

Draft Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme
Review of Submissions
Local Area Key Issues Paper No. 13:
Southern Hinterland townships growth opportunities

Key Issue:	Growth opportunities for Southern Hinterland townships
No. of submissions:	21
Major issues raised:	Limited growth opportunities in the Southern Hinterland townships, particularly Glass House Mountains and Beerwah.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Council received a submission from a community group requesting expansion opportunities for the Southern Hinterland townships, particularly Glass House Mountains and Beerwah.

The submission is concerned that the draft planning scheme does not adequately provide for the emerging needs of Glass House Country communities and business operators.

Other individual submissions outlined proposals for expansion in the Southern Hinterland townships including Glass House Mountains, Beerwah, Landsborough and Mooloolah.

The subject areas are located outside the SEQ Regional Plan's Urban Footprint land use designation and, as such, Council is unable to consider these areas for inclusion in an urban zone. However, as part of the review of submissions, these areas have been considered for possible identification as future investigation areas to inform a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.

Submissions relating to specific sites in Beerburrum, Landsborough and Mooloolah have been dealt with separately in the relevant submission response. This paper broadly considers expansion opportunities in Glass House Mountains and Beerwah. Detailed assessments of specific sites would be required for a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Southern Hinterland area

The Southern Hinterland of the Sunshine Coast is a valuable rural, recreational, scenic hinterland living area with unique natural features including the Glass House Mountains. The North Coast rail line traverses the area providing access to the rural townships of Beerburrum, Glass House Mountains, Beerwah, Landsborough and Mooloolah. These townships have developed to service the surrounding rural areas and in many cases provide alternative lifestyle opportunities for the southern part of the Sunshine Coast. The rail line offers significant opportunities for travel to Brisbane and other locations.

Beerwah is developing as the major centre in this area, providing a broader range of services, businesses and residential development. Glass House Mountains, Landsborough and Mooloolah provide township and Rural residential opportunities, whilst Beerburrum is a small village providing limited business and services.

2.2 South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009

The *SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031* identifies an Urban Footprint and Rural Living Area regional land use categories to accommodate projected growth on the Sunshine Coast to 2031. These categories are prescribed and subject to regulation. Urban and rural residential development is not permitted to occur outside the boundaries of these defined land use categories except where satisfying specific criteria.

Although Council can provide recommendations for the review of the *SEQ Regional Plan*, it cannot at this time make zoning allocations that are in conflict with the Regional Plan. However, the *SEQ Regional Plan* is intended to be reviewed in 2014. During the review process, both Council and the community will have opportunities to make submissions to the *SEQ Regional Plan* regarding the Urban Footprint and Rural Living regional land use categories.

As part of a submission, any submitters will be required to address the following criteria outlined in the *SEQ Regional Plan* for the consideration of any expansion to the Urban Footprint:

Areas to be considered for inclusion in the Urban Footprint should:

- *be physically suitable;*
- *exclude areas with an unacceptable risk of natural hazards including predicted impacts of climate change;*
- *exclude areas with significant biodiversity values;*
- *be appropriately separated from incompatible land uses; and*
- *be either a logical expansion of an existing urban area, or of sufficient size to support the efficient provision of social and economic infrastructure.*

New Urban Footprint areas should be located to:

- *achieve a balanced settlement pattern across SEQ and within sub-regions over the planning period;*
- *maintain a well-planned region of distinct cities, towns and villages;*
- *maintain the integrity of inter-urban breaks;*
- *minimise impacts on natural resources;*
- *maximise the use of committed and planned major transport and water infrastructure;*
- *enable the efficient provision of physical and social infrastructure, including public transport;*
- *have ready access to services and employment;*
- *ensure significant non-residential activities; and*
- *achieve specific locational, infrastructure and site requirements.*

2.3 Population Projections

As part of the preparation of the draft Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme, Council completed a population and employment assessment, which looked at the realistic and ultimate development potential of all land in the region. The assessment is based upon a lot by lot consideration of the physical, administrative and ownership constraints that represent potential limitations to future development or redevelopment.

