of food and some parking regulations.

The local laws controlling vehicles for other than on a road have recently had some challenges and this is currently under investigation at Gold Coast City Council, particularly in respect of recreational vehicles on South Stradbroke Island.

### **5.3. Facilities**

The construction of facilities to accommodate visitors or provide ancillary services to recreational activities should be caught by the planning schemes through development applications. The case studies selected included the following types of recreational and tourist facilities.

- Motor Vehicle based
  - Land Cruiser Mountain Park
  - Black Duck Valley
- Camp grounds
  - Savages Crossing
  - Neurem Creek Cabins
  - BOAT Club Campgrounds at South Stradbroke Island
- B'n'B /Farmstay/Outdoor Ed
  - Mt Barney Lodge
  - Fordsdale Farmstay

Each type of facility experienced slightly different types of constraints in terms of the planning and regulatory systems and these are discussed under the relevant sub-headings below.

Findings from Motor Vehicle based facilities:

- The proposed buildings and/or construction methods can sit outside planning scheme and Building Code of Australia expectations.
- Rural local governments rarely receive Development Applications for highly specialised facilities and appeared to struggle with these types of projects.
- Environmental impacts and their management were often a point of difference between proprietors and regulators.

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- These facilities are meeting a strong demand for “off road settings” in an environment of increasing demand shaped by:
  - Increased enforcement of illegal riding
  - Sales increasing for motorcycles and off-road vehicles
  - Available areas closing to 4wd and trail bikes
- Insurance is recognised as expensive but also a valid business expense which is recouped through fees charged.
- A reading of the SEQ Regional Plan suggests that these facilities would not receive approval placing further pressure on existing facilities.

#### Findings from Camp grounds

- Wide range of recreation activities available with focus on water bodies and shore lines.
- Scenic and remote places attract people and alcohol and sometimes associated bad behaviour
- Private or Council operators face considerable operational costs due to:
  - High level and persistent demand
  - Often distant location
  - Difficulty of servicing - for example waste water and solid waste management
  - Increased environmental standards
- Up to \$30,000 to pre-lodgement stage was reported for a proposed campsite, however the respondent when questioned decided against this approach and purchased an existing campsite.
- There is evidence of many users failing to respect campsites and nearby private property. This was often associated with excessive alcohol consumption. These attitudes did not provide a good fit between rural activities and camping.
- Many farmers and rural landholders have consistently shown strong resistance to opening up their lands for casual visitors and while there is evidence of bad behaviour compared to the total number of camper nights estimated the occurrence as very low.
- QPWS is the major provider of campsites through the National Park system where a permit is required and Camping fees are \$4/person/ night or \$16/family/night.
- For National Parks, a family group is up to two adults and accompanying children under 18. Children under 5 are free and school groups on approved excursions are charged \$2.25 each. The maximum length of stay for parks is 22 days but shorter periods apply.
- This contrasts with no costs for free or unregulated camping or on Council sites for example Gold Coast City Council \$14 per night for South Stradbroke Island campgrounds and Neurem Creek \$9.60 adult per night and \$5.40 child per night.

#### Findings from B’n’B & Farmstays

- Planning and environmental issues and regulations were not raised as a prominent issue, but were acknowledged as an expensive and tiresome aspect to establishing these businesses.
- Complaints re planning “industry planning” including relationships with local government.
- The planning system was difficult and expensive to negotiate. One potential entrant was frustrated that a development approval dating from the late 1980’s could not be found by

the local government and to begin the process again would cost \$4,000. This was a sum which his enterprise could not support.

- New tourism developments into any rural areas were perceived initially as a significant change and one existing residents were often not comfortable with.
- The economic and cultural change accompanying a new tourist venture is likely to be lead by incomers not existing locals.
- Some indications that local government acted with the same suspicion and occasionally unlawfully in respect of new tourist projects.
- The initial set up period was tough financially with up to 5 years to break even
- The site of the tourist project is just part of the visitor experience and visitors are influenced by:
  - A diversified and working landscape
  - The vibrancy of a town centre e.g. there were suggestions that the activity and street life of Boonah contrasted markedly with bustle and agricultural atmosphere of Beaudesert
  - Local infrastructure plays a significant role and this is not always large investment but country roads, signage and public toilets can have a big impact on the visitor experience.
- SEQ Regional Plan acceptable for developments with less than 20 accommodation units.

#### **5.4. Issues highlighted by Case studies**

The industry participants and other stakeholders from both outdoor recreation and tourism indicated that they were well aware of the planning system and other State regulations, but that these of themselves were not the critical stumbling blocks to their enterprises.

The issues of the costs and accessibility of the planning system, transport regulations, public liability insurance and the raft of other compliance issues remain constraints to the further development of outdoor recreation and tourism and these are discussed in the next section.

It should also be noted that each of these issues are impacted upon by cultural and community expectations. Within rural areas it is not always accurate to assume that new development proposals, particularly those related to outdoor recreation and tourism will be welcomed unreservedly.

## **6. Constraints & other impacts on outdoor recreation and tourism in Rural SEQ**

### **6.1. The Planning system & other compliance issues**

Concerns about the cumbersome nature of the planning system and other State regulations were expressed by Working Group members and several key stakeholders and participants from the outdoor recreation and tourism industry. Concerns such as these have been expressed by many across the planning profession and the building and development industries.

The introduction of the *Integrated Planning Act, 1997* (IPA) provided a system for identifying and coordinating all planning issues as well as other State government conditions and requirements. The various State government departments with interests in development issues became known as referral agencies and the means and conditions of their involvement was specified in the *Integrated Planning Regulation 1998* (the Regulations). Schedule 2 of these regulations lists the various referral agencies and their jurisdictions as they are triggered by the standard building regulations and local planning schemes.

Tourism and outdoor recreation is not specifically identified within these schedules, however development applications will be picked up by this schedule if any of the following characteristics are associated with the development.

Application Types from Table 3 in Schedule 2:

- Land contiguous to a State-controlled road
- Land not contiguous to a State-controlled road
- Acid sulfate soils
- Declared catchment areas
- Coastal Management districts
- Land designated for community infrastructure
- Electricity infrastructure
- Clearing vegetation
- Contaminated land
- SEQ regional plan
- Public passenger transport
- Railways
- Oil and gas infrastructure

Source: Integrated Planning Regulation 1998: Schedule 2.

Once referral coordination processes have been triggered, it is generally the local government which acts as the coordinator of the various requests for information from the applicant. This aspect of the IPA has been characterised by extensive requests for information on potential impacts and delays in the approval processes. This process has been further complicated by a shortage of experienced planners prepared to work in local government and a development boom in SEQ.

The critical nature of this situation has been acknowledged by the Planning Minister Desley Boyle, who is to hold a summit during March 2006 to identify where,

IPA needs fixing to make it more efficient, to make it simpler and more straightforward and to clarify planners' and councillors' role and responsibilities." Ministerial Press Release 22 February, 2006.

From the research carried out and the interviews conducted it does appear that the planning system and State regulations have probably acted as a constraint on development generally. It is difficult to identify where tourism and outdoor recreation projects in rural areas may have been specifically disadvantaged. It should be noted that the Queensland planning system, has by the Minister's own admission, an urgent need for review to improve processes and to develop a system which is more "user friendly" Ministerial Press Release 22 February, 2006.

This impact has been on the entire development and building industries and not restricted to outdoor recreation or tourism. From our research it does appear that the proponents of outdoor recreation and tourism projects in rural areas appear to have many of the following characteristics

- Access to relatively small amounts of capital
- A low level of understanding of the planning system including its inherent processing time and costs
- A lack of the specific business skills required for a development project
- There is no automatic transferability of the skills required for farming and those required to run a successful recreation or tourism venture.

The above issues would disadvantage any sector in their dealings with the planning and regulatory systems.

## **6.2. Public liability insurance**

The massive increases in public liability insurance have been documented widely and reported in the press as being related to the global nature of the industry, tighter economic conditions and increasingly vocal shareholder expectations. Solutions which at least partially address these costs are being addressed through both legislative and non-legislative strategies.

### **Legislative changes**

Public liability for outdoor recreation activities on both public and privately owned lands has been a concern for some time and recent significant legislative changes have included Personal Injuries Proceeding Act 2002 which introduced:

- Requirements for pre-court procedure for all remaining personal injury actions
- Restrictions on legal advertising and touting in relation to personal injuries claims
- Restrictions on costs awards
- Limits upon damages – economic loss, loss of consortium, gratuitous services, interest, exemplary damages.

The Civil Liability Act 2003 (CLA), the main purpose of which was to ‘further facilitate the ongoing affordability of insurance through clarification of some basic principles within the substantive law and sustainable awards of damages for personal injury’.

Within the CLA the assessment of duty of care (ss.9 and 10) includes specific provisions on:

- The duty of care of public authorities
- The duty of care of professionals
- The impact of alcohol and criminal behaviour
- The impact of obvious risks
- The impact of dangerous recreational activities.

The CLA clarifies the concept of the Assumption of Risk and specifically defines (in Section 13) “Obvious Risk” as a “risk that, in the circumstances, would have been obvious to a reasonable person in the position of that person” and includes risks that are patent or a matter of common knowledge, risks that can be obvious even if a low probability of occurring, risks that can be obvious even if not physically observable. A person does not owe a duty to warn of obvious risks (section 15) EXCEPT

- If asked about the risk
- If required by a written law
- If the defendant is a professional.

The CLA also address dangerous recreational activities (defined as ‘an activity engaged in for enjoyment, relaxation or leisure that involves a significant degree of risk of physical harm to a person’). A person is not liable in negligence for harm suffered as a result of materialisation of an obvious risk of a dangerous recreational activity engaged in by a person suffering harm. This applies whether or not the person was aware of the risk.

Sections 34 -47 of the CLA specifically address the liability of Public Authorities

- Whose functions are limited by the financial and other resources that are reasonably available.
- Whose functions to be exercised by reference to the broad range of its activities
- Who may rely on evidence of its compliance with its general procedures and any applicable standards for the exercise of its function as evidence of the proper exercise of its functions in the matter to which the proceedings relate.

Despite the clarification of some basic principles within the CLA, both State and Local government as well as private landholders continue to express ongoing fear of liability until there are significant indications through case law that the intent of the CLA with respect to the assumption of inherent and obvious risk has been applied in practice.

### **Non Legislative strategies**

Non Legislative strategies include:

- Industry associations negotiating cover for all registered members for example the work done by Motorcycle Australia. Entry fees now include insurance cover for registered (Motorcycling Australia) riders and sanctioned events.
- Activities previously ineligible for cover e.g. rock climbing now possible through professionally accredited instructor or leader.

There is an increased recognition across outdoor recreation and tourism industries that insurance costs have increased, but there are some limitations and solutions which have been developed. If outdoor recreation is to be regarded as a valid economic activity there is also a requirement to accept an increased level of responsibility for paying customers which is above that expected when carrying out the activity for personal enjoyment and that public liability insurance is a valid business expense.

### **6.3. Transport regulations**

The information in this section has been summarised from work completed by David Batt (Sport and Recreation Queensland).

There are five agencies that have responsibility over some aspect of driving or riding on roads:

1. Queensland Transport – legislation governing road use and vehicles
2. Queensland Police Service – enforcement of road rules and other laws
3. Department of Natural Resources and Mines – any land dealings associated with roads
4. Department of Main Roads – day-to-day management of State-controlled roads
5. Individual Local Governments – day-to-day management of those roads not controlled by the Department of Main Roads. Enforcement of Local Laws where they apply

Unless a road is declared under a regulation (made under the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*) not to be a road (see explanation below) -

- All vehicles must be road registered; and
- All drivers/riders must have the appropriate license for the vehicle they are using.

The *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995* applies to all roads. Under this Act, a road is defined as including an area that is:

- Open to or used by the public and is developed for, or has as one of its uses, the driving or riding of motor vehicles, whether on payment of a fee or otherwise; or
- Dedicated to public use as a road.

However, under the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*, a road does not include an area declared under a regulation of the Act not to be a road. This means that an area, track or road can be declared not to be a road. Depending on the detail of any such regulation, the requirements for road registration and rider licensing may not apply.

Unless a stock route, reserve for community purpose or freehold land held privately is declared under a regulation [made under the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*] not to be a road then road registration and driver licensing remains the same as a public road.

Thus any freehold property wishing to allow motor vehicle activities by unlicensed and/or unregistered vehicles will need to have the appropriate area declared not to be a road.

