Next generation tourism planning
A guideline for planners in Queensland

A framework to consider tourism projects from small-scale farmstays to international resort complexes and everything in between.
Next generation tourism planning: A guideline for planners in Queensland

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Summary

Next Generation Tourism Planning is a guideline for local government planning in Queensland. Its aims are:

- assisting planners when writing plans, or considering tourism proposals to satisfy the Queensland Government’s planning policy for tourism. This policy—‘grow the tourism industry’—is found in Queensland’s State Planning Policy (SPP) (DSDIP, 2013a), and this handbook is guidance material for the SPP
- increasing awareness and understanding of tourism, sustainable tourism development, and tourism planning
- explaining tourism planning practice in Queensland and how it can be used to assist local government planning
- providing references for further study.

The guideline will be used by local government planners, especially those involved in writing local government planning schemes. It will also be useful to local government officers, managers and councillors, consultants working for local governments, and others with an interest in tourism planning and tourism development.

There are five important planning principles in this guideline. These are summarised below, and have been used to organise the document.

Part 1.0: Sustainable tourism development: A framework for success

The research supporting this guideline suggests a framework for defining sustainable tourism development is required. It is a framework for tourism, development and planning success that is closely aligned to the familiar ‘triple bottom line’ approach measuring economic, environment and social inputs to sustainable development.

Tourism activity and tourism development comes in all shapes and sizes. Despite this variety, our research suggests five common and critical success factors that can help achieve sustainable tourism development. It is important for planners to understand these factors, as all have relevance to planning and planning processes. These success factors are:

- knowing the needs of the tourist
- creating experience
- developing in context
- enhancing setting
- good process.

Part 2.0: The right place: Enabling tourism development through ‘place planning’

A clear finding of this research is that tourism can fit almost everywhere. What we mean by this is that if designed in context, there is a type of tourism activity or tourism development for virtually every place in Queensland, from secluded islands to underground mines.

Tourism development is not a ‘one size fits all’ and nor is it a ‘free for all’. But there’s a type of tourism for every type of place. Thinking about tourism activity and tourism development in terms of place makes it easier to understand the appropriateness of tourism proposals, and is recommended as a means of planning strategically for tourism.

In this document, planning guidance is provided for:

- tourism in natural places
- tourism in rural places
- tourism in rural towns and townships
- tourism in suburban and urban neighbourhoods
- tourism in town and city centres
- tourism in specific use places.
Part 3.0: Planning for the unexpected: Tourism and plan making

Planning for tourism needs to happen at all levels: state, regional and local. The state government has an important role to play in defining how tourism can contribute to the economy and identifying major tourism generators. Regional planning can be used to identify specific tourism hotspots throughout the state, as well as the unique tourism attributes that should be encouraged within each region.

Local planning has arguably the most influential role to play, particularly through the drafting of planning schemes. Long-term visions and goals determined by the strategic framework, as well as the intent and criteria for development within each zone, shape the types, scale and extent of tourism development possible within a local government area.

Most importantly though, communication between all three levels is essential as each has a valuable role and information to contribute. Both top down and bottom up approaches have value when planning for tourism and this needs to be recognised.

Part 4.0: The value of good design in tourism development

Tourism developments can bring a number of economic, environmental and social benefits to their local community, region and wider area. Good design plays a key role in producing these outcomes, often through responding to the natural setting and identified tourism needs.

Having a good design process that is thorough, consultative and innovative is key to realising the full potential of a sustainable and successful tourism development.

Part 5.0: Using model tourism planning provisions in local government planning schemes

This chapter provides example planning scheme provisions showing how the SPP state interest—tourism industry—and the concepts in Parts 1.0 to 4.0 of this guideline can be implemented in a planning scheme. These provisions are designed to make it simple for local governments to support tourism through their planning schemes. They can be readily modified to reflect local circumstances.

The model provisions include guidance on writing strategic frameworks, zone outcome statements, choosing levels of assessment, and a range of incentives that could be used to support and promote tourism development in appropriate locations.

Part 6.0: Sustainable tourism development case studies

A literature review and case study analysis of successful tourism developments was used to inform this guideline. The case studies are presented in Part 6.0.

A desktop analysis and, in some cases, site visits of existing, successful tourism developments from a variety of place types was invaluable in determining the critical success factors for tourism projects.

Understanding what makes these developments so successful has been essential for drafting comprehensive guidance for new planning scheme provisions that actively seek to encourage tourism development.
What is tourism?