This assessment supported the allocation of zones in the draft planning scheme and informed the preparation of the priority infrastructure plan. The draft priority infrastructure plan provides estimates of existing and projected population to 2031 for each priority infrastructure area on the Sunshine Coast. The population projections for the Southern Hinterland towns follow:

Priority Infrastructure Area	Estimated Existing Population (2011)	Estimated Projected Population (2031)
Beerburrum	326	548
Beerwah	3,159	7,748
Glass House Mountains	1,094	2,374
Landsborough	1,857	3,766
Mooloolah	1,249	2,047

Note: These estimates only relate to population within the Priority Infrastructure Areas. Additional population is located outside the priority infrastructure areas and in the surrounding rural areas.

The priority infrastructure plan only outlines population estimates and projections for priority infrastructure areas (which are loosely aligned with the local plan areas). It is recognised that these estimates will vary from the ABS census data and other projections due to the different projection areas used by these groups.

The population assessment determined that there is sufficient land zoned for urban purposes in the draft planning scheme to meet the needs of the hinterland townships and adjoining rural residential areas for the life of the planning scheme.

It should be noted that population estimates are only one tool used in the preparation and implementation of the planning scheme. Other measures are also considered to determine the likely growth of townships including the region wide settlement pattern, the role of the township, constraints to development and proposed services. These considerations are outlined in more detail in Section 4 below.

2.4 Strategic Framework – Key Concepts for the Southern Hinterland

The draft planning scheme includes a draft Strategic framework which sets the policy direction for the planning scheme, including the preferred settlement pattern for the region. The Strategic framework includes a draft Spatial Concept which identifies the major elements of the preferred settlement pattern for the Sunshine Coast to 2031 (as expressed in the Spatial Vision). The Strategic Framework and Spatial Concept are based on extensive consultation undertaken on previous planning and the Statement of Proposals 2009.

In terms of the Southern Hinterland, the draft Spatial Concept identifies the following:

- the picturesque and valued natural and landscape elements of the Glass House Mountains are unique places of national and international significance;
- Beerwah is a bustling rural town centre for the southern rural and rural residential communities;
- communities such as Mooloolah, Landsborough, Glass House Mountains and Beerburrum are rural towns with a strong community identity located along the North Coast Rail Line;
- opportunities for Rural residential living are located within and around the townships of Glass House Mountains, Beerwah, Landsborough and Mooloolah; and
- the values of the surrounding rural area are protected for their rural, scenic amenity and interurban break values.

In summary, the Southern Hinterland is intended to be a rural area with valuable natural and landscape elements. The area offers significant opportunities for rural and related activities, tourism and lifestyle residential experiences. Beerwah is identified as the major centre providing many of the major business and services for the southern hinterland area as well as residential and Rural residential opportunities. The other townships of Mooloolah, Landsborough and Glass House Mountains are intended to offer local business and services, township residential and Rural residential living opportunities. Beerburum is identified as a small rural village offering limited business and community services with village living opportunities.

The *Strategic Framework Map 6: Landscape Character and Community Identity* recognises that the Southern Hinterland is an area of high scenic value. From Beerwah south to Beerburum, Map 6 also identifies this area as part of the Regional inter urban break between the Sunshine Coast and the Moreton Bay regions. Map 6 also identifies sub regional interurban breaks between the Southern Hinterland towns.

In terms of Rural residential development, the draft planning scheme's Strategic Framework contains Rural residential development within defined boundaries so as to avoid biophysical values and natural hazards, protect natural resources, maintain the individuality of communities and to plan effectively for the efficient delivery of infrastructure and services.

Having regard to the findings of the population assessment, the Strategic framework does not recognise the need for additional growth beyond the Local plan boundaries or Rural residential areas identified for the Southern Hinterland townships at this time.

The draft planning scheme seeks to accommodate additional growth within the existing urban zones in the Southern Hinterland townships, however it is recognised that some land zoned for Low density residential development in Glass House Mountains and Beerwah is constrained or intended to be used for other purposes. Therefore, there may be a need to consider some small additional opportunities for growth in the Glass House Mountains and Beerwah areas for further investigation (post adoption of the draft planning scheme). The timing and extent of this development will require further assessment as part of further investigation to inform a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.