## **6.4. Submissions from industry**

### **Caravan Park Industry**

This submission was provided by the Executive Director of the Caravan Parks Association of Queensland which represents members who control in excess of 73% of the caravan parks in Queensland and over 83% of the sites. The submission expresses the association's concern that the SEQ Regional Plan will "...will almost certainly spell the 'death knell' of any future tourist based Caravan Park in Queensland (See Appendix II).

The principle points contained in this submission were

- Caravan parks play a critical role in Australian tourism industry, particularly the low cost and grey nomad sectors
- The parks are characterised by open and outdoors based recreation activities.
- The temporary and seasonal nature of most of the accommodation within these facilities means that for many months of the year the parks are "open grassed fields."
- There is a shortage of medium to low costs tourist accommodation in SEQ and caravan parks address this niche.

The Association cites quite specific location and development criteria which their members require to establish a new park and they contend such locations no longer exist.

A case study of a proposal for Lake Weyba Eco-Holiday Park is included to illustrate that caravan parks can have a "direct connection with the rural, natural or resource value of the surrounding area."

### **Caravan Parks & Golf Resorts**

Dillon, Folker Stephens provided a submission which supported many of the concepts provided by the Caravan Park Association and were identified in the case study as the planners associated with the project.

There is a contention in this submission that the Office of Urban Management's interpretation of the SEQ Regional Plan is quite restrictive, particularly in relation to golf courses and that this interpretation is based "an attitude that there is a glut of such developments." The submission highlights the amount of land required for these facilities which results in the necessity to locate golf courses and associated resorts or residential developments outside the urban footprint. Internationally golf course resorts are generally located outside the urban footprint.

The submission concludes with the assertion that both caravan parks and golf resorts can be designed to be "environmentally sensitive and attractive". These important elements of the tourism industry of SEQ should be facilitating outside the urban footprint and the Regional Plan be amended to remove any confusion on this point.



## 7. Innovations to encourage Outdoor Recreation and Tourism in Rural lands

### 7.1. Introduction

This section concludes the report and provides recommendations and highlights areas for further study, which are relevant for:

- The Office of Urban Management
- Local government in SEQ
- Industry participants and key stakeholders
- Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation

The final section provides concluding comments which summarise the context for outdoor recreation and tourism in SEQ rural areas.

### 7.2. Planning & Infrastructure

#### SEQ Regional Plan - OUM

The major constraint identified in rural areas to the development of outdoor recreation and tourism is the SEQ Regional Plan. It is understood a review of definitions within the Plan is underway and the following recommendations are made:

##### *Tourist Accommodation*

The thresholds for tourism accommodation at 20 units would have no impact on farmstays as they are generally well below this capacity. Interesting re-use of larger properties such as Hiddenvale, an integrated resort with 30 accommodation units would not be possible.

##### **Recommendation**

**A more sophisticated approach would be to recognise these two segments and provide a definition for each industry component.**

##### *Golf Courses*

A case was put to the consultants that golf courses should be allowed however it is still difficult to see that a golf course can ever be anything but an urban activity. Therefore the current interpretation which does not allow golf courses is supported.

##### **Recommendation**

**Any definition to encourage tourism based re-use of existing properties should be able to demonstrate a clear linkage to the “rural natural or resource value of the surrounding area”.**

##### *Caravan Parks*

Caravan parks cannot satisfy widely accepted definitions of outdoor recreation, however they have a far lower level of infrastructure and have the potential to minimise impacts in rural areas.

**Recommendation**

**Consider inclusion of caravan parks within the SEQ rural lands subject to detailed investigation of environmental conditions which can be imposed**

**South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program (SEQIPP) – OUM**

*Minor infrastructure*

Keeping daytrippers or tourists in a rural area longer increases the chances of their spending in these locations. This can be encouraged by the provision of appropriate low level infrastructure such as public toilets and parks.

**Recommendation**

**Infrastructure investment in the rural areas for relatively minor infrastructure such as public toilets and parks be placed as a priority within the SEQIPP.**

*Protected Areas*

The shortage of protected areas is a regional problem and should be addressed through the regional SEQIPP.

**Recommendation**

**Increasing the land available through acquisition with particular focus on non viable farms with scenic values or other characteristics which may be useful for outdoor recreation for example 4wd and trail bike activities.**

**Local Government Initiatives**

*Voluntary Private Access Agreements supported by State Treasury*

Ipswich City Council is considering **Voluntary Private Access** Agreements and this concept could receive State government support through cross subsidising rate relief and perhaps light infrastructure such as fences and signage. The cross subsidising could come from highly urbanised local governments to the rural shires in the form of funding.

**Recommendation**

**Voluntary Private Access Agreements to receive State government support through cross subsidising from throughout the region in the form rate relief and perhaps light infrastructure such as fences and signage.**

*IPA Summit*

Local government should be encouraged to participate in the upcoming summit in relation to IPA amendments as they are in best possible position to **lobby on behalf of the future of their rural communities.**

**Recommendation**

**Invitations to go to local government to seek their input into IPA reform with a view to supporting Rural Futures.**

#### *Regular Tourism and Outdoor recreation Forums*

There is often a lack of dialogue and understanding between local government planners, the economic development officers/branches and the tourist industry participants and key stakeholders. QORF and TQ to also be involved in the encouragement and agenda forming of these fora.

#### **Recommendation**

**Regular forums should be encouraged at a local level with a view to forming closer partnerships between each of the stakeholders and industry participants.**

#### *Motorised Outdoor Recreation*

Current interpretations suggest that no additional 4wd parks would be allowable. This may cause some problems due to the very high level of demand for this activity and the tendency for these participants to resort to entering areas with higher environmental values such as State Forests or National Parks.

#### **Recommendation**

**Consideration should be given to monitoring the demand and supply of these sites and activities, bearing in mind that the Ipswich Motor sports Precinct provides an unusual opportunity for this use.**

#### *Thresholds*

Planners should be required to investigate the **thresholds required** for various types of infrastructure and the nature of conditions imposed so as not to discourage fledgling outdoor recreation and tourism enterprises.

#### **Recommendation**

**Further work be carried out to identify the most relevant and critical infrastructure thresholds to encourage outdoor recreation and tourism enterprises in rural areas.**

### **7.3. Industry Planning – TQ, Regional Tourism Organisations & QORF and other relevant professional associations**

#### *Transition from events to investment in facilities- Local government, QT, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

The hurdles to entry into outdoor recreation and tourism will depend on the level of investment and infrastructure required. One strategy which may be adopted is to begin with events and after a series of successful events which can provide input into business planning and then possibly to full scale investment in permanent facilities. This may require further investigation of **temporary use permits** and **defined but limited life thresholds**. This would require education of potential industry entrants and negotiation with local government planners.

#### **Recommendation**

**Further investigation is made re mechanisms to provide for temporary use permits and limited life thresholds for associated infrastructure.**

*Assessment tool for outdoor recreation opportunities – TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

The farmstay component has an excellent resource available in the form of the *Farm & Country Tourism on your property; Stage 1 Assessment Tool*. A similar tool should be developed for outdoor recreation in rural areas and linkages to the tourism industry should also be included.

**Recommendation**

**An assessment tool for outdoor recreation opportunities be developed to allow potential entrants to understand scope of commitment and initial critical success criteria.**

*Hub and spoke model – TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

The investment required for a full scale integrated resort – even one with less than 20 units and which has a direct and valid connection to the rural, natural and resource values is very substantial. An alternative approach could be a series of properties with a sensible geographic relationship cooperatively involved in the supply of the various aspects of an integrated resort. For example one property could provide accommodation, another rock climbing and a third water-based activities. This is similar to the way smaller food and wine producers co-operate in the Barossa and Yarra Valleys.

**Recommendation**

**That further investigation into the hub & spoke model as it could potentially relate to outdoor recreation and tourism in SEQ rural areas and prepare educational materials to support this concept.**

*WOOFers World-wide Opportunities Organic Farmers- TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

Organic farmers have a loosely organised international alliance based on the web and this can provide visitors for farmstays. The objectives of the organisation include:

- to enable people to learn first-hand about organic growing techniques
- to enable town-dwellers to experience living and helping on a farm
- to help farmers make organic production a viable alternative.

The constraints here are that the farm should be an organic operation and the farm management needs to be quite flexible as accommodation is provided in exchange for farm labouring. Matching labour needs to the availability of WOOFERS could be difficult and this scheme does not involve exchange of money, therefore the cash flow of the farm would not be improved.

**Recommendation**

**Material providing details relating to World-wide Opportunities {for} Organic Farmers is included in educational kits circulated to interested rural landholders.**

## 7.4. Financial Assistance

*Strategies to reduce resistance to change – State Government, local governments, TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

Rural areas even within SEQ have demonstrated reluctance and occasional resistance to change, particularly around outdoor recreation and tourism enterprises. Financial incentives to consider change could take the form of **grants, taxation or relaxation of planning fees and infrastructure contributions**. This could be seen as similar to the program instituted by Brisbane City Council in relation to provision of affordable housing.

### **Recommendation**

**Further investigation of the feasibility of various financial incentives designed to reduce resistance to outdoor recreation and tourism in rural areas to include grants, taxation and relaxation of planning fees and infrastructure contributions.**

*Industry re-structuring programs – TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

Industry re-structuring programs aim to move redundant participants from one industry to another. The next likely re-structuring program within rural SEQ is in the cane industry. Education kits highlighting the potential for outdoor recreation and tourism should be prepared ready for this influx as often considerable amounts of capital to facilitate the movement from one industry to another are required.

### **Recommendation**

**A watching brief on industry re-structuring programs likely to impact on rural SEQ and preparation of education kits encouraging consideration of outdoor recreation and tourism projects.**

*One stop shop for licensing – Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation, QT, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce*

One stop shops carrying details for the above strategies should be placed inside the Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation offices and rural organisations such as NFF and Agforce.

### **Recommendation**

**One stop shops for dissemination of all education materials recommended in this report placed in Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation, TQ, Regional tourism organisations NFF/Agforce offices.**

*Increasing professionalism & insurance*

While several linkages appear to be in place, further development of relationships between the insurance industry and outdoor recreation professional organisations should be developed. This would be with a view to reducing premiums for establishments with accredited leaders and practitioners or even licensed work environments.

### **Recommendation**

**Investigation of improving relationships between outdoor recreation professional associations, the tourism industry and insurance firms.**

## 7.5. Concluding comments

The scope of this assignment was not spatial but rather it was regulatory in its focus. However it should be remembered that recreation, tourism and planning with associated regulations are very spatial and specific in their impacts and operations.

The *SEQ Outdoor Recreation Study 2001* has demonstrated that there are strong preferences within the community to recreate in attractive and natural landscapes. This report has discussed the sometimes very specific landscape or setting requirements for various types of recreation. Any superficial inspection of tourism promotion material similarly confirms this. So it is evident that within rural areas only certain selected areas will ever be attractive to recreationists or tourists.

Recreation activities and tourist visitation creates impacts. These attractive places are often vulnerable to such impacts with successively more remote locations then being subject to impact as people keep seeking out pristine environments. To reduce some of these human impacts infrastructure is required across a range of private and public facilities. The environmental and planning controls and costs placed on recreation and tourism projects are very similar to those placed on other projects. The location may be different and there is a possibility that outdoor recreation events are temporary.

As this work is to be placed within the context of Rural Futures the economic aspects of the outdoor recreation and tourism industries have been the focus rather than the access to protected areas.

Within an enterprise looking at outdoor recreation or tourism there are several areas which are critical to success and these encompass the cultural, financial and managerial context for these enterprises to operate within.

We have argued in this report that the constraints on outdoor recreation and tourism are no more severe than other types of proposals. Outdoor recreation and tourism should be considered for their potential impact on community building and regional prosperity.

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## **Appendix I**

Collated District Parks submissions from SEQ Local Government



Two submissions were received, one from Richard Pascoe, Principal Recreation Planner from Gold Coast City Council and a second from Jacqui Colwell representing the SEQ Sport & Recreation Officers Professional Forum. Both submissions are re-produced below.

1. Richard Pascoe, Principal Recreation Planner from Gold Coast City Council

Pressure on district and citywide sporting facilities is already high and will progressively get worse as urban areas further consolidate. The situation is critical in Brownfield areas where opportunities to acquire land for such purposes (i.e., flat, unencumbered land of 3 -5 ha+) either don't exist or are cost prohibitive. While we can collect developer contributions to assist with carrying capacity this can only assist to a certain point. The solution then leads us to look to provide lands outside of urban area, within floodplains (eg. the Greenheart on the Gold Coast - Merrimac Floodplain), containment sites etc. The need to consider available government lands and have these available at community value not highest and best value, which is the current policy, is also crucial as these may provide some remaining opportunities.