The World Tourism Organisation defines tourism in the following way:

+ tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. Tourism refers to all activities of visitors including both tourists (overnight visitors) and same day visitors. (WTO, 1994)

Tourism then is much more than annual family holidays. It is ‘an economic and social phenomenon mass movement of human behaviour which almost all of us are part of and participate in, often many times each year in near and far locations’ (WTO, 1994).

Tourism is also a ‘complex and dispersed economic activity’ (Destination NSW, 2010). It involves ‘traditional’ tourism developments, such as resorts, hotels, airports and roads, but also ‘areas of activity,’ such as tours, marketing, branding and positioning. Hallmarks of tourism that all have planning dimensions include: all types of accommodation, visitor attractions, natural and built assets, systems for visitor information, transport, supporting infrastructure, retail activities, and community and sporting infrastructure (QTIC, 2013).

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) expands on this concept, suggesting that tourism is an activity that brings with it a land use dimension. This is undoubtedly true, but is not the same as saying that tourism is always a discrete land use.

The diversity of forms, types, sizes, locations and impacts that tourism can take distinguishes tourism from any other type of development. This makes it difficult to define a distinct form and type of development that it embodies (DSDIP, 2013a). Tourism is an activity that takes different forms in different places, mainly because of the diverse characteristics of the places it occurs.

Tourists visit different areas for different reasons and to enjoy different experiences. It follows that the built infrastructure required for tourism will therefore vary from area to area. Tourism is certainly not a one-size-fits-all product. (DCLG, 2006)

Note: In this document we use the word tourism as defined above.

Tourism activity refers to all activities of those participating in tourism, from overnight stays to tours to eating out.

Tourism experiences are related to tourism activities, being the experience of tourism in a particular setting. Examples of a tourism experience might be a wine tour, a diving holiday or a city break.

By tourism development we mean development as defined by law (that is, building works, operational works, making a material change of use, or reconfiguring a lot) relating to tourism, tourism activities or experiences.
Context

In the year to September 2012 the tourism industry generated $21.7 billion of visitor expenditure in Queensland, or $59 million a day. Over 136,000 Queenslanders (5.9% of workers) are directly employed in the tourism industry (QTIC, 2013; ABS, 2013).

Already a significant industry, the Queensland Government has committed to grow tourism as part of its plan to grow the state’s economy. An economic vision for the tourism industry has been established, with targets for growth in visitor overnight expenditure of 7% annually, to an overall target of $30 billion by 2020 (DTESB, 2012). This in turn is designed to help achieve a national target of doubling 2010 visitor expenditure by 2020 (DTESB, 2012).

The economic vision for tourism is supported by policy reform to enable sustainable tourism development to establish where appropriate in Queensland, whether urban, rural, coastal or natural areas, metropolitan, regional or remote.

Planning for tourism is crucial to the success and longevity of the tourism industry in Queensland. Allowing tourism to develop without first planning for it can often lead to developments that suffer from environmental and social problems, as well as being unable to effectively compete with those tourism destinations that have benefited from a planning process (QTIC, 2013).

This document provides guidance on how to plan for tourism and tourism development, and how to incorporate this planning into Queensland’s statutory ‘land use planning’ framework.

About the study

This handbook provides a framework to consider a broad range of tourism projects, from small-scale farmstays to international resort complexes and everything in between. It is also relevant and appropriate to all regions and local government areas across Queensland.

A number of sources have informed this study, including:

• a review of existing tourism policies, plans and strategies devised by the Queensland Government and its agencies, government bodies from other jurisdictions in Australia and international agencies
• case studies of existing tourism developments that represent best-practice tourism operations, including desktop analysis, site visits and interviews with operators
• workshops with an advisory panel, comprised of state agency and organisation representatives with a recognised role or interest in the tourism industry.
Part 1.0

Sustainable tourism development: A framework for success

Tourism—and how to plan for it—is not widely understood by planners in Queensland.

This section introduces a framework for understanding sustainable tourism development.
1.1
A framework for sustainable tourism development

The research supporting this guideline suggests a framework for defining sustainable tourism development. It is a framework for success that is closely aligned to the familiar ‘triple bottom line’ approach measuring economic, environment and social inputs to sustainable development. The framework is simplified, and is intended to inform local government planners about tourism and how to plan for it, rather than experienced tourism planners. When tailored to tourism, the framework features:

Economic benefits
• to the tourism operator, but also the community and region in which the tourism activity takes place.