2.5 Criteria for further consideration

For the consideration of expansion options for land outside the Urban Footprint, the following criteria would provide some guidance. These criteria are based on the *SEQ Regional Plan* criteria (outlined in Section 2.2 above) and Council's other policy considerations:

1. **Growth management** – expansion of the township is consistent with the region's growth management strategies, contributes to well planned towns and maintains interurban breaks;
2. **Need** – demonstrated community need for urban expansion in the town;
3. **Location** – the site is a logical expansion to the township, adjoins land which is within the Urban Footprint and is separated from incompatible land uses;
4. **Suitability** – the site is relatively unconstrained, is suitable for urban development and doesn't compromise natural resources; and
5. **Services** – the site is capable of being adequately serviced, is accessible from the existing road network and is well connected to the existing town centre.

3.0 GLASS HOUSE MOUNTAINS

3.1 Overview

Approximately 10 submissions were received in relation to Glass House Mountains. The majority of these submissions either express concern about the lack of growth opportunities and/or request a zone change.

In particular, a submission requests that the local plan area for the township is extended to include additional Low density residential, Medium impact industry and Rural residential zoned land, to support new business growth in the township.

3.2 Consideration of submissions

The major points raised in relation to expansion proposals in Glass House Mountains follow:

- The Local Plan Area for the township should be extended to include additional Low density residential, Rural Residential and Medium impact industry zoned land, to support new business growth in the township. A number of specific growth areas are identified to the north, south, east and west of the local plan area boundary;
- The Local Plan boundary should be based on topographic borders like creek lines or national parks. The local plan boundary should consolidate rather than fragment urban and rural residential areas;
- Railway towns already have existing infrastructure and their growth should be encouraged. Hindering growth of Glass House Mountains will serve to limit infrastructure provision;
- Growth should be encouraged to sustain industrial business opportunities in Beerwah;
- The area is key for first homebuyers and families – the planning scheme should support the attractiveness of this area;
- The planning scheme makes no provision for a Low or Medium Impact Industry zone to provide for local employment opportunities; and
- The expansion of the Local Plan Area will also assist with vegetation (fire) management, as the township is surrounded by forestry plantations.

In response to these issues, the following general comments are provided:

Issue	Response
1. <i>Expand Local plan area</i>	During the preparation of the draft planning scheme, an assessment of population and employment was undertaken. This assessment identified that there is vacant land within the existing Low density residential zone in Glass House Mountains. However, it is recognised that there is some local demand for additional residential opportunities and some of existing zoned land is constrained which may restrict yield. On this basis, there may be opportunities to investigate some limited expansion in Glass House Mountains where an area meets the criteria for consideration outlined in Section 3.3 of this report.
2. <i>Base Local plan area on natural features</i>	The Local plan area boundary was based on the Urban Footprint, the <i>Caloundra City Plan</i> , consideration of existing and proposed zoning and natural features. Where possible, natural boundaries are used.
3. <i>Infrastructure provided</i>	Urban zoned land within the local plan area is connected or has the ability to be connected to reticulated water and sewerage. Reticulated water is also available to Rural residential areas within the local plan

Issue	Response
	area. Any further investigation would need to give careful consideration to the infrastructure requirements for the expansion of residential or Rural residential development in an area.
4. <i>Sustain industry in Beerwah</i>	The draft planning scheme recognises that Beerwah is the Major Regional Activity Centre for the southern hinterland area. Additional residential growth is planned for Beerwah to support the centre. Additional, smaller scaled residential growth is provided for in the other towns, including Glass House Mountains.
5. <i>Support area for first home buyers</i>	The cost of land or housing is not directly related to the draft planning scheme, however it is recognised that the Southern Hinterland provides opportunities for a variety of housing forms and prices. As such, the draft planning scheme provides for a range of residential and lifestyle options in Glass House Mountains including Low density residential, Medium density residential and Rural residential.
6. <i>Low or medium impact industry opportunities</i>	The draft planning scheme allocates land in Beerwah for Medium impact industry which is appropriate for a Major Regional Activity Centre. In Glass House Mountains, the Local centre zone allows for a range of local industry services to meet the needs of the community. However, it is recognised that there may need to be some land identified for Low impact industry to cater for the medium to long term local service activities. These activities should be located in or adjoining the existing town centre of Glass House Mountains.
7. <i>Vegetation management</i>	The expansion of residential areas into forestry areas is likely to exacerbate vegetation management issues rather than improve these issues. The draft planning scheme includes provisions for development to manage bushfire hazards.