In Greenfield areas the issue isn't as big as prescribed density levels i.e.. 25 dwellings/hectare are ensuring a better utilisation of available lands. Even so, with so much land in SEQ which has been land banked by the development industry the cost of acquiring good quality land in close proximity to future communities is already starting to get prohibitive. To assist with this the government will need to ensure the Structure Planning guidelines currently being prepared highlight appropriate standards of service (quality as well quantity provisions) that will ensure sporting fields, where appropriate, are dedicated. The state may also need to consider its role in assisting financially with the acquisition of regional open space including sporting facilities.

In terms of locating sporting facilities outside of the Urban Footprint we have already highlighted this as a major issues, particularly noisy (karting, trial bikes) and hard to locate activities (pony clubs, model aeroplane etc). With the cost of industrial land often being higher than residential there are basically no opportunities but to look to the Regional landscape and Agricultural Zones. To date they have indicated that such opportunities would need to be assessed by the OUM on a case by case scenario.

2. The SEQ Sport & Recreation Officers Professional Forum seek written clarification from OUM:

- o as to the definitions used by the Regional Plan & OUM in relation to "outdoor recreation" and "sporting and recreational land use" and its provision in both the Urban Footprint and the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area (RLRPA).

[Schedule 2 Dictionary \(p.129\)](#)

***urban activity*** -

(1) Urban activity, in relation to the use of premises, means a residential, industrial, retail, commercial, sporting, recreational or community purpose normally found in a city or town.

(2) The term includes a tourist facility that does not have a direct connection with the rural, natural or resource value of the surrounding area, including, for example, a general theme park, water slide or go cart track.

(4) Also, the term also does not include the following purposes -

(h) sporting, recreation or community purpose predominantly serving a local area;

- o on the meaning of "local area" in relation to the definition for urban activity (as above) - does this exclude sport and recreation facilities above a local nature in the RLRPA? Is the intent to only permit local sport and recreation facilities in the RLRPA and district/metropolitan/regional sport and recreation facilities in the urban footprint? If this is the case, it will prohibit the ability to provide equitable access to a range of recreation activities (including outdoor recreation and sport) due to the cost of land acquisition and availability of appropriate land for these purposes. E.g The provision of regional trail bike facilities is best placed in the RLRPA due to availability of land, ability to provide appropriate buffers from residential development, etc.

- o as to whether land for "outdoor recreation" can be provided in the urban footprint, for example in parklands with different settings that cater for a range of outdoor recreation opportunities

- o as to whether sport and recreation facilities/spaces can occur in the RLRPA, e.g an equestrian centre, a trail bike facility that caters for a range of disciplines, a regional facility that cannot be located in the urban footprint due to land shortages etc.

Clarification and amendment of these definitions is sought in future revisions to the plan. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Should you require clarification or an opportunity to workshop these issues, the Forum is more than happy to assist.

Provided by Jacqui Cowell

Principal Sport & Recreation Planner

## **Appendix II Industry submissions**

Submission 1. from Dillon Folker Stephens



DILLON | FOLKER | STEPHENS

TOWN PLANNERS

Our Ref: 6544gd.ja

7 February 2006

FAXED

Sharon Boyle and Associates  
2/56 Gordon Parade  
MANLY QLD 4179

Attention: Ms Sharon Boyle

Dear Sharon

**TOWN PLANNING INPUT INTO SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND REGIONAL PLAN IMPLICATIONS IN  
RELATION TO RECREATION AND TOURISM ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE URBAN AREAS DESIGNATION**

Further to our recent discussion I would be grateful if the opportunity arose for you to present my following town planning concerns to the Office of Urban Management, namely:

1. CARAVAN PARK DEVELOPMENT

The Caravan Park industry is experiencing a period of revitalisation after 1-2 decades of decline, ie caravan sales were falling, Caravan Parks were being re-developed for higher order uses and very few new Caravan Parks were being established throughout SE Queensland. Fortunately that pattern has changed substantially over recent years, however I have grave concerns that the SEQ Regional Plan will greatly inhibit this growth and adversely impact on the tourism industry as it relates to Caravan Parks. In turn I would expect this to also have an in-direct adverse impact on the "grey nomad" population who are growing in numbers and opting in many instances for caravan/recreational experiences.

It is my limited experience since the inception of the SEQ Regional Plan, but very real concern, that the SEQ Regional Plan will inhibit the emergence of new Caravan Parks throughout SE Queensland. It is my understanding that many Caravan Parks throughout SE Queensland are being valued at a much higher land classification by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, resulting as I understand it, in a number of Caravan Park owners selling their Caravan Parks at inflated values for higher order use purposes. The difficulty then becomes that "urban" footprint development economics virtually prohibit the establishment of replacement Caravan Parks within the urban footprint which is further exacerbated by the SEQ Regional Plan discouraging, on face value, the establishment of such parks outside the urban footprint.

As I have already stated, my experience to-date has been limited, however, based upon one example where the client is a highly respected and well known existing Caravan Park operator, our experience to-date clearly suggests that the Office of Urban Management is adopting a relatively inflexible and unpragmatic approach to the Caravan Park industry.

I would be grateful if you would relay these concerns to the Office of Urban Management.

2. RESORT GOLF COURSE ESTATES

Similar to the Caravan Park scenarios described above, it appears that the Office of Urban Management considers that Resort Golf Course estates, which frequently include a significant residential component,

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PETER FOLKER  
BAppSc(Blt Env), GDURP/MPIA

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are no longer considered a desirable feature of SE Queensland unless they are established within the urban footprint, which is totally impractical and somewhat contradictory to the other philosophies espoused throughout the Plan.

Golf Course Resorts and associated residential estates are very land consumptive and are increasingly focussing on the features that only attractive natural environments outside built-up areas can offer.

I have a fear that the Office of Urban Management's interpretation of the SEQ Regional Plan with respect to the future establishment of such important land uses is quite restrictive, to such an extent that one may interpret the Office of Urban Management having an attitude that there is a glut of such developments. If this were to be the case I would assume that Golf Courses would either be for sale or closing down and I am not aware of this circumstance anywhere throughout SE Queensland.

To suggest that such land consumptive uses must or should establish within the urban footprint is ignoring trends worldwide as well as up and down the east coast of Australia. There are numerous examples of high quality Golf Course Resorts and residential estates in highly attractive natural environments outside of urban footprints. In some instances the residential component is nothing more than resort accommodation and in other instances it consists of residential or rural residential development adjacent to the Golf Course. Examples that are readily recognisable within Australia are:

- Numerous highly regarded Golf Courses on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria;
- Golf Course developments in the Hunter Valley in NSW;
- Bonville Golf Course immediately south of Coffs Harbour;
- The Pines and Palms Golf Course at Sanctuary Cove;
- The Coral Coast Golf Course near Bargara;
- Resort Golf Courses near Cairns and the Whitsunday region;
- The Iwasaaki Capricorn Coast Golf Course Resort at Yeppoon, etc. etc.

As with Australia, many other parts of the world such as Spain, France, South Africa, America, the UK and Asia have numerous and increasing numbers of Golf Course Resorts removed from urban footprints.

In summary, if the apparent attitude to Golf Course Resorts with residential components were adopted say 20 years ago then it is highly likely that SE Queensland would not have enjoyed the same degree of success that has come with the growth of such an industry within and outside the urban footprint.

In conclusion, I contend that the ever increasing growth of population throughout SE Queensland and its attendant everyday urban pressures, the increasing size and mobility of the "grey nomad" sector, and the ever increasing international interest in Queensland as a leisure destination, would suggest that the need for environmentally attractive and sensitive recreation and leisure activities such as those represented by environmentally sensitive and attractive Caravan Parks and Golf Course Resorts outside the urban footprint will continue to be in demand. Accordingly I urge the Office of Urban Management to take a more proactive role in facilitating these elements of the Tourism Industry outside the "Urban Footprint", and amend the SEQ Regional Plan so as to remove any confusion and/or mixed messages.

Yours faithfully  
DILLON FOLKER STEPHENS PTY LTD

GARY DILLON  
DIRECTOR

Submission 2. from Mr Ron Chapman, Executive Director Caravan Parks Association of Australia on behalf of Caravan Parks Association of Queensland and its members



Tuesday, 7 February 2006

Ms Sharon Boyle  
Sharon Boyle Associates  
2/56 Gordon Parade  
MANLY 4179

Dear Ms Boyle,

**SUBJECT: OBJECTION TO THE TREATMENT OF TOURIST BASED CARAVAN PARKS IN THE SOUTH EAST QLD REGIONAL PLAN (SEQRP)**

This submission is made on behalf of the Caravan Parks Association of Queensland and its members. The association represents in excess of 73% of caravan parks in Queensland which in turn contain in excess of 83% of sites. It is however an industry in crisis at the moment as regards the questionable viability of developing new parks and sites, hampered to a large extent by the cost of Government charges. Now the SEQ Regional Plan will almost certainly spell the 'death knell' of any future tourist based Caravan Park in South East Queensland.

Caravan Parks play a critical part in Australia's tourism industry being the largest providers of commercial tourist accommodation in regional Australia. The modern Caravan or Holiday Park typically provides low to medium cost holidays for families and 'Grey Nomads'. These businesses are characterised by their open space and outdoors based recreational activities. It is an obvious 'catch 22' situation where our guests choose to stay in caravan parks for their open space and connection to nature, yet the SEQRP deems that they must be built in areas designated Urban. Pictures 1 and 2 below illustrate tourist based Holiday Parks.



Pic 1: BIG4 Tweed Billabong



Pic 2: BIG4 Yamba - Clarence Coast

On average, Caravan Parks operate with an occupancy of 40% p.a (ABS). Although on a plan a caravan park might look high density (due to lines marking out sites), in reality for most of the year these same areas are open grassed fields. The buildings that do exist are typically cabins, amenities, recreation building and reception. Most of these are made from light weight materials, in some cases even canvas.



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T/A Caravan Industry Australia  
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A Member of  
Caravan Industry Australia Ltd  
Qld Tourism Industry Council

Over the last 10 to 15 years, land prices have caused the closure of many parks and costs are making it difficult to build replacements even in 'rural' areas. To quote two articles on the subject in SEQ;

"The Sunshine Coast is desperately short of medium to low cost tourism accommodation.....Queensland's beautiful Sunshine Coast is the hardest hit camping and caravanning spot. In the last couple of years at least a dozen popular caravan parks and camping sites have been shut down"

- 'Caravan Parks Under Threat' – On The Road 10/01.

"The council's Director of Business David Thomas said the time was right for a new caravan park. The only camping ground in Noosa Heads proper, the council-run Noosa River Caravan Park at Munna Point, has been at 100% occupancy since Easter".

- 'Baby boomers hitting the road' – Noosa News 17/9/04).

Many of our operators have spent years searching for a location that meets the requirements for building and making viable a tourist based caravan park. These requirements are;

- More than 20 acres at less than \$17,000 an acre.
- Within a nature based area.
- On a natural attraction such as a river, lake or beach.
- Close to a major road and preferably public transport.
- Above 1:100 year flood levels.
- Zoning that will permit a caravan park to be built.
- Within a Council area that doesn't charge exorbitant 'Head-works' fees.

Having done the research ourselves we challenge anyone including the OUM to find land within the Urban Area Footprint that meets the above essential criteria.

Several operators have indicated their willingness to develop new parks within what are now the bounds of the Rural Footprint of the SEQ Regional Plan. It would appear that at least three new parks are now doomed due to the plan. This would be disastrous for our industry given that there are no doubt other such proposals which we do not know about but which collectively may go some part of the way to meet the demand brought about by closures and proposed closures alone.

Many parks which have been forced into closure have had, or will have, high-rise built on the site. It is hard to imagine that the intention of the SEQRP would be to effectively replace low density holiday accommodation with high density, or over time eliminate the private sector from the Caravanning Industry in SEQ. Equally it is hard to imagine the intention of the SEQRP's was to eliminate affordable holidays for families and our many retiree visitors. Our statistics show that while the number of caravan parks in SEQ have been declining, the number of caravans, motorhomes and tents sold in Australia are booming. The SEQRP will cripple our industry in this region, lead to the end of economical holidays for thousands, create unemployment, and remove millions of tourist dollars from the local economy. Ultimately, not being planners we don't pretend to have the answers to how the plan should be amended to achieve it's intended goals yet not have a devastating effect on what is an outdoor and recreational based Caravanning Industry. Yet it would seem logical that a tourism based Holiday Park should be classified as a rural activity.