Environmental benefits
• many tourism developments make a feature of their environmental credentials and can enhance natural features and values. This stands to reason. Who wants to holiday in a degraded environment?

Social and cultural benefits
• respect for community values and social benefits like employment and locally focused tourism activities. Tourists often travel to an area to experience its people and culture.

Sustainable tourism is about building a type and a style of tourism development that contributes to the economic viability of places and people through employment and investment. It contributes to communities’ sense of pride, place attachment and connection with others and it encourages sustainable stewardship over the environmental and natural resources that contribute to the tourist experience.

Tourism and tourism development comes in all shapes and sizes. Despite this variety, research suggests five common and critical success factors that can help achieve sustainable tourism developments. It is important for planners to understand these factors, as all have relevance to planning and planning processes. These success factors are explained on the following pages and are:

• knowing the needs of the tourist
• creating experience
• developing in context
• enhancing setting
• good process.

Some benefits of sustainable tourism development are summarised in the table opposite.
### Some benefits of sustainable tourism development

| Economic benefits | • Create and diversify job opportunities  
|                   | • Provide the means for local governments to inject money into improving public services, such as parks, transport, health centres and libraries  
|                   | • Ability to return revenue to the tourism industry to support a broader, more vibrant and active community by attracting arts, sport and cultural events  
|                   | • Aid diversification within rural and over-specialised local economies  
| Environmental benefits | • Sustain and improve the natural and physical built environment  
|                     | • Educate tourists about environmental issues and impacts  
|                     | • Improve and restore natural ecosystems and their values  
|                     | • Derelict land and buildings brought back into use and maintained  
|                     | • High-quality design improving visual and environmental experience  
|                     | • Underpin quality of the local environment and facilitate further enjoyment  
|                     | • Underwrite environmental schemes and improvements to the natural and built environment  
|                     | • Conserve and enhance qualities and features of the landscape  
|                     | • Enhance access to visual appeal and ambience of rural areas  
| Social and cultural benefits | • Focus of regeneration for urban and rural areas  
|                          | • Provide a catalyst for growth in an area (raising the profile, stabilising out-migration)  
|                          | • Improve social cohesion, sense of place and community pride  
|                          | • Provide awareness of the local area natural environments and scenic beauty and further promote conservation efforts  
|                          | • Support a broader, more vibrant and active community by attracting arts, sports and cultural events  
|                          | • Improve community health and wellbeing through increased diversity of leisure, recreation, arts and cultural services  
|                          | • Secure the retention or upgrading of public services (public transport, health centres and libraries)  
|                          | • Revitalise rural towns, villages and communities  
|                          | • Support important services and facilities  
|                          | • Facilitate improved access by sustainable modes of transport  

Sources: Compiled from QTIC, 2013; DCLG, 2006; Dredge, 2013
1.2
Knowing the needs of the tourist

What our case study research tells us

The case studies undertaken for the development of this guideline are summarised in Part 6.0.

Understanding the needs and motivations of tourists and tourism markets was a strong feature of the successful tourism projects researched in this work.

A tourist might come from anywhere in the world, and have all kinds of interests and motivations for their travels. There's no 'average tourist'. There are many tourism markets.

Understanding the market, the industry and the particular challenges of developing and supporting tourism that are unique to the location, is important. It is also about understanding the characteristics of tourist movement to and within the destination, how they experience the destination, their purpose of visit, their decision-making around their visit and how long they stay.

Often the projects studied for this document focused on two or three complementary target markets. For example, Lilydale Farmstay (page 85) regularly hosts family groups from South East Queensland, but also families from South East Asian cities keen to have a rural holiday experience. Limes Hotel in Brisbane (page 87) hosts many corporate guests mid-week, with visitors looking for entertainment in nearby Fortitude Valley at the weekend. In all cases, the tourism 'product' is carefully tailored to the tourism markets.

Tourism markets are identified in different ways, from entrepreneurs spotting 'gaps in the market', to government-sponsored tourism marketing, and old-fashioned trial and error.

Lessons for planners

Tourism (and the buildings and infrastructure associated with it) responds to the needs of the tourist. This is often linked to the attributes of the location where the tourism takes place, but it is common to have different tourist activities and infrastructure in the same location, and still be appropriate. It's definitely not 'one size fits all'.

