

**From:** Amanda Hay

**Sent:** Friday, 3 March 2017 11:36 PM

**To:** SEQRegionalPlan@dilgp.qld.gov.au

**Subject:** Submission on 'Shaping SEQ' – Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan

I wish to provide the following comments on the "Shaping SEQ" - Draft South East Qld Regional Plan. I am a resident and ratepayer of the Scenic Rim Regional Council area and reside on Tamborine Mountain, a relatively unspoiled area of natural beauty, flora and fauna, all of which enhance our primary industry of tourism. I have been engaged in several Planning and Environment Court appeals relating to inappropriate development applications as a voluntary co-respondent over the past five years.

My primary concern is that the "one size fits all" approach, which fails to differentiate between areas and communities which have distinctly unique characteristics, is detrimental to these areas and communities. An homogenised approach covering the entire SEQ area for the next decades is a recipe for failure and sets up each individual region for irreversible damage.

You will note that my two other major areas of concern relate to activities which can be "conditioned" as part of the development approval process, but which have effects which cannot be contained within the boundaries of the property on which the activities take place (A. commercial groundwater extraction and B. intensive poultry farms (sheds)).

**Biodiversity** is not preserved nor enhanced by a "one size fits all" approach, and there needs to be recognition of the national biodiversity hot-spots located within SEQ. Any "plan" needs to recognise the unique characteristics of such areas and be specific enough that the "plan", when read in its entirety, is not subject to interpretation which suits developers' needs rather than protecting such areas. The proposed Guanaba Experience mountain bike development currently before the Planning and Environment Court is a case in point. Lip service put forward as grounds for permitting the destruction of koala habitat and koala movement corridors highlights the need for all levels of Government to be on the same page, rather than undermining each other.

**A.** I am particularly alarmed at the lack of meaningful coverage of the **groundwater issue** within the draft. When preparing a plan which covers the next 25 years, the protection of groundwater resources, particularly in areas not serviced by a reticulated water supply or a sewerage system, such as Tamborine Mountain, should be a high priority. The lifestyle, well-being and health of residents has the potential to be seriously impacted given the undetermined volumes of water



within the aquifers and the as yet undetermined connectivity between the aquifers. The current lack of State Government legislation, let alone a "plan", currently has Tamborine Mountain residents constantly watching and monitoring the ever-increasing commercial extraction of groundwater and its removal from the mountain for sale as bottled water - an activity which satisfies economic "greed" rather than "need". Whilst this continues to occur, the water table is dropping, evidenced by the death of many avocado trees, fruit drop and a change in the appearance of the vegetation in declared state forests. If there is any doubt about the impact a commercial activity will have on the locale in which it occurs, surely the "Precautionary Principle" should apply. The "Green Behind the Gold" is unlikely to remain the slogan applicable to Tamborine Mountain if the groundwater level is not protected/maintained, and this will ultimately impact severely on the Mountain's tourism industry. The Mountain is currently the most visited day destination in S E Qld, however the State Government's failure to protect its groundwater may result in the area being "visited to death" by those wanting to escape urban areas. Creeks are running dry and the last platypus sighted months ago was a dead one. Koala habitat and corridors continue to be destroyed on the escarpments.

**Fostering resilient communities which are better able to respond to climate change** is certainly an ideal worth pursuing, however for our community which does not even have security nor protection of its drinking and household water, this seems to be an unrealistic goal.

**B. Priority Agricultural Areas** (Map 7) identifies strategic clusters for the most regionally significant agricultural production areas which contain priority agricultural land uses. Whilst this works in theory, the Scenic Rim is currently experiencing an explosion in the number of intensive animal husbandry development applications for **poultry farms**. The Scenic Rim does not want them nor encourage them to be established. These operations offer virtually no employment opportunities but have a very high impact on amenity, air quality and potentially the health of residents. Discrepancies between local planning schemes and State Government guidelines serve the developers well - all refused development applications end up in the Planning & Environment Court with the State's less stringent requirements overriding the local planning scheme. With the increasing public awareness of food production methods, preferences for organic produce and a focus on food miles, locating intensive poultry farms in clusters thus minimising the extent of their impact on entire regions would seem a priority (biosecurity shed separation requirements notwithstanding).

**Scenic amenity areas** - At page 141 the following motherhood statement is made: "....surrounding rural hinterland that provides:

- attractive and accessible natural environs and public open space with areas of high scenic amenity including important views and vistas." Areas of regional interest (Map 7) need to be provided with non-generic and very specific plan - again, "one size fits all" can only be detrimental.

**Urban footprint** - as stated, Tamborine Mountain does not have a reticulated water supply nor sewerage system, and its expected population growth is likely to be naturally capped at approximately 10,000 (from a current estimated 7,000) due to these limitations. Residents do not want either reticulated water nor a town sewerage system as these services would then open the way for urban infill, subdivision of existing blocks and infrastructure (including roads) which cannot support a higher population. It is imperative that the urban footprint is not extended or enlarged beyond its current boundaries.

Amanda Hay  
Tamborine Mountain Resident and Ratepayer