As a practical example of the effect of the SEQRP on one of our proposed caravan parks we have attached a case study of Lake Weyba Eco-Holiday Park prepared in part by one of the developers - Andrew Tribe. The essence of this case study has been sent to the OUM who have indicated that the proposal would be deemed an urban activity within the rural footprint.

Should you have any queries relating to this matter or would like to meet with us to discuss our submission in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact me on 07 3357 4399.

Yours faithfully,

  
Ron Chapman  
Executive Director



## CASE STUDY

### Lake Weyba Eco-Holiday Park

The site is located in the Regional Landscape & Rural Production Area where any material change of use application for urban activities must be referred to the OUM. Although caravan and camping parks are also found in urban areas they should not be treated exclusively as an urban activity particularly where, as in this case, they have a *“direct connection with the rural, natural or resource value of the surrounding area”*. Further details of the site, the proposal and eco-tourism aspects of the proposal are provided below.

The Holiday Park developers are Andrew & Geoff Tribe who own the Tweed Billabong Holiday Park in Tweed Heads South and BIG4 Yamba – Clarence Coast Resort. Tweed Billabong is recognised as one of the best holiday parks in Australia and has won a number of awards including:

- twice winning the award for best caravan park in NSW from the NSW Caravan & Camping Industry Association; and
- the first to be awarded the caravan & camping association gumnut award – the industry’s award for sustainable tourism.

Tweed billabong has also been featured on TV programmes such as Getaway & the Great Outdoors.

#### 1.0 THE SITE

The subject site is located in Maroochy Shire, about 150m to the south of Lake Weyba (**REFER FIGURES 1 & 2 in ATTACHMENT A**). The site is rectangular in shape and covers an area of approximately 19 hectares and is currently used to graze horses.

The site has been largely cleared but there is an area of melaleuca woodland in the north western corner of the site which forms part of Regional Ecosystem 12.3.5 “of concern”. Nyell Road, the proposed access to the site also passes through Regional Ecosystem 12.2.7 which is also “of concern”.

The site has a high point of approximately 7m AHD, located on a ridge, which is located within the middle of the site and the land gradually slopes away from this ridge towards the east and west. The ground in the western and eastern parts of the site is relatively flat with a minimum level of approximately 1.5AHD.

There is an existing dam located in the south-western corner of the site which receives flows from an intermittent watercourse. There is also a small creek located to the east of the site which runs into Lake Weyba. Given the ground levels across the site and its proximity to Lake Weyba, sections of the site are prone to flood inundation.

The main access to the site is from the Sunshine Motorway via Murdering Creek Road, Clarendon Road, Annie Drive and Lake Vista Drive.

**FIGURE 3 in ATTACHMENT A** confirms that the site forms part of the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area in the SEQRP.

The site is generally surrounded by forest although a large rural residential development immediately abuts the central part of the southern boundary of the site.

Historically, Maroochy Shire Council had granted preliminary approval for a material change of use (Sport & Recreation – nine hole golf course and ancillary facilities, clubhouse & caretakers residence). The currency period for this approval expired in August 2005.

## **2.0 THE PROPOSAL**

As the proposed site layout plan prepared by Gall & Medek in **ATTACHMENT B** illustrates, the proposed Eco Tourism Holiday Park will comprise the following facilities:

- 130 caravan sites, 60 cabins & a 50 bed dormitory;
- reception & office;
- café, store, games & tv room
- resort pool;
- bowls;
- tennis courts; and
- multi-function room.

The proposed layout has been designed to respond positively to the local environment and includes buffers to the waterways and wetlands within, and close to, the site. In addition, it is proposed that substantial replanting will be undertaken to regenerate natural vegetation within the site. This vegetation will have a number of ecological and environmental benefits and will also provide natural shade to the proposed buildings and facilities.

The buildings will be designed by Gall & Medek who are leaders in environmental architecture in Australia and have been selected by the Queensland Government to write the design guide component of the publication "Grow Your Own Eco-Tourism Business. Gall & Medek will use a variety of techniques to utilise the natural attributes of the local area (solar power and building orientation) and to minimise the impact of the buildings on the environment (insulation and the use of sustainable materials).

The holiday park will also provide organised activities for visitors such as a kids club, nature walks, entertainers & movies and will also be used by schools as an educational centre. In this respect, our clients intend to run a range of educational programs based on the natural environment that surrounds the site. It is anticipated that this program will include guest speakers from the Noosa National Park and local indigenous groups who will be able to provide visitors and schools with an understanding of the importance and significance of the local environment.

Access to the site will be via Murdering Creek Road, Monak Drive, Lakewood Drive and an existing unsurfaced track to the north of the site along the alignment of Nyell Road. Both Lakewood Drive and Nyell Road will need to be upgraded to a suitable standard as part of the application. This route has been chosen to minimise any adverse impacts on the rural residential community to the south of the subject site.

## **3.0 ECO-TOURISM**

A key objective of the SEQRP is to promote economic growth in rural areas by encouraging alternative forms of development that capitalise on the character and

local attributes of the area. Within this context the Regional Plan seeks to ensure that the development of appropriate eco-tourism uses is not constrained.

The Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2003 – 2008 produced by Tourism Queensland and the Queensland Government defines ecotourism as encompassing:

*“ a spectrum of nature based activities that foster visitor appreciation and understanding and cultural heritage and are managed to be ecologically and socially sustainable.”*

The key principles of Ecotourism are ecological, social and cultural sustainability.

These important principles will underpin the design, construction and operation of the proposed Holiday Park and these are discussed briefly in turn below.

#### Ecological Sustainability

We are fully aware of the importance of the local environment and are excited by the opportunity it presents to create a sustainable, environmentally sensitive, development. Examples include;

- initiatives to reduce water use and minimise the production of waste water;
- rainwater harvesting;
- treatment of effluent on site to a quality that is suitable for human contact and will ensure that its disposal on site will have no adverse impacts on lake Weyba, local waterways and wetland or groundwater;
- use of vegetated swales and detention basins to remove pollutants from stormwater run-off;
- building design and the use of sustainable construction materials;
- use of solar power, and
- revegetation on the site.

Our clients are already using a number of these measures at the Tweed Billabong Holiday Park and were the first caravan park in Australia to be awarded the Industry's Bronze Gumnut Award for environmental initiatives.

#### Social Sustainability

The proposal will help to sustain and enhance the local community in the following ways:

- create employment (it is expected that 16 full time jobs would be created once the park was operational);
- working with national and local charities (Camp Quality);
- stimulating demand for local goods and services;
- improving infrastructure in the local area;

# SEQ Regional Plan 2005 - 2026, Regional land use categories



Created by: Office of Urban Management,  
Department of Local Government, Planning,  
Sport and Recreation



Thu Jun 19 17:06:15  
GMT+10:00 2008

SRP25732: NYELL RD, WEYBA DOWNS

Land use category: Regional Landscape and Rural  
Production Area

The information provided in the mapping is indicative only and  
reference to particular parcels should be checked against  
endured versions of the SEQ Regional Plan 2005 - 2026 and  
the SEQ Regional Plan 2005 - 2026 (1 - Regulatory Area,  
June 2005). Maps SEQR001 to SEQR003.

All the information contained within the mapping is derived from  
the Digital Cadastral Database (CDD), May 2005, as supplied  
to the Queensland Government by the Queensland Department  
of Natural Resources and Mines.

While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this product,  
the Queensland Government, the Department of Natural Resources  
and Mines, and the Department of Local Government, Planning,  
Sport and Recreation make no representations or warranties about the  
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or part of any purpose, including but not limited to, making  
decisions and/or taking any action, may incur a liability for any  
being inaccurate or incomplete in any way or for any reason.  
(c) The State of Queensland 2005

Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area  
Urban Footprint  
Rural Living Area  
Investigation Area

Land use category - general description

Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area - identifies  
areas with values that should be protected from urban and rural  
development.

Urban Footprint - identifies areas to accommodate urban growth  
to 2035.

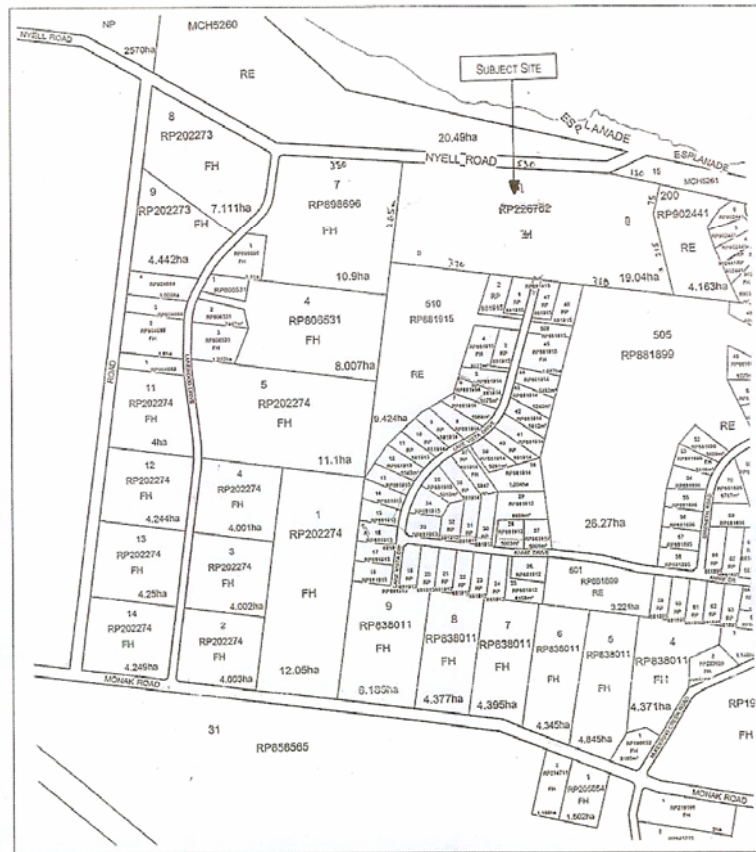
Rural Living Area - identifies areas predominantly for continuing  
rural residential development.

Investigation Area - identifies areas that are subject to further  
investigation, parts of which may be  
subject to future development.

Investigation Area - identifies areas that are subject to further  
investigation, parts of which may be  
subject to future development.

Investigation Area - identifies areas that are subject to further  
investigation, parts of which may be  
subject to future development.