3.3 Consideration of Expansion opportunities

Under the draft planning scheme, Glass House Mountains is intended to remain as a small rural town with a range of Low density residential, Medium density residential and Rural residential opportunities contained within the local plan area. Glass House Mountains is generally contained on the western side of the rail line to ensure connectivity within the town.

Submissions indicate that expansion is needed for both residential, Rural residential and industrial development in Glass House Mountains. However, these submissions do not provide any analysis of existing population, projected population, available land or market demand to demonstrate the need for this expansion.

The draft planning scheme currently intends that growth in Glass House Mountains can be accommodated in existing urban zones. However it is recognised that whilst there is capacity within the existing zoned land, a number of sites are constrained and would have limited development potential.

On this basis, it may be possible to consider some small scale expansion in Glass House Mountains for medium to longer term residential or Rural residential development where this expansion would not have a significant impact on the sub regional inter urban break.

In terms of industrial development, the Local centre zone provides opportunities for local industry in Glass House Mountains. More intensive industrial development is catered for in the nearby Beerwah Major Regional Activity Centre. Glass House Mountains is not considered to be a suitable location for Medium impact industry which should be located in Beerwah.

However, it is recognised that there is limited capacity for local services in the Glass House Mountains Local centre zone and that further consideration could be given to opportunities for small localised service (Low impact) industry to cater for medium to long term needs as part of a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.

The submitters identified a number of sites to the north, east, south and west of Beerwah. As part of a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan, it is intended to consider these sites proposed by the submitters in more detail.

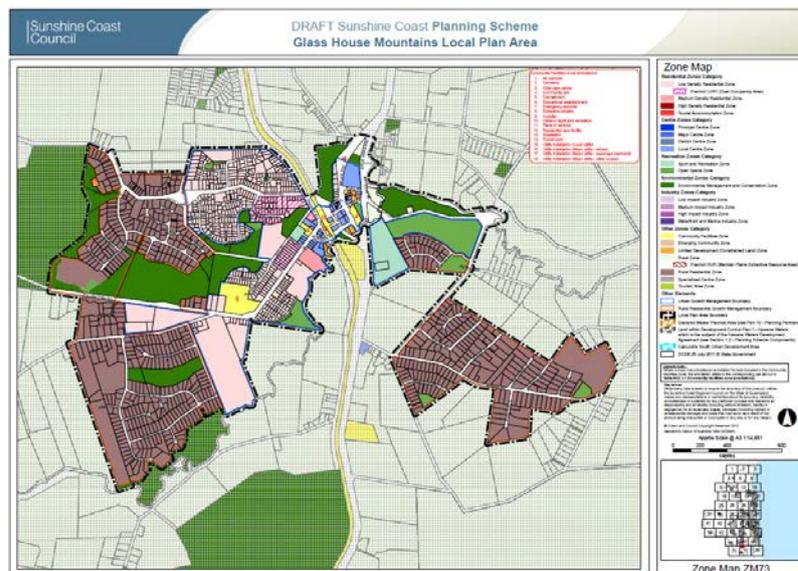


Figure GHM 3: Zoning

4.0 BEERWAH

4.1 Overview

Approximately eight submissions were received in relation to Beerwah Local plan area. The majority of these submissions either express concern about the lack of growth opportunities and/or request a zone change. In particular, a submission requests that the Local plan area for Beerwah township is extended to include additional Low density residential, Medium impact industry and Rural residential zoned land, to support new business growth in the township.

