3. Rural zone

Council’s Planning Scheme commenced on 1 February 2016. Since this time council has been working on the proposed amendment to the scheme to ensure it remains a living document that supports growth and maintains the region’s unique characteristics.

Council previously consulted the community on the proposed improvements to the planning scheme and supporting planning scheme policies. Council has now reviewed and considered much of this feedback, using it to inform the development of a new planning scheme amendment.

Council is now seeking community feedback on the new proposed amendment to the planning scheme and planning scheme policies.

The proposed changes generally aim to improve functionality and address implementation issues which have been identified since the planning scheme first came into effect.

The changes summarised in this information sheet may also be made in other areas of the planning scheme where similar outcomes are sought.

The proposed amendment only relates to changes to certain parts and provisions of the planning scheme. For example, whilst the proposed amendment is seeking to change car parking provisions for secondary dwellings, other requirements for secondary dwelling already exist in the planning scheme (design and setbacks etc.) and are proposed to continue. To determine the requirements for any proposed development the planning scheme must be considered in full.

The proposed key changes described in this information sheet relate to clarifying the requirements for dwelling houses in rural areas that can be developed without an application to council. Changes are also proposed to requirements for development on sloping sites and setbacks for development in rural areas.
Key changes include the following:

**Requirements for dwelling houses in rural areas (and similar areas)**
Most dwelling houses in rural areas can be constructed (with the involvement of a building certifier) without an application to council so long as the house can comply with the requirements in the planning scheme. However, some houses may not be able to fully comply and, depending on what aspect cannot be complied with, an application may still be required to council. The proposed changes clarify the existing requirements and circumstances when an application to council is required.

These proposed changes occur in Part 5 and Part 6 of the planning scheme.

**Building on sloping sites**
The planning scheme contains requirements for development on sloping sites in rural areas. These existing requirements respond to slope by regulating building and site design. Changes are proposed to remove these requirements and instead regulate the extent of earthworks and the impacts these will have on the street and adjoining residents.

These proposed changes occur in Part 6 of the planning scheme.

**Setbacks for houses in rural areas**
The planning scheme contains requirements for dwelling house setbacks in rural areas from front, side and rear boundaries. As the risk of potential adverse impacts from the siting of dwelling houses is considered low in rural areas it is proposed to remove the setback requirements from the planning scheme and rely on Queensland-wide standards (set out in the Queensland Development Code).

These proposed changes occur in Part 6 and Part 7 of the planning scheme.

**Requirements for short-term accommodation in rural zones at Woodfordia**
The planning scheme currently allows for short-term accommodation in the Woodfordia and Abbey Surrounds precinct to be undertaken without an application to council. The proposed changes clarify the parts of the planning scheme that need to be satisfied for such development.

These proposed changes occur in Part 5 of the planning scheme.

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