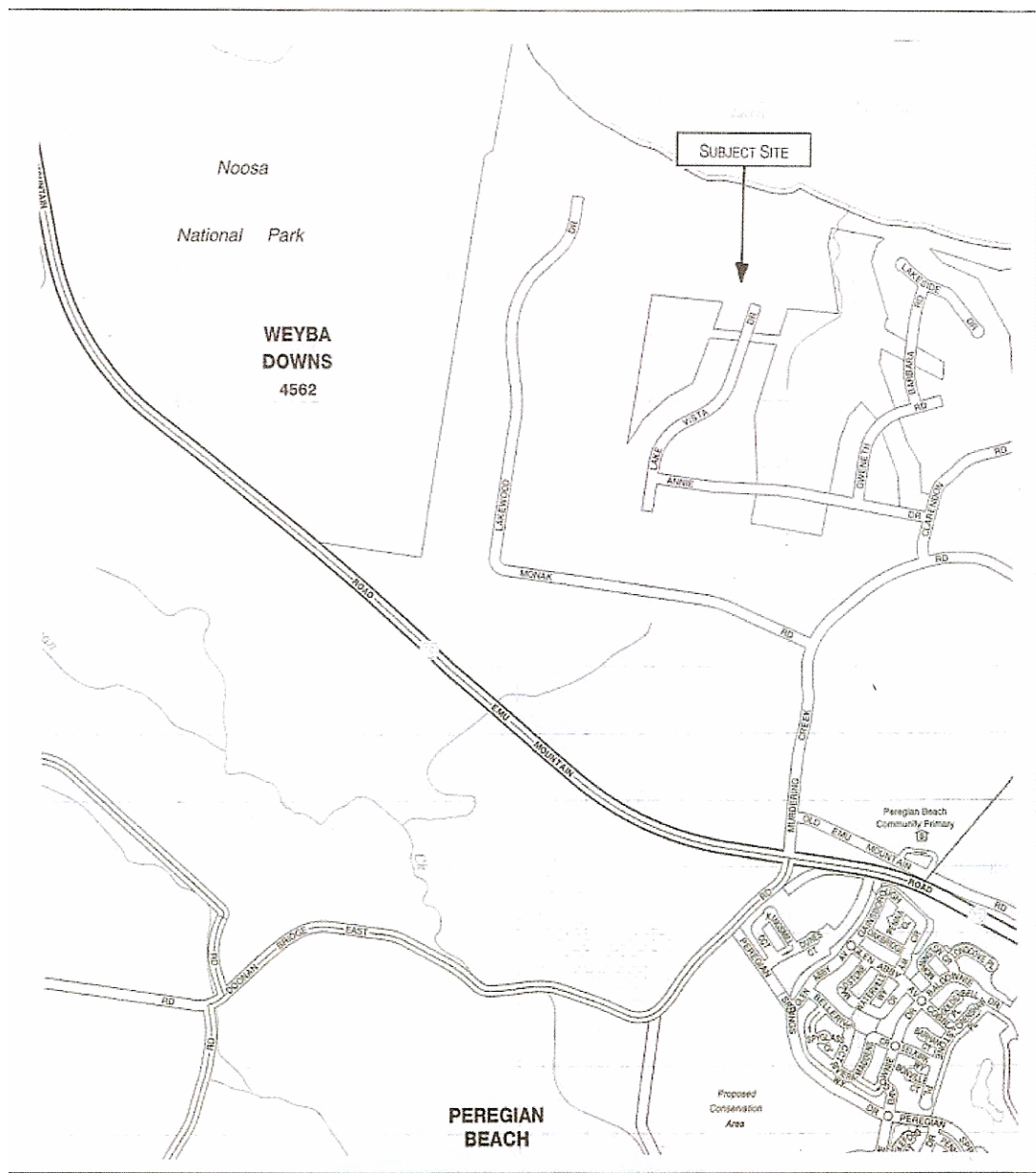


**FIGURE 2 – SUBJECT SITE PLAN**

ANDREW TRIBE  
LOT 3 ON RP226782  
5 JULY 2005



DILLON | FOLKER | STEPHENS  
TOWN PLANNERS



**FIGURE 1 – LOCALITY PLAN**

ANDREW TRIBE  
 NYELL DRIVE, WEYBA DOWNS  
 5 JULY 2005



**DILLON | FOLKER | STEPHENS**  
 TOWN PLANNERS

## **Appendix III Workshop findings – SEQ Country Destination Management Plan**

Attached is a copy of the Greater Brisbane Country Workshop notes from Wednesday 14 December. Representatives who attended the meeting were:

Rodney Ringe, WESROC  
Julie McKenzie, Boonah Shire  
Lyn Cooley, Caboolture Shire  
Marianne Buckham, State Development, Ipswich  
Nichole Neumann, Ipswich Council  
Julie Lomas, Esk Shire  
Sarah Castle, NRMSEQ  
Sally Summers, Boonah Valley Motel  
Jenni York, EPA  
Ross Leaver, The Workshops, Ipswich  
Glenn Price, The Workshops, Ipswich  
Sharon Boyle, Sharon Boyle & Associates  
Susan Yates, Brisbane Marketing  
Emma Freer, Tourism Queensland  
Kerrie Beck, Tourism Queensland



## GREATER BRISBANE COUNTRY DMP REVIEW

Stakeholder Group  
Wednesday 14 December 2005

### Tourism Services, Community Services, and Stakeholder and Partnerships Analysis

Description	Strengths	Weaknesses
Accommodation (2.5+)	Good mix of accommodation	Lack of caravan/motor home accommodation
	Some characteristic accommodation	Limited number of characteristic accommodation stock
	Consistency in standard and quality of accommodation has lifted in the last few years	Limited resort/boutique style accommodation
		Limited camping opportunities in National Parks and other areas
		Regulatory environment/red tape
		Market appropriate accommodation ie. cabins, lodges etc.

Attractions (3+)	Abundant natural attractions	Lack of interpretation of natural attractions
	Dams – review of recreational activities on dams	Lack of interpretative signage
	Wineries	Limited recreation facilities at natural attractions
	Ipswich Railways - key attraction	Limited service infrastructure in National Parks
	Ipswich Art Gallery	Clearer understanding of carrying capacity
	Heritage Attractions	Limited winery linkages
	Country Markets	Long distance trails for cycling, horse-riding that link experiences/sensible trails!?!
	Motor Sports	Built attractions
		Limited linkages with heritage etc.



Tours & Activities (1+)	Ipswich walking tours	Limited eco-tours – benefits to work with stakeholders/ networking with National Parks
	Plethora of drive loops	Lack of implementation and consistency to establish trails (no follow through)
	10 Priority Trails with a mix of walking, horseriding, cycling, canoeing trails (not to be released until Feb)	Lack of consultation with industry
	Heaps of activities – land based and water based	Longevity of initiatives and consideration of ongoing support. Also, consideration of market interests
	Local Government looking at developing recreational activities in the region	Lack of networking between the natural attractions and Councils/ relevant Government Agencies
		Lack of coordination
Destination Access (2+)	Bruce Highway being upgraded to six lanes (Caboolture)	Limited road maintenance
		Modes of transport other than drive need to be explored – alternatives to drive market
		Limited road access to Laidley, Gatton, Esk, Boonah, Ipswich (Ipswich Road)
Local Access & Transport (2.5+)	Some transport options	Internal public transport does not meet current consumer demand
		Public transport does not operate on Weekends/Sundays (Ipswich)
		Limited private enterprise transport
		Utilise trails/trail linkages within the region
		Explore transport options to move around/within the region
		Limited directional signage
Events & Festivals (3+)	Variety of events and festivals – some great ones – hero events	Doubling up - coordinated review of events and festivals. Timing? Who?
	Motor Sports	Missing a food and wine event/festival??
	Potential for region to host international extreme sporting event	Gliding Event
	Regional Event Calendars	Outdoor Events – scope to utilise outdoor environment
		Too many events and festivals across the region (linked to coordination)

Use of Rural Lands For Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

*Not representative of Commonwealth, State of Local Government policy – for discussion purposes.*

		Consolidate regional events and festivals calendar across the region
Hospitality & Retail Services (1.5+)	Mostly good variety and range	Not all businesses are open 7 days/week
	Increasing representation of arts and crafts, local fare and products	Visitor awareness (ie. some cafes not open on a Monday or Tuesday night) – coordination??
	Region is a food bowl – rich agriculture/produce	Links in food/produce sector for quality
Customer Service & Training (1.5+)	Good service ethic	Industry education – quality service/product expectations
		Consistency in service quality across the region is variable (BIG ISSUE!)
		Reliability/access of industry operators variable
		Whole package – greater visitor awareness
Visitor Information & Services (3.5+)	Generally very good VICs within the region	Gateway VICs – access locations
	Broader awareness of the region	Availability of information to the VICs from other agencies
	Five?? accredited VICs in the region (check the number accredited)	Lack of connection with local, natural environment/habitats
	VICs an interactive experience for the visitor	Local area education of VIC staff
	The role of the volunteers is crucial to the operation of the VIC	VICs as a hub? Role as 'business incubators'?
		Most VICs technology outdated, very brochure dependent. Link with tourism distribution system??
		Role of the VIC? Can they play a broader role than just distributing brochures?
Directional Signage (0)	Formation of the District Tourism Signage Committees (in some places?)	Lack of both directional and interpretative signage
	Local Government consciousness	Greater cooperative with the State agencies responsible for signage
		Profusion of signage/confusion of signage
		Lack of directional signage predominantly in the Scenic Rim, Esk, Kilcoy
		Funding for Signage required

		Integrated Signage Policy
		Old technology signage?? ie.GPS, multi channels for information and direction
Community Support (2+)	Tourism reflective of communities	Caution about the use/terminology of the word 'playground' - level of respect to be gained in a region for a clearer identity/position
		Lack of community education of values
		Some of the incoming tourism development in the region are not seen as sympathetic in community lifestyle
		Concern about change/growth within the community
		Fundamental changes/conflict between land users
		Linkages with policy and planning
Local Policy, Planning & Regulation (-2)	Coordinated Council effort at CEO level as well as tourism officer level, ie. Greater Brisbane Group, Council of Mayors	Lack of consultation with operators and tourism business interests (in some cases)
		Lack of consultation and coordination on tourism at a local/state level
		Inform and provide awareness and education of tourism planning initiatives
		Communication of planning initiatives
		Be Proactive – put on planning agendas to inform
		Interact between planning initiatives and the appropriate Local Government agencies/ contacts
		Participation with key players
Public Services & Amenities (+2.5)	Well kept parks and gardens High level of improvement in streetscaping in the Greater Brisbane area, which represents the rural and relaxed feel of the region (parts Ipswich)	Lack of clean public toilets Characteristic country public loos!
	Councils provision good, within budget constraints	Some poor public facilities

	Opportunity for linkages with the SEQ Infrastructure Plan and SEQ Regional Plan	Smarter options for environmentally friendly planning of amenities where appropriate
		Permit bureaucracy – poor access
		Access for disabled variable
		Look to the future for provision of services (links to Council budgets)

Leadership & Coordination		

## Appendix IV – Case Studies

## Appendix IV

### Case Studies

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## 8. Events

- Tom Quilty Endurance Horse Event
- Greenlands Motorcycle Event
- Mountain Bikes

### Tom Quilty Endurance Horse Event

#### Ownership and Management

The Tom Quilty Gold Cup Ride is owned by the Australian Endurance Riders Association, which is the National Federation for endurance riding in Australia. Each year, the ride is contracted out to a club in Australia to conduct. The ride is rotated in each state of Australia and is therefore held in Queensland every six years.

In 2006, the ride will be managed by the **Fassifern Horse and Pony Club** which is based in Boonah. Contact person whom this information was gained from is Dick Collyer (ph 07 5463 1979)

#### The Event

A 160km in one-day endurance ride:

1. Thursday – nominations for event
2. Friday – vet checks for horses
3. Midnight Friday – Midnight Saturday – actual event
4. Sunday – Best condition of horse judging, presentation and dinner dance

Approximately **300 riders** compete (they have approximately 1000 support staff)

Volunteers – approximately 300-400 people (eg located on race track to make sure riders don't get lost and also if they fall that someone sees them etc)

Media/Spectators – estimated a couple of thousand on the day

#### Location

The track in 2006 includes local roads and private property all located within Boonah Shire. The race base is located in the Boonah Showgrounds

#### Access

People are required to get to the ride themselves. There are irregular buses to Boonah.

#### Facilities

Race is based at Boonah Showgrounds, where all infrastructure (apart from extra hot showers) is already in place.

Boonah Showgrounds is located in the town of Boonah, so ambulance, hospital and chemists are located close-by. Also, accommodation is available in the town.

Within the showgrounds, the event provides catering and a licenced premises for selling alcohol to spectators.

## History

In 1966 famed Stockmans Outfitter, R.M. Williams was inspired by the Tevis Cup 100 mile ride in the USA to see if contemporary Australian riders still had the skills and horsemanship to undertake a similar ride. R.M. Williams found a 100 mile course around the Colo area of NSW, and legendary cattleman, Tom Quilty provided 1,000 Pounds for a Gold Cup; thus the 160 kilometre, on one horse, in one day, Tom Quilty Gold Cup Ride was born.

## Recreation Activities

Endurance horse riding

### **Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.**

Event organisers report having no contact with the planning scheme, so feel it does not impact on their event at all.

Legal constraints and Local Law issues are described below:

1. Permission to use “track”:
2. private land holders – negotiate with to get permission to use their property. Have to provide own public liability insurance and guarantee that riders will stay on the designated tracks. To ensure this organisers have people on gates of properties and within properties to direct the riders to follow the track.
3. Roads – required to get a permit to use the local roads for a “regulated purpose” from Boonah Shire Council in accordance with Local Law 11 –Roads. Also required to obtain appropriate Traffic Act permits from the Queensland Police Service. Riders must also ride according to the normal road rules.
4. Event running – Boonah Police have a “Large Events” procedure which they give to the organisers to assist them ensuring all requirements have been met
5. Catering is provided by Boonah Show society who have the contract and appropriate accreditation for provision of catering services (I suspect this is in accordance with another local law)
6. The Boonah Rotary Club provide the bar service in the showgrounds. They gain the appropriate licences
7. Australian Endurance Riders’ Association have an “event standard” which the event organisers are required to comply with
8. Risk Management – Fassifern Horse and Pony Club have developed a comprehensive Risk Management Policy
9. To prevent horses from being over-ridden, or competing lame a stringent series of veterinary checks is included as an essential part of the ride criteria.

### **Concluding Comments (ie what does this case study show us.)**

Outdoor recreation events do occur in SEQ and without much more organization or regulation than a similar urban event.