4.2 Consideration of submissions

The major points raised by a community group in relation to their expansion proposals in Beerwah follow:

- as Beerwah is shown as a Major Regional Activity Centre, it must be allowed to grow more than allowed for in the draft scheme – otherwise the business community cannot plan with any certainty. Must be allowed to attract regional growth. Suitable zoned land to be allocated for job creation. Achieve a balance of zones;
- the footprint of the Beerwah Local Area Plan must be expanded to allow the future growth of Beerwah while maintaining its rural/urban life style;
- opposed to increasing the population by converting low density residential to higher density residential as this does not reflect the outcomes of the Beerwah Place + project and the community aspirations for the future of Beerwah;
- Beerwah needs more land in the rural residential zone;
- the local plan boundary should typically use topographical borders (such as creek lines or National Parks). As an example the Local Area Plan boundary south of the Lindeman Road to Sandy Creek should be investigated for development;
- additional Medium Impact Industry zone land should be provided between the existing industrial estate and the proposed new council depot on Roys Road; and
- the northern urban boundary of the town should be shifted north and west to provide for future growth.

A general response to these issues follows:

Issue	Response
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Beerwah MRAC – continue to grow to attract growth and job creation;</i> 2. <i>Expand footprint to allow for growth</i> 	<p>The draft planning scheme recognises Beerwah as the Major Regional Activity centre for the Southern Hinterland and includes land within the Local plan area in a range of urban zones to support growth in the town. In particular, Beerwah includes a Major centre zone and Medium impact industry zone to support a range of business and employment opportunities in the Southern Hinterland.</p> <p>In addition, Beerwah includes land in the High density and Medium density residential zones to allow for a range of housing options in close proximity to the rail station. It is noted that there is vacant Low density, Medium density residential and Rural residential land in Beerwah with capacity to accommodate growth.</p> <p>Having said this, it is recognised that if the High density residential is not in demand in the short term, there may be demand in Beerwah for additional Low density residential and Rural residential land. On this basis, it may be possible to consider some expansion of the Local plan area as part of a further investigation and</p>

Issue	Response
	submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.
3. <i>Opposes High density residential – doesn't reflect placemaking</i>	<p>The Beerwah Place+ Project provided valuable community input on placemaking plans for Beerwah. It is recognised that the outcomes of the consultation confirmed that the community wants Beerwah to develop as a vibrant town whilst still retaining its rural township ambience. The project identified a number of specific actions, mostly relating to connectivity and streetscape outcomes.</p> <p>It is noted that the draft planning scheme was prepared prior to the finalisation of the Beerwah Place+ Project. However, the draft planning scheme has been reviewed against the outcomes of the project. This assessment confirmed that the draft planning scheme is generally consistent with the overall findings of the project. However, it is recognised that a detailed review of the Local plan code is required to ensure that the detailed project actions are reflected, particularly in the Beerwah Element Figure and detailed requirements.</p> <p>It is noted that the submission questions the suitability of the High density residential zone in Beerwah. In response, this zone provides for a mix of medium and high density residential activities including multiple dwellings, short-term accommodation, residential care facilities and retirement facilities. The Medium and High density residential zones are applied to areas close to the Beerwah town centre and public transport facilities. It is considered that the Beerwah Local plan area should provide this range of zones to support the towns development as a Major Regional Activity Centre.</p>
4. <i>More Rural residential land</i>	There is capacity for further Rural residential development in the Rural residential zoned land in Beerwah. However, it is recognised that there may be some demand in Beerwah for additional Rural residential land. On this basis, it may be possible to consider some expansion of the Local plan area as part of a further investigation and submission to the <i>SEQ Regional Plan</i> review.
5. <i>Use topographical borders – eg south of Sandy Creek</i>	The Local plan boundary was based on the Urban Footprint, the <i>Caloundra City Plan</i> , consideration of existing and proposed zoning and natural features. Where possible, natural boundaries are used.
6. <i>Provide additional Medium impact industry</i>	The submission identifies a proposed expansion area between the existing and proposed Council depot in Roys Road for additional Medium impact industry land.
7. <i>Shift boundary to north and west to provide for expansion</i>	The submission identifies a proposed expansion area to the north and west of the town for Rural residential development.