Tourism can result from top-down (plan-led) and bottom-up (entrepreneurial) processes. Our research suggests a bias towards the bottom-up approach, suggesting flexibility is an essential part of 'planning' for tourism development.

Tourism operators and developers often know the characteristics of the market and are able to design a proposal to accord with a robust commercial understanding. All development contexts are different and it is important to understand the needs of the industry.
1.3
Create experience

What our case study research tells us

Experience and products is what tourism is all about. Our research suggests ‘genuine’ experiences are what motivates tourists. A focus on connecting to ‘place’ or local communities, or a learning experience, can be ways to form a ‘genuine’ experience.

*The ‘tourism product’ is what the customer buys; the ‘tourism experience’ is what they remember.*

(Tourism and Events Queensland)

In planning, we deal mostly with the tourism developments (accommodation, attractions and transport, etc.) although how those are planned and developed give rise to the experience.

Uniqueness of experience was also found to be an attractor. This doesn’t mean the same or similar activities cannot be found in different locations. A different location might be enough to make the experience different.

Regional synergies or ‘clustering’ of tourism developments was a common feature. This was seen in many of our cases studies where nearby operators offered complementary but not the same experience or tourism product. Lilydale Farmstay (stay on a working farm, page 85) and Mount Barney Lodge (experience a mountain, natural environment, page 80) are but a few kilometres apart in the Scenic Rim. Other nearby operators help make up a cluster of tourism options where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. In another context, the cluster of theme parks in the north of the Gold Coast shows that the advantage of regional synergies is not exclusive to small businesses.

Lessons for planners

Expect the unexpected. Enterprising operators will create new experiences in familiar settings, and this might be a challenge for plan-led approaches. The Story Bridge Adventure Climb (page 92) and XXXX Brewery Tour (page 94) are two great examples of tourism experiences in unexpected and unplanned settings.

While there are exceptions, tourism experiences that are ‘genuine’, connect to place and the people in it, and include educational or learning experiences are a hallmark of sustainable tourism. These criteria could be useful in considering the appropriateness of tourism proposals.

Regional synergies and clustering of tourism activities is common. Most tourism developments don’t offer the whole ‘destination’ experience on their own. In some cases regional synergies can be predicted, planned for and supported. Consideration of cumulative impacts should be made as early as possible. When is one more development too much, and the attraction of the destination begins to be undermined?
1.4

Developing in context

What our case study research tells us

A key finding of this research is that tourism fits everywhere ... if it’s appropriate to place.

This doesn’t mean tourism development should be camouflaged. To the contrary, it’s sometimes good to make a statement. Some case studies looked at use of architecture to do this. Southern Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island (page 78) is one example.

Several case studies cited access as an important factor in developing appropriate to place. In natural places, difficult access might be part of the experience. In city environments many tourists won’t have a car, making conventional car parking rules out of step.

Lessons for planners

Impacts from tourism development cannot be completely avoided, but they can and should be minimised and mitigated. This applies in the design, construction and operational phases of a tourism project. Tourism development must complement and enhance the built and natural environment.

A common finding in our research is that many tourism businesses are not 100% about tourism. Spicers Peak Lodge (page 83) and Lilydale Farmstay (page 85) are both working cattle properties. Limes Hotel (page 87) and Emporium Hotel (page 91) are hotels that also attract dining and entertainment custom from locals.

For planners, a key question for any tourism development is: Is it appropriate to place? This question is explained further in Part 2.0. But this doesn’t always mean a ‘sympathetic’ design. The value of good design is examined in Part 4.0.
1.5 Enhancing setting

What our case study research tells us

Many successful tourism developments don’t just recognise or complement their setting, they enhance it.

At Lilydale Farmstay (page 85) the operators are improving the natural habitat values of the property by planting and maintaining ‘koala corridors’. This kind of environmental benefit fits well with the motivations of their guests to get close to native wildlife. Planners should think about the broader benefits, including environmental benefits, a tourism proposal may bring.

At Brisbane YHA (page 88) the traditional backpacker experience is turned on its head by the addition of a rooftop kitchen, outdoor dining area and swimming pool. All this takes advantage of a spectacular view to the CBD and Brisbane River.

Lessons for planners

Enhancing setting means identifying the ‘sense of place’ around a project and designing to enhance it. Good design is key (Part 4.0). Tourism is diverse and ‘standard designs’ for tourism development do not exist. Instead, adherence to design principles and process is key to developing a good design.