## **Greenlands Annual Trail Ride**

### **Name & Ownership**

The Greenlands Annual Trail Ride was recently held on 11-12 February 2006. It is the first of 13 trail rides organised in South East Queensland. Other rides and dates are shown below.

Venue	Date
Greenlands	11/12 February
Crows Nest	18/19 February
Quinalow	11/12 March
Killarney	8/9 April
Kaimkillenbun	13/14 May
Burrandowan	3/4 June
Jandowae	8/9 July
Bunya	19/20 August
Jimbour	2/3 September
Cooyar	30/9-1 October
Battunga	21/22 October
Crows Nest	11/12 November
Stanthorpe	25/26 November

The ride calendar is coordinated by Dalby Moto (Craig Hartley on 0428621211). The Greenlands trail ride was chosen for the case study as (at the time) it was the next ride and was in the process of being organised so any issues and problems relevant to the study would be fresh in the organiser's mind. The following information has been provided by Peter Burnell ((07) 46836366) who is the ride coordinator.

The Greenlands State School P&C is the major beneficiary of the trail ride.

### **Location**

This ride is held approximately 17km west of Stanthorpe in the picturesque Granite Belt. The venue is approximately 2.5 hours from Brisbane, 3 hours from the Gold Coast and 1.5 hours drive from Toowoomba.

The venue is wholly on private sheep farming properties. While a State Forest is adjacent to the venue it is not used as part of the trail ride.

### **Access**

Access is via public roads.

### **Facilities**

All facilities are brought in for the event. The camping ground is also the control point. It is established in an open paddock for the duration of the event which is a Friday night to Sunday afternoon.

Other facilities include:

- two different loop tracks. One is used on Saturday and Sunday afternoon while the other is only open on Sunday morning)
- a camping area
- hot showers (a tent with 6 discrete cubicles within it)
- toilet facilities (a mix of pedestals (20) over pits that are later closed and portaloos (approximately 10)
- licensed bar and canteen
- Saturday evening entertainment
- supervised peewee track
- novice track

## **History**

This particular ride is the newest on the calendar. The first ride was held in 2005 with 200 riders this year 400 riders were expected. Other, more established events on the calendar such as the Killarney ride attract approximately 1,400 riders.

The event is the principal fundraiser for the Greenwood State School. Much of the land, but not all, used in the event is owned by parents of school children.

After the event all tracks are reseeded and erosion measures put in place.

## **Recreation activities**

The main recreation activities are the trail riding and the camping and associated entertainment (chainsaw racing and DJ music). The event flyer describes the trails as taking “you through some of the finest riding in the district, consisting of spectacular granite formations, creeks, mountains, gullies, gorges, timbered land, open sheep paddocks, fantastic views and more.”

## **Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.**

In this particular case the organisers are not aware of or have sought any particular licenses or approvals beyond a liquor license.

The organisers have received assistance from Stanthorpe Shire Council (the loan of safety vests) but have not been asked to obtain any approvals.

DNRM were made aware that an area where a rare plant was located would not be used during the event. They acknowledged the voluntary disclosure but have not sought any further advice/approval.

The local police are aware of the event and will attend over the weekend to provide a presence. Arrangements have been made with the St Johns ambulance and Queensland Ambulance Service.

As liquor will be served appropriate liquor licenses have been obtained.

Insurance is organised through Motorcycling Australia (a \$15/head charge for the weekend).

The organisers have not proactively sought out agencies to establish if approvals are required. That the event will be held is well known in the district so the organisers would expect approaches from agencies if approvals are required. Being a smaller rural community a number of Council and government agency employees are involved in the event so the organisers feel that they would have been alerted to other approvals if required.

### **Concluding Comments**

It appears that smaller events held on an occasional basis are not required to obtain significant numbers of approvals – at least in some local government jurisdictions.

### **Mountain Bikes**

This case study relies heavily on the work of Gillian Duncan and the Gap Creek Trails Alliance whose work and motivation arose out of a lack of venues and events for mountain biking.

This example fits more with events because no facilities are established in the form of buildings and mountain bikers aim to leave no trace. The exception is the track maintenance which club members assist with.

This activity is similar to most other outdoor recreation activities relies on the continuing access to bushland and the trails included in “Where to mountain bike in SEQ” are on a variety of tenures, including Conservation and National Parks, unmade road reserves and recreation reserves held by local councils.

This booklet has taken considerable negotiation and cooperation with protected area managers and other land managers.

In contrast to other recreation activities some of these group members appear very enthusiastic to put something back into their sites through Landcare groups and similar maintenance.

### **Concluding Comments**

Determined individuals can make a very substantial difference if access is negotiated with land managers and compromises are sought.

## 9. FACILITIES

The facilities examined included those based on motorised transport, private camping grounds and B'n'B or farmstay establishments.

- Motor Vehicle based
  - Land Cruiser Mountain Park
  - Black Duck Valley
- Camping
  - Savages Crossing
  - Nurem Cabins
  - Campgrounds @ SSI Tipplers
- B'n'B /Farmstay/Outdoor Ed
  - Mt Barney Lodge
  - Boys Grammar Outdoor Recreation Centre
  - Fordsdale Farmstay

### 9.1. Motor Vehicle based

#### Landcruiser Mountain Park

##### Name & Ownership

The venue is known as Landcruiser Mountain Park and is privately owned by Alben and Helen Perret. The Park is described as “a working cattle property and Queensland’s first privately owned wilderness park for off-road and bush camping enthusiasts”. The Park is large consisting of 3,600ha or about 9,000 acres.

##### Location

The address of Landcruiser Mountain Park is MS 526 Jimna via Kilcoy (telephone contact: 07 5497 3164). The venue is approximately 2hrs drive from Brisbane and about 60kms from Kilcoy.

##### Access

Access is via a gravel road.

##### Facilities

As described on the Landcruiser Mountain Park website – “facilities are basic”. Facilities at the property include formal camping facilities, event facilities and various 4wd trails (over 200kms) as well as courses for skill testing and driver training. It is possible to camp anywhere on the property if you do not need the comforts of the formal camping areas. The Park does not cater to off-road motorcycles - only 4wd vehicles and camping.

## **History**

The Park was first opened in 1988. It started as a hobby as the owners were involved in motorsport and held the occasional event at the property. They later recognised the potential for camping and recreational four-wheel driving and the Park has grown from that point. This aspect of the business is now a much bigger business than the traditional cattle farming.

## **Recreation activities**

The main recreational activities are:

- Off-road driving
- Off-road driver training
- Events (usually multi-day events focussed on music and off-road vehicles)
- Camping

## **Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems**

The Park is well-established and has now built credibility with the local government (Kilcoy Shire Council) and with the Environment Protection Authority. In the early days management indicated that the Kilcoy Shire Council was a hindrance to getting the Park open and operational. This has now changed as the Park is the biggest tourist attraction in the Shire. When questioned on why the Council was a hindrance the operators felt that it was because the Park was new and different and posed some challenges to them. Petty politics by local government Councillors also muddled the process.

The Council has now given an enduring approval for events given that the Park “has proved itself” with the successful hosting of events over many years. Town planning approval is not required for each event as it was initially. Health inspectors from Kilcoy Shire Council though will generally conduct an inspection at all events and check local law compliance (e.g. serving of food and treatment of waste).

The Park has procedures in place for the control of erosion and revegetation of areas. The EPA has inspected these and makes no regulatory demands now as it is satisfied with the management of the Park in this regard.

The biggest cost burden for the Park concerns the treatment of sewage and grey water. All sewage from events, and a typical event has about 180,000 litres, has to be trucked to Council’s waste water treatment plant and treated at the Park’s expense. Despite approaches from Park management the Council and EPA have not allowed disposal of the sewage on the property despite its size and remoteness.

Grey water (e.g. from showers and hand basins) also needs to be collected and treated at Council’s waste water treatment plant. That is, all the water that is generated from facilities built in recent years. Grey water from earlier approved facilities is sprinkled on the property. It could be argued that there is a logic disconnect with such approvals that is adding to the costs of the operation.

## Concluding Comments

- If a proposal does not easily fit into the planning legislation it can run into difficulty.
- Local politics can interfere with planning mechanisms
- Successful operation for a period of time, as well as documented plans and practices, reassures the regulatory agencies and they are likely to make less demands than when the operation is in its infancy.

## Black Duck Valley – 4WD and Motorcycle Park

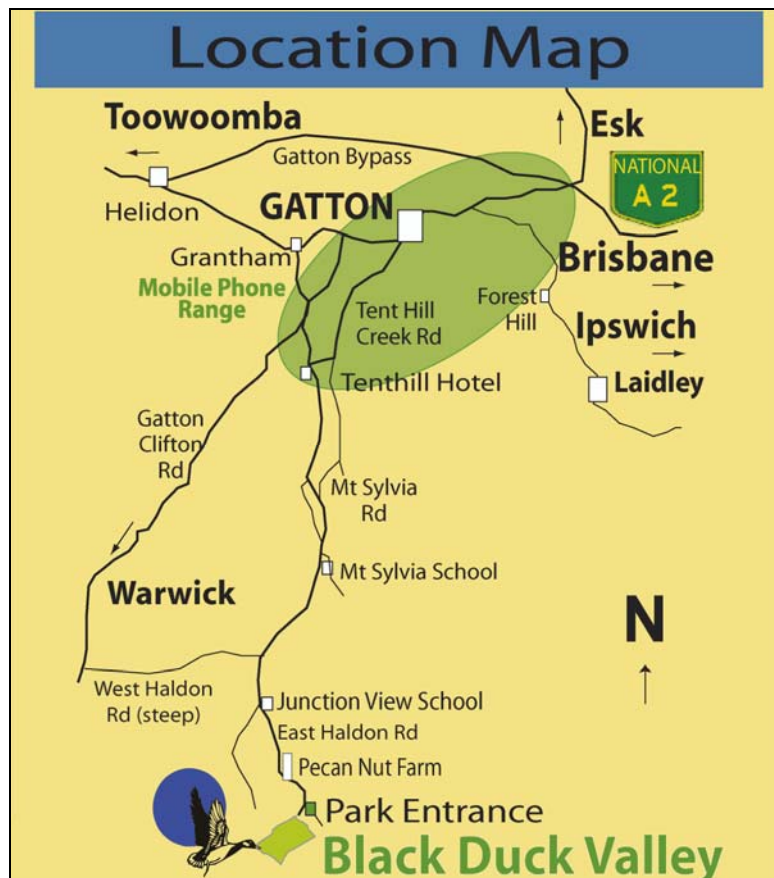
### Name & Ownership

Black Duck Valley 4WD and Motorcycle Park is a privately owned land holding of some 263 hectares. The business (and farm) is owned and operated by the Deite Family.

The Park has a website that provides up-to-date information on events and other aspects at the Park. The address is [www.blackduckvalley.com](http://www.blackduckvalley.com). The contact telephone number is (07) 5462 9116.

### Location

The address of the property is Browns Road, East Haldon, via Gatton, Qld, Australia.



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## Access

The park is approximately 30 minutes or 40kms south of Gatton and about 135kms in total from Brisbane.

Access from the:

- Gold Coast is via the Logan Motorway.
- Sunshine Coast is via Kilcoy and Esk.
- Toowoomba is via Old Warrego Highway, Grantham and Tenthill.
- Warwick is via Clifton-Gatton Road and Tenthill.

## Facilities

The principal facilities at the Park include:

- camping areas
- various high standard motocross tracks
- 4WD tracks for all levels of experience
- freestyle motorcycle ramps
- dedicated motor bike tracks for junior/novice riders
- dedicated motor bike tracks for mini-moto bikes
- trials obstacles
- scenic trail ride for all riders
- enduro loops for intermediate to advanced riders.



A small shop for fuel, snacks and basic spare parts.

The design of the Park is “rustic casual” and is described by Park management as “basic”. Various photographs of the site are included in this case study.

## History

The Park first opened in 1992 as an adjunct to farming activities. However it was not until 2001 that the Park “took off”.

The reasons for this sharp upturn in activity can be traced back to the decline in legal riding areas coupled with the continued growth in motorcycle ownership and demand for riding areas. In particular, the closure of State Forests to motorcycles and greater policing (including by local laws officers) of illegal urban off-road riding are cited by management as reasons for this growth.

The Park has developed to such a point now that only a small area is still used for farming (growing of lucerne hay) with the majority of the area set aside for motorcycling and four-wheel driving.