4.3 Consideration of expansion opportunities

Under the draft planning scheme, Beerwah is intended to develop as the Major Regional Activity Centre for the southern hinterland providing a broad range of higher order uses and activities and providing a focus on transit oriented residential opportunities. Growth is generally contained on the western side of the rail line to ensure connectivity within the town.

Submissions indicate that expansion is needed for both residential, rural residential and industrial development in Glass House Mountains. However, these submissions do not provide any analysis of existing population, projected population, available land or market demand to demonstrate the need for this expansion.

The draft planning scheme currently intends that growth in Beerwah can be accommodated within existing urban zones.

To consider this issue, a review of the existing residential and Rural residential land around Beerwah was completed which identified that there is capacity within the residential zones and the Rural residential land for some expansion. There is some capacity within the Low density residential land, however this is more limited.

On this basis, it may be possible to consider some small scale expansion in appropriate areas for medium to longer term residential or Rural residential development where this expansion would not have a significant impact on the sub regional inter urban break. The timing and extent of expansion should be considered in more detail as part of a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.

In terms of industrial development, the draft planning scheme determined that there is existing capacity within the Medium impact industry zoned land in Beerwah to cater for industrial development for the life of the planning scheme. However, it is recognised that some of the land zoned for Medium impact industry has not been developed for some time and that opportunities for alternative and future industrial land may need to be considered as part of a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.

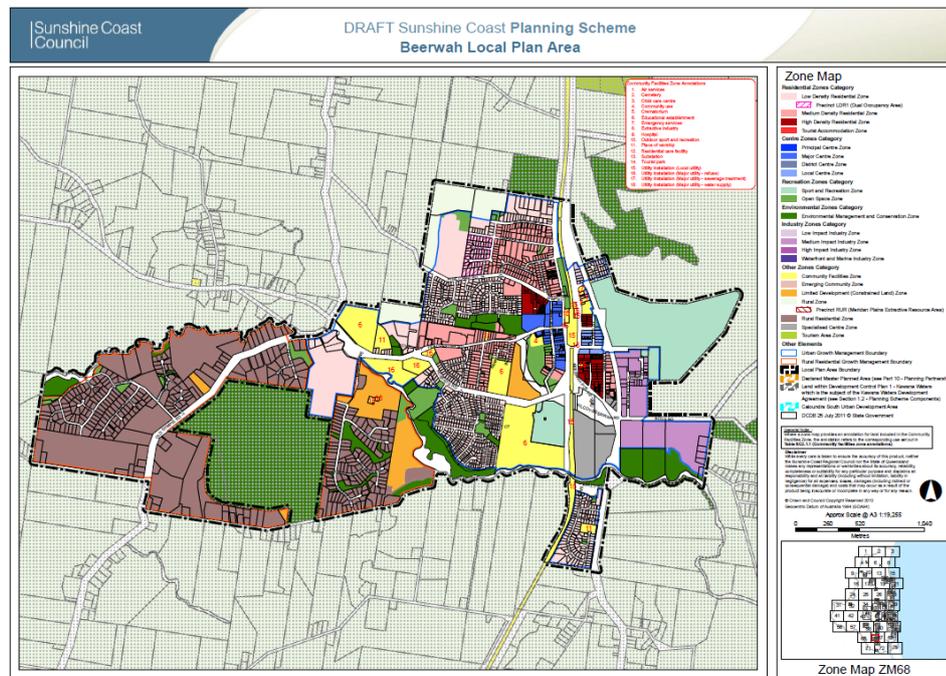


Figure BEERWAH 3: Extract from the Draft Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme

5.0 DIRECTION

Further consideration be given to opportunities for expansion of residential and employment uses around Glass House Mountains and Beerwah as part of a submission to the SEQ Regional Plan review.