1.6 Good process

What our case study research tells us

Our research found that tourism projects are often entrepreneurial, rather than planned. In many cases the approval process for development was said to be difficult. Common problems included long assessment timeframes and inappropriate conditions. Other (non-planning) regulations were also cited as obstacles.

Sometimes tourism developments are developed in stages. A planner might expect this to be outlined at the outset in the form of a staged development application, but more often, stages of the development are in the eyes and mind of the operator and may even develop over time in response to the market or environment.

Lessons for planners

Good process for tourism development is recommended as an area of focus for planners. One consideration for improvement is the increased use of pre-lodgement discussions between operators and planners. In our research, only occasionally did prior consultation form part of the development process. Pre-lodgement is often the best time to make changes to a proposal or explain a concept, before much time and money has been invested.

Another consideration might be the dedication of a ‘fast-track’ team, or similar, to provide advice to the applicant and facilitate the application process.
Part 2.0

The right place: Enabling tourism development through ‘place planning’

A clear finding of this research is that tourism can fit almost everywhere.

What we mean by this is that if designed in context, there is a type of tourism activity or tourism development for virtually every place in Queensland, from secluded islands to underground mines.

Equally so, it is essential to recognise that tourism development is not a ‘one size fits all’ and nor is it a ‘free for all’ where any type of tourism development can go anywhere. A fundamental planning principle is that tourism development must be sustainable and appropriate to the local context and character of a place and designed and operated in a way that does not compromise the values or qualities underpinning the attractiveness of a place for tourism purposes.

Tourism development must deliver sustainable tourism outcomes including genuine benefits for the local community, environment, economic, cultural and social dimensions and not just ‘development’ for the sake of development.

There’s a type of tourism for every type of place. And rather than making it hard to plan for, this makes it easy.

Thinking about tourism activity and development in terms of place makes it easier to understand the appropriateness of tourism proposals, and is recommended as a means of planning strategically for tourism.
2.1 Tourism in natural places

Natural places are areas dominated by the natural environment. Beaches and reefs, mountains and forests are all examples of natural places. Natural places include national parks and other relatively undisturbed areas. Some privately owned land will have the same attributes. Often large areas including whole islands can be described as a natural place.

Many of Queensland’s best and most popular tourist attractions are natural places. The coexistence and symbiotic relationship of tourism and the natural environment is key.

An example of tourism in a natural place is ecotourism developments near to or within national parks, offering accommodation and activities like bushwalking, fishing, wildlife watching, and tours that allow people to experience and learn about nature.

Mount Barney Lodge in South East Queensland is one example considered in this study (page 80).

Luxury hotels in natural locations increasingly feature in the Australian tourism story. Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island is one example (page 78). Other examples of tourism in or near natural places are Binna Burra Mountain Lodge (page 74), Kingfisher Bay Resort (page 75) and Kuranda Scenic Railway and Skyrail (page 77). Tourism in natural places allows people to experience and learn about the natural environment.

Best practice in environmentally sensitive design, development and operations is key for tourism in natural places. The protection of environmental values and opportunities for enhancement are as important to tourism as to the environment itself.
2.2 Tourism in rural places

Rural places are mostly used for agriculture, from less intense activities like grazing, to cropping, forestry and rural industries. Rural places are extensive in most local government areas in Queensland.

Tourism has an important and growing role in rural economies. Tourism offers an opportunity for diversification, whether as an alternative or a supplement to farming and other rural incomes. Tourism in rural areas allows people to experience a rural lifestyle and learn about rural pursuits.

Rural places provide the background to important growing market segments like adventure tourism, sport tourism and health and wellness tourism. The protection of rural character is important, as is the involvement of local communities in protecting and enhancing rural assets.

Tourism in rural places must coexist with other rural activities, principally farming, but also other high-impact activities like quarrying. Similarly, planning for rural areas must acknowledge the role for and needs of tourism.

Many rural tourism businesses also derive some of their income from farming and other rural businesses.

Examples of tourism in rural places include:

- accommodation, from luxury lodges (see Spicers Peak Lodge, page 83), to bed and breakfasts to camping (see Mt Barney Lodge, page 80)
- farmstays, where as well as accommodation, tourists get to experience the rural lifestyle (see Lilydale Farmstay, page 85)
- wineries
- venues for weddings, conferences and other events
- eating and drinking
- drive tourism
- adventure tourism
- health and wellness tourism.
2.3
Tourism in rural towns and townships

Rural townships and rural towns are small and larger settlements surrounded by rural places. Rural towns and townships have strong relationships with their rural hinterland, its economy and community.

Rural towns and townships in Queensland often have 19th century origins and forms. Typically they centre on a mixed use, low scale main street, often with traditional buildings and awnings over the footpath. The mix of uses is often eclectic, and together with the buildings, trees and street bric-a-brac, form a character attractive to tourists.

Towns and townships have a multitude of tourism opportunities. This includes accommodation of all types, dining, shopping, tourism attractions (often featuring the history of the town or area), as well as tourist information and amenities for travellers.

Locating tourism facilities in the centre of town increases the chance that travellers will spend money in the local economy.

Protecting and enhancing small rural township character is important to the visitor experience. Enhancing the vibrancy of towns can be achieved by co-locating products and experiences to promote synergies (Dredge, 2013).

Rural town tourism is also closely linked to that of the surrounding rural places. Visitors may stay in town and visit attractions in surrounding rural and natural places.

Planners should expect and encourage a wide mix of tourism activity in rural towns and townships. In most cases, tourism development can coexist alongside traditional rural town functions and service both local and tourist populations. Tourism can provide productive use of old buildings and serve as a means of protecting their heritage values. Tourism can be supported by making straightforward or removing regulatory processes for small-scale tourism activity in rural towns and townships, particularly if the tourism activity uses existing buildings.
2.4
Tourism in suburban and urban neighbourhoods

Suburban and urban neighbourhoods are predominantly residential places, of increasing density and with increasing non-residential uses in the case of urban neighbourhoods.

Tourism has a minor role in suburban and urban neighbourhoods, compared to other types of place.

Small-scale accommodation such as bed and breakfasts, motels and small hotels are common in suburban and urban neighbourhoods, particularly in good locations close to centres and transport. This can boost and enhance the economic resilience of these areas.

Vibrant neighbourhoods, particularly in bigger cities, frequently become attractions in their own right. Popular local centres, shopping streets, pubs and parks in turn support tourists seeking to share the same dining and entertainment venues as locals. Tourism also provides much needed additional patronage to make local pubs and restaurants viable. The broader economic benefit of tourism to successful neighbourhoods and centres should be considered by planners.
2.5 Tourism in town and city centres

Town and city centres are the heart of urban communities. They are the biggest centres, with the widest range and greatest intensity of people and activity. Town and city centres are at the centre of transport networks.

The centre of a town or city is also usually the place most people think of when it is mentioned.

Tourism developments in town and city centres may be as diverse as the towns and cities in which they sit. Brisbane YHA (page 88) and the Gold Coast’s Hilton Hotel development (page 90) both represent city centre tourism, of vastly different scales and forms. Other examples of tourism in town and city centres are Limes Hotel (page 87), Emporium Hotel (page 91), and the Story Bridge Adventure Climb (page 92).

Tourism activity often takes place in urban buildings, the same way offices, apartments or shops would. For planning, this suggests tourism may not be treated any differently than these other uses.

However it may sometimes be the case that tourism land uses are less economically rewarding as others and this may suggest the use of incentive policies to support tourism and give it a ‘fair go’ (page 44). Tourism provides wider job and economic flow on benefits than many other industries.
2.6 Tourism in specific use places

Specific use places describe a relatively small number of locations where a large single use or focus does not fit into other place types, and takes a quite different form to those other place types.

Transport infrastructure including airports, seaports and railway stations are the tourism infrastructure most likely to be described as a specific use place. Such places often include accommodation, information, dining and other non-transport uses as well.

Portside Cruise Terminal in Brisbane (page 93) is an interesting example of tourist transport infrastructure integrated with urban development. This facility came about as part of an urban redevelopment project, and has the advantage of providing day-round and week-round use of the place, in a way that a cruise-only facility would not be. There are some limitations posed by the close proximity of the terminal to other urban uses.

Theme parks can also be described as a special use place. Such large facilities don’t sit well with urban land uses, suggesting a favoured location away from other place types and sometimes—as with the Gold Coast—in clusters.

Special use places for tourism have a critical role in the process and experience of tourism. They help get the tourist to the tourism, claim first impressions for a city, region or country, and may also accommodate major tourism attractions.

Specific use places for tourism are large and important. They have the potential to cause impacts on other land uses and should be considered carefully in planning.

Transport infrastructure rarely has a sole tourism function, but in turn