## Recreation activities

The Park is focused on providing trails, tracks and facilities for a wide range of motorcycle and 4WD activities. Camping is an adjunct to the motorcycle and 4WD activities. These facilities

are available for use at any time though during the week some trails may be closed for track maintenance.

In addition to the year-round use for casual riding and driving activities the site also organises a number of events over the year. These are often on long weekends and go for three days or so.

### **Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.**

A general comment from the owners was that the concept (i.e. a motorcycle and 4wd park) does not fit easily into the existing planning laws, policies and standards. As an example the Australian Standards for building design are written around the use of sawn timber. At this Park, for reasons of cost, aesthetics and durability, round timber was the preferred building material. Council officers did not have appropriate standards to refer to when assessing approvals. In general the standards, laws and regulations set too high a standard for the requirements of this operation. However the owners have found that the Council and EPA (sediment control licenses) have been willing to work with the Park to find acceptable solutions.



The operators stated that they have been able to keep public liability insurance premiums to a reasonable level. Reforms undertaken by the State (e.g. introduction of the *Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002*) has assisted in this regard.

Having the right topography and soil type is an advantage when establishing this type of facility. A general site requirement is a buffer from neighbours so that noise is not a problem. In this particular location the containment of the noisiest activities within a valley, so that there are ridges between the activity and neighbours, contains the noise within the site. The soil type is also important for a sustainable activity. Soils that do not erode easily are easier and more affordable, to manage.

### **Concluding Comments**

A lot of law appears to be written for the urban context and the requirements may be too high if you are trying to provide a low-cost rustic style facility. Even so, if authorities are prepared to be flexible and find realistic solutions then the operations can still be viable.

As some of these ventures are uncommon, there may not always be appropriate recognition of the activity in the planning instruments



## 9.2. Camping

### Savages Crossing

#### Ownership and Management

Land Tenure:

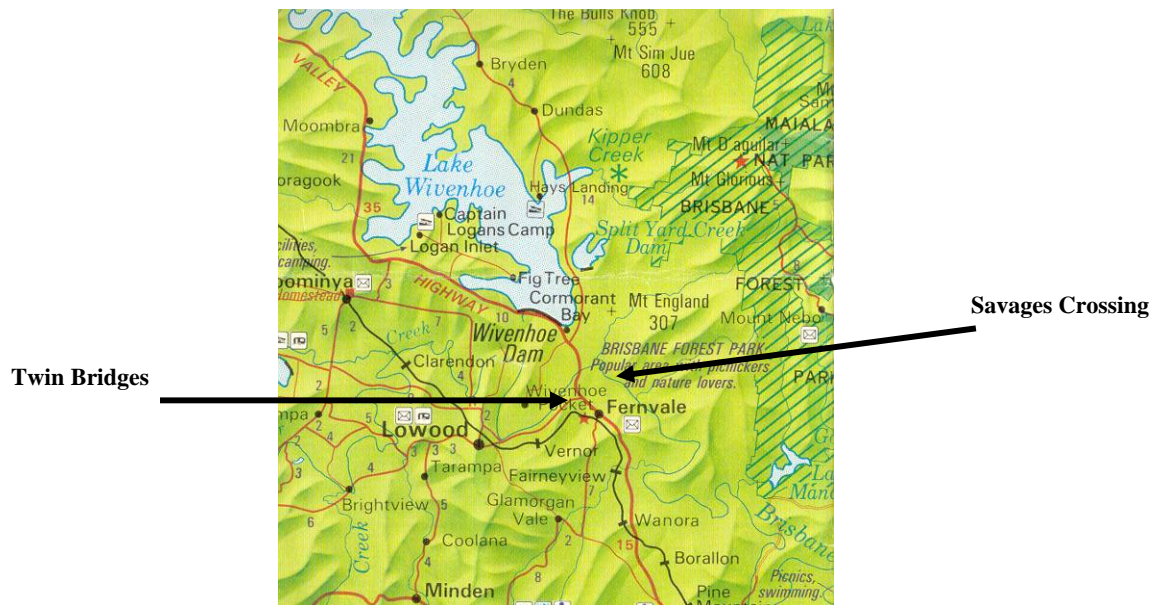
Road Reserve (Main Roads Department);

In-stream land, DNRM

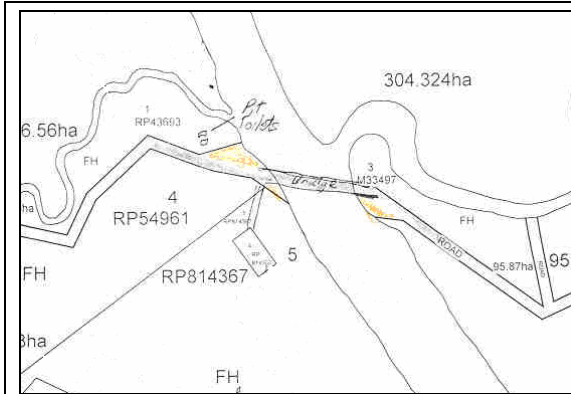
Management responsibilities are held by Esk Shire Council, who provide:

- a rubbish removal service;
- a grass mowing and weed slashing service;
- a toilet cleaning service;
- local area planning activities; and
- service planning and provision by council staff.

#### Location



Map 1 Location of Twin Bridges and Savages Crossing



**Map 2 Sketch of Aerial view of Savages Crossing**



**Photo 1 Aerial view of Savages Crossing**

### Access

Savages Crossing is accessible from Fernvale along Banks Creek Road. There are no regular public transport services either to the site or even to Fernvale.

Savages Crossing can be accessed by river (ie person paddling from another site)

### Facilities

There are two pit toilets, located a minimum of 100m from where people camp (and also out of site of campers), shown on Map 2. The toilets are in poor condition as shown in Photo 2.

There are no other facilities at the site, not even rubbish bins or access to potable water.



**Photo 2 Pitt toilets at Savages Crossing**

### History

Savages Crossing was originally a wooden bridge that connected Banks Creek Road across the Brisbane River. As shown on Map ??, the land adjacent to the bridge is road reserve. When Somerset Dam and more recently Wivenhoe Dam were constructed, the flow of water through the Brisbane River decreased and the water level in the river became more consistent, use of the river by recreationists increased.

### Recreation activities

Recreation activities and issues associated with them being undertaken at Savages Crossing are listed below:

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Activity	Situation
Camping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No designated or managed sites;</li> <li>No facilities for short or long term camping - no toilets, potable water, showers, rubbish bins, bar-b-ques.</li> </ul>
Swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Random access from a large number of sites is leading to widespread riverbank erosion;</li> <li>Snags, submerged objects, shallow water etc is a safety issue;</li> <li>Rubbish in the river and on the banks (ie syringes, glass) poses a threat to bare-footed swimmers.</li> </ul>
Boating	<p>Canoeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good opportunities for long and short canoe trips;</li> <li>No formal or designated canoe access points;</li> <li>Car parking and canoe trips - leaving cars overnight is unadvisable due to the risk of break and enter / being stolen.</li> </ul> <p>Motorised vessels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water shallow in some sections</li> <li>Water quality can be affected by use of motorised vessels;</li> <li>Hidden objects underwater;</li> <li>No formal boat ramps and parking facilities;</li> <li>Noise issues relating to engine.</li> </ul>
Picnicking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No developed picnic facilities;</li> <li>Picnickers have to bring all own equipment;</li> <li>Toilet facilities within reasonable walking distance from west bank (though no signage to indicate their presence and they are not visible from the riverbank).</li> </ul>
Trail Bike Riding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise from bikes disturbs river setting serenity;</li> <li>Safety is an issue as trail biking occurs in areas where non-compatible recreation activities are occurring eg camping, picnicking, children playing.</li> </ul>
Wildlife observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protection of bird and animal habitat required to enhance this activity.</li> </ul>
Fishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible from non-motorised vessels;</li> <li>No formal facilities and/or access specifically for fishing and associated activities.</li> </ul>





**Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.**

*General Issues*

1. User regulation is a significant problem at this site. Current legislation does not provide any government agencies with a mechanism for coordinated planning and management. Management agencies have overlapping responsibilities eg DNRM responsible for land (and water) below the high water mark, DMR are responsible for the road reserve, EPA responsible for ensuring vegetation is managed and protected, SEQ Water is responsible for water quality, Esk Shire Council is responsible for maintenance, Qld Police Service is the only agency that has legislative base to be able to enforce behaviour, but people have to behave unlawfully, not inappropriately for the police to have any powers. Overlapping and unclear jurisdictions have resulted in difficulties in supervision of activities and enforcement of behaviour codes and uncertainty among management agencies regarding jurisdictional issues
2. Difficult for users to know who is responsible for management and regulation enforcement
3. Esk Shire Council does not have the management resources (both human and financial) or mandate to manage the site (eg state legislation). Esk Shire have developed a **Mid Brisbane River Recreation Management Plan (November 2004)** (attached) which details actions that can be legally undertaken. The Shire is having significant difficulty in financing the proposed works. Additional funds would definitely increase recreation provision in the shire.

For example, Twin Bridges was in a much worse state regarding inappropriate user behaviour etc than Savages Crossing currently is. In collaboration with DNRM and Main Roads (who both provided funding to undertake the remedial works) the site was bollarded to prevent camping and vehicle incursion on to the site and policing was increased in the short-term to move on inappropriate users. These small measures have seen the site undergo a major transformation and become a recreation resource that the general public can safely access.

### *Planning Scheme issues*

There doesn't appear to be any planning scheme regulations preventing Savages Crossing being turned into a recreation resource. It is located on the south bank in the Fernvale Town Zone and on the north bank in the Catchment Precinct of the Rural Zone.

Issues that may cause concern depending on how the site is "developed" may include provision of parking, provision of infrastructure to support use (eg toilets and potable water) etc. The main legislation affecting the above though are Acts such as the Water Act, the Land Act, Environmental Protection Act etc.

### *Local Laws*

The Local Law applicable to this site is **Local Law No 14 Parks and Reserves**. In this Local Law "**park**" means land under the local government's control that is designated by local law policy as a park.

The objects of this local law are to-

- a. provide for the establishment of parks and reserves on land under the local government's control; and
- b. provide for appropriate public access to parks and reserves for active and passive recreation; and
- c. protect the safety of persons using parks and reserves; and

- d. preserve features of the natural and built environment and other aspects of the amenity of parks and reserves; and
- e. regulate activities in parks and reserves and ensure appropriate standards of conduct.

This Local Law does not prevent a place like Savages Crossing from being developed into a more appropriate recreation site.

### **Concluding Comments (ie what does this case study show us.)**

This case study highlights that it is not necessarily the planning legislation that prevents outdoor recreation from being provided, rather the lack of resources that local councils may have to enable appropriate levels of development and maintenance.

Another issue highlighted in this case study is the fact that there are a significant number of people accessing this site. They are causing significant impacts on the site, from riparian land being denuded of vegetation to water quality being compromised, litter, lighting of fires etc. Recreationists do impact on sites and this is one of the reasons cited by the private sector as to why they don't want to open up their land to recreation.

## Neurum Creek Bush Retreat and Campground

### Ownership and Management

Neurum Creek Bush Retreat and Campground is a privately owned and operated business. The property is owned by John Gavin (mobile 0400913195). It is managed by Simon and Tracey Gavin and they are assisted by two other people.

### Location

Neurum Creek Bush Retreat and Campground is nestled between tree-lined Neurum Creek and the cliff-faces and forested slopes of the Mount Archer escarpment. It borders Mt Mee state forest as shown on Map 3. This makes it less than 75 minutes travel from Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba or Kingaroy. The township of Woodford is a twelve minute drive away while Kilcoy is just a couple of minutes more.



**Map 3 Location of Neurum Creek Bush Retreat and Campground**

### Access

Accessible by conventional vehicles (don't need a 4WD). There is no public transport to the facility.

### Facilities

Set in natural surroundings on 127 hectares the property is home to native animals. It is suitable for individuals, families and large groups.

There are nine powered sites and a large number of sites available for camping.

There are two amenities blocks, both of which are light and airy. The larger one (southern unit) has wheel chair access to both male and female toilets. The amenities blocks are constructed in 1920's style with decorative finials, balustrading, timber casement windows, stained cypress-pine exteriors and mortice locks on the doors. Whilst the outside reflects days long gone the inside contains free hot showers and environmentally friendly self composting toilets with modern day toilet roll and hand soap dispensers, mirrors and 240 volt ac power outlets. Automatic dusk to dawn lighting is installed in these units.

Wash troughs with running hot and cold water are available at the back of both of these amenities blocks. Rainwater is also available at the amenities blocks from suitably marked taps. Water, pumped from Neurum Creek, is used for the showers and is reticulated to all camping areas. It is recommended that all on site water be boiled prior to drinking. These taps are marked with a "Creek Water" sign.

There is a picnic area has a shelter with tables and chairs. This area also has wood fired BBQ's and fire rings for open fires.

Open fires are permitted in the designated areas

### History

Formerly a dairy farm and then used for beef cattle.

## Recreation Activities

Available for day use as well as staying overnight

Activity	Situation
Camping	Suitable for Tent Camping, Camper Trailers, Caravans and Motorhomes (9 sites are powered) Campers can choose sites by the creek, in front of the gorge, on the hillside, or be a bit more remote in the bush area
Swimming	Neurum Creek runs from the south to the north and is accessible at all points. There are several year round swimming areas in the creek, some suitable for small children while others are for the bigger kids and adults.
Bushwalking	Available along the creek, up the slopes and into the gorges (these walks are graded)
Nature Viewing	There is an abundance of bird life is present on the property as well as a large variety of butterflies. Many species of trees and shrubs are found here along with seasonal wildflowers.
Astronomy	The distance from towns and other forms of artificial lighting make it an ideal place for those who like to star gaze at night.
Picnic	A picnic shelter and associated facilities (BBQ, water etc) is on site, but picnicking is encouraged on other sites under the trees also
Motor bike riding	Not permitted

## Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.

### *General issues*

Believes that sites such as this are viable as low budget camping accommodation that is not a caravan park. Viability is linked to providing things for people to do, so intends to put activity pads in place eg cricket, volleyball. Things that kids can be active in. Target market seems to be families, rather than outdoor recreation groups.

Believes that in order to remain viable, capitalization of the property needs to be kept appropriate to returns.

His estimates are for the Neurum Creek Bush Retreat and Campground he has a 300-400 person capacity on site. In order to make the site viable, he needs 40% occupancy. Therefore, the types of activities that he is offering is not necessarily what the “traditional” outdoor recreation community is looking for, rather he is offering budget accommodation – a chance for low income people to be able to go on holidays!

### *Planning Scheme issues*

John Gavin bought the property as a going concern so doesn't know what , if any, difficulties the owners before him had in getting the property approved.

## Concluding Comments (ie what does this case study show us.)

This case study shows us that private places do exist and are considered to be viable by the proprietors.



## **Addendum**

When talking to John Gavin he indicated that he had attempted to set up his own similar business, but had moved away from that idea because he had difficulty with getting the information required to satisfy Council (Caloundra) requirements for development application. The steps he had to undertake were:

- His first contact with Council was a conversation re what was required in order to get development assessment approval for a material change of use, as well as some infrastructure. He was told he would have to have a meeting with Council, but was advised to employ a Town Planner, as the process was likely to need one. There were two types of meetings, one cost \$175, the second \$1000. Regardless of which meeting he opted for, he would not be given any opinion of likelihood that his application would be successful.
- He put an option on the piece of land, with clauses to the effect of him being able to forgo it should development assessment not work in his favour. It was a time-limited option.
- He employed a Town Planner who attempted to put together an application. He was required to produce at a minimum the following studies:
  - Traffic count
  - Environment impact statement
  - Water resource impact
  - Fire Risk Management Plan
- Due to a number of physical constraints, he was unable to even produce the required information to Council prior to the option time being up. So, he opted not to continue.

His issues are:

- He spent \$30K attempting to get the information that Council required to make its decision – at that point he stopped, so potentially getting the info required by Council would have been more. So, the process requires spending a minimum of \$30K without knowing the outcome.
- The process of getting the information was so long and full of obstacles that he ran out of time – the \$30K referred to above does not include his own time

## **What have we learnt:**

- The set-up costs are very high just to comply with IPA. The problem may not be the Planning Scheme as it is possible that the development application may have been successful, or the Regional Plan – IPA creates the costs.

## **BOAT (Brisbane Outboard Aquatic Touring Club) Campground - South Stradbroke Island**

### **Name & Ownership**

Brisbane Outboard and Touring Club a not-for-profit association which holds a term lease from DNRM until 2014.

### **Location**

The campground is the southern most boat club camping ground at Tipplers Passage South Stradbroke Island on a waterfront site of approximately 4,160 m<sup>2</sup>.

### **Access**

The site is accessed principally by small craft ie 10-20 foot dinghies with outboard motors, however the grounds can be accessed by a water taxi from Runaway Bay.

### **Facilities & Activities**

Individual campsites are not designated and the boundaries of the camping area are poorly marked.

There is a shower, toilet block and laundry of at least twenty years standing.

The facilities are not able to address the demands of the summer camping crowds and failure of the septic system is a regular event during this period.

There is a generally low level of investment on the site which includes a central meeting area, as well as toilet and shower facilities. The site is only just above sea level and is generally aimed at the needs of the association members.

The collection of solid waste is addressed by Gold Coast City Council.

### **History**

This site was originally leased to this club in approximately 1980 and improvements have been gradually made to the site.

This facility has been run as a campground since 1980. It is part of the Island culture and experience which has formed a traditional location for summer holidays for many families. Note: this information is coming from a User Survey which is currently being undertaken..

The current condition of this campground is poor with evidence of trampling and other vegetation damaged, virtually no ground cover and poor waste management practices.

## **Recreation activities**

The outdoor recreational activities associated with this site are principally marine-based as the Island and therefore the campground is only accessible by boat. Swimming, fishing and walking to the eastern ocean beach are the principle recreation activities.

This part of South Stradbroke Island has long been regarded as a low-cost venue where excessive drinking is not only tolerated but a key aspect of the culture. This is related to the relative proximity to the South Stradbroke Island Resort.

## **Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.**

Gold Coast City Council has made it clear that the level of waste water treatment is inadequate and must be upgraded in the very near future. Good sewage disposal is a condition of the lease with DNRM and the on-going operation of the site is dependent upon the renewal of the lease with DNRM.

Current operations violate

1. *Local Law No. 29. Public and other camping areas and camping generally*
  - during the summer months up to 30 or more tents are left in a semi-permanent arrangement.
2. *Local Law No 42 On-site Sewerage Facility* – inadequate operation of a septic system.

There is some doubt about the status of this camping site as it is not registered under Local Law 29 which requires a ceiling on the number of campsites. It is anticipated that if the club intends addressing the toilets issue a MCU will be triggered. This will be reviewed in the context of the study currently underway to review the long term land use pattern in this precinct.

## **Concluding Comments**

This not-for-profit group have extraordinary and restrictive access to relatively scarce resources in the form of waterfront campsites less than 10 nautical miles from the heart of Surfers Paradise. The site is not well-cared for in environmental terms as the sewage is inadequately processed and may be contaminating the water table. This situation is in common with several other club leases and the Council's own campsite all within about 500 metres.

There is a strong demand for this type of facility but it is very weather dependent. Overnight stays are free to club members and there is a practice of erecting tents at the beginning of summer and members returning every couple of weeks to "their site".

The immediate competition is from the Council campground which charges approximately \$14 per night per tent.

There is a possibility that if this club surrendered its lease it could be acquired by a private operator, but again this would be subject to the current review of the land uses in this area. The operational issues associated with the island are difficult and expensive and good staff are difficult to attract. It is also difficult to resolve the equity issues of a highly sought after location remaining in the hands of one club, when other highly desirable campsites are held by the State and require bookings, protect the environment (particularly through efficient sewerage

treatment systems) and access is rationed fairly, rather than by members reserving campsites week after week.

### **9.3. B'n'B /Farmstay**

#### **Mt Barney Lodge Country Retreat**

##### **Name & Ownership**

Mt Barney Lodge Country Retreat is owned and was developed by the Larkin Family, initially John Larkin who began the project in the late 1980's. Management and partial ownership is now in the hands of the second generation, Innes Larkin who has studied to the level of Masters of Outdoor Recreation.

##### **Location & site characteristics**

This farmstay/B'n'B is 20 km from Rathdowney in Beaudesert Shire. It is immediately at the foothills of Mt Barney National Park. Neighbours on all sides run dairy and beef cattle. The site is undulating towards Mt Barney and provides spectacular views of the mountain and range.

##### **Access**

The access is bitumen except for the last 3.4 km and the trip from Brisbane is approximately 2 hours.

##### **Facilities**

The property is comprised of several farm houses, including the original which was on site when the property was purchased in the 1980's. The accommodation is a very comfortable farmstay without any additional facilities such as swimming pools or other recreational activities.

##### **History**

The property operated as a dairy for many years prior to the Larkins taking over. The initial years on the property were difficult due very uncooperative neighbour and Council which did not effectively protect the Larkins from the impacts of an unlicensed quarrying operation.

This property was one of the first non-farming activities in the area, although Mt Barney has been a traditional bushwalking venue for generations.

It appears the quarrying was carried out to deliberately annoy and adversely impact on the Larkins due to the noise and additional truck traffic which operated during weekends. Occupancy is focused on weekends and one of the major attractions of the site is the rural setting and its peaceful atmosphere. This atmosphere was shattered by the quarrying activities of their neighbour.

The initial development approval was for 20 accommodation units a capacity the Larkins cannot ever see the site reaching. Financially the project did not reach a break even point until 5 years into operation and this impacted on the family finances. Moving old Queensland style houses onto to the site was a difficult process but the Larkins did not indicate that this was any more difficult than moving a house for residential purposes to any other site.

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Use of Rural Lands For Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

*Not representative of Commonwealth, State or Local Government policy – for discussion purposes.*

### **Recreation activities**

The recreation activities at this location are dominated by the spectacular landscape of Mt Barney which provides bushwalking and rock climbing.

John Larkin initially escorted guests on walks up Mt Barney and for rock climbing excursions as he is an accomplished and experienced bushwalker. In recent years the insurance risk has been too high for John to continue, however Innes (the son) can secure reasonable cover because of his professionally recognised qualifications.

### **Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.**

The issue with the neighbour's quarrying activities took a huge toll on the family and they indicated they would not have begun the project had they known what lay in store. There appears to have been reluctance on the part of Council to enforce regulations upon the quarrying neighbour.

From the Larkins' point of view the planning scheme and regulatory environment did not pose any additional constraints than any other house moving exercise.

### **Concluding Comments**

The Larkins were pioneers in this area and the Beaudesert Shire Council probably reflected the opinions of many of the long term residents. Several other rural tourism establishments have followed this one and the community acceptance of these establishments, and now the Larkins', appears to be at a very high level.

## **Fordsdale Farmstay**

### **Name & Ownership**

The Fordsdale Farmstay is owned and operated by the Refrey family as a working farm which welcomes visitors. This is one of two properties owned by the Renfreys.

### **Location**

This property is 22km from Gatton along Wagners Road. This property is located less than a kilometre from the Bicentennial National Trail (BNT).

### **Access**

The road is sealed until the turnoff at Wagners Road, then a reasonable quality dirt road until entering the property. The farmhouse and accommodation is situated up a very steep and rutted dirt road accessible only by 4wd vehicles.

### **Facilities**

The accommodation bunkhouse is in the original farm house.

## **History**

The Renfreys bought the property 5 years ago. Business in the first year was promising but as the drought swept across Queensland, the lack of water and feed on the Bicentennial Track forced people to abandon their dream. This establishment has experienced several personality issues with local coordinator of the Bicentennial National Trail.

The BNT committee is made up of members who live in either Sydney or Canberra and have no sympathy with Queensland issues. With the closure of many forests to horse riding there has been increased pressure to find suitable riding places, but people only want them near where they live. Local government has imposed several conditions on the farmstay and has displayed little sympathy or understanding of the conditions operating in the farmstay tourism sector.

## **Recreation activities**

This is a 1,000 acre cattle property with endurance horses as well as goats trained as pack animals which are available for treks. Baby animals are available as are horse riding holidays. The connection with the BNT has not produced the anticipated results due to drought and administrative conditions.

This establishment offers a wide range of activities including:

- Endurance riding
- Jillaroo/Jackaroo School
- World Wide Organic Farmers – exchange program – farm labour for accommodation with world-wide affiliations.

## **Any known issues re legal constraints, planning scheme issues and local laws problems.**

Insufficient detail was provided to fully understand what the problems may be other than the BNT administration and drought issues.

## **Concluding Comments**

The obvious location adjacent to the BNT has not provided the regular flow of visitors which had been anticipated. This operator indicates that their target market is also likely to be sensitive to drought conditions. This location for urban dwellers is reasonably distant with approximately 2.5 hours travelling from Brisbane.