

TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

"Protecting the quality of living on Tamborine Mountain"

Tamborine Mountain Progress Association Inc.
PO Box 106 Tamborine Mountain 4272,

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Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan Review Feedback
Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
PO Box 15009
CITY EAST QLD 4000
Sent via email to: SEQRegionalPlan@dilgp.qld.gov.au

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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

Tamborine Mountain Progress Association Inc. (TMPA) is a long established organisation, (100yrs +), whose members are keenly interested in protecting the wellbeing of the natural environment and the quality of the lifestyle opportunities this area offers. It does this through input into local Planning Schemes and State legislation and the careful consideration of development applications against the provisions of those instruments.

At all times it is necessary to remember that Tamborine Mountain does not have reticulated water or sewerage systems. This limits its capacity to continue to cope with an increasing number of residents and visitors on the plateau at any one time. The Mountain's pleasant environment is valued by residents and visitors alike but, as urban development grows nearby and people look to escape to nature, greater pressure is being placed on the attractive natural resources the Mountain has to offer. There are significant challenges in balancing the protection of our biodiversity with the development of our region.

This submission supports there being **no extension** of the Urban Footprint on Tamborine Mountain and strong limitations on development in the Rural Living and the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Areas.

Of the five themes developed in ShapingSEQ, a better order of importance for Tamborine Mountain might be:

Sustain and Live – the local environment on which so much else depends; the aquifers, which provide a source of additional water and support the vegetation; the agricultural areas which provide food and incomes and the liveability of the residential areas are dependent on maintaining sustainability.

Connect – whilst somewhat isolated by the nature of the geography, the Mountain community requires connectivity to other areas for many aspects of daily living – work, provisions and supplies, health resources and additional cultural experiences – as well as providing for tourists to be able to visit. Although well placed to access many off mountain resources the community is solely dependent on private transport by car except emergency helicopter evacuation.

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Climate change

This Association supports the attention that has been provided to climate change adaptation in the draft SEQRP. The inclusion of the protection of climate adaptation zones and refugia as a component to be mapped of regional biodiversity values and corridors is a good example of the Department's actions in addressing the need for to consider and plan for the changes expected from climate change.

Water Security

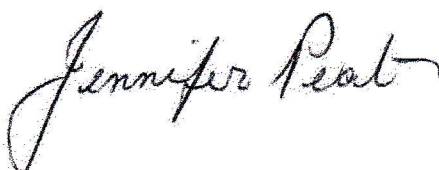
Of significant concern to residents on Tamborine Mountain is the security of water supplies. Currently, many megalitres of groundwater are being commercially extracted to be taken off mountain each year for the purpose of bottled water, a luxury item when alternatives are readily available. The amount of groundwater used to top up domestic rainwater tanks is of much less significance.

A longitudinal study into groundwater sustainability on Tamborine Mountain has just been announced but the effects of changing weather patterns on recharge rates introduce an additional variable.

Residents are concerned by bores drying up, an apparent decrease in subsurface soil moisture in the vicinity of extraction sites and reduced flow rates in creeks running off the Mountain. It is believed that subsurface moisture and the heights of the water tables are significant factors in preserving the health of the vegetation which is so vital to the character of Tamborine Mountain.

Areas such as Tamborine Mountain can be greatly affected by Planning Schemes. It is vitally important that the drafting conveys with clarity and precision the intent of the provisions. This will assist in reducing unnecessary argument over the interpretations in relation to development proposals and, hopefully, reduce wasteful litigation.

Yours faithfully,



Jennifer Peat
Honorary Secretary.

Prosper – With a significant proportion of its population made up of retirees and also others who prefer a simple, partially self-sufficient lifestyle, the drive for greater prosperity may not be as significant as in other areas.

Growth – as mentioned above growth is limited by the factors of water and sewerage and also the need to maintain the factors, such as the natural environment and scenic amenity on which the tourism industry depends.

Regional biodiversity values and Regional biodiversity corridors.

The Association supports the introduction of these two new measures for protection of biodiversity.

Tamborine Mountain is like a miniature representation of the wider region. It is fortunate in having areas of natural environment but these areas tend to be small and fragmented, reducing their value for ecological protection. The National Parks have high visitation rates with consequent disturbance of fauna.

The important regional values do not have to be on a large scale here. Biodiversity corridors are extremely important and, as well as the National Parks, may include council parks, roadsides, home gardens and various other forms of vegetated areas. These areas need to be recognised, valued, accounted for, monitored, intentionally increased and appropriately enhanced to mitigate against the increasing pressure which leads to degradation and loss of biodiversity.

Where key areas for developing or extending biodiversity have been identified efforts should be made by both state and local governments to have them protected. The SEQRP mapping should be broadened to include the urban footprint where it still contains valuable and vulnerable ecosystems and environmental features. We are all dependent on the health of our ecosystems. Amending the State Planning policy to protect regional biodiversity values and regional biodiversity corridors as matters of state environmental significance would strengthen environmental protections.

There is a koala population of the Eastern Escarpment extending into the Gold Coast City Council area. Implementation and integration of the findings of the Koala Expert panel will enhance protection for this population.

Agricultural land should be protected against other forms of development which would alienate it for productive use so that natural areas are protected from encroachment for agricultural purposes.

Agricultural land and conservation areas serve as important mini-urban breaks enhancing the rural character of the area but also serving as biodiversity corridors for some species and should be recognised as such.

Measures that Matter

We recommend that the measures that matter be redrafted to provide greater specificity:

- more measures which capture all intended goals within the SEQRP adequately to ensure communities have a good indication of whether they are on their way to meet the performance indicators or whether changes are needed to the SEQRP in the next iteration; and
- more specific, tangible goals for our 'preferred future', to ensure communities have motivation and direction to achieve strong outcomes to improve SEQ and
- that monitoring of the availability/quantity of water as groundwater and in streams be included and triggers to identify reductions in sustainability be developed so responses can be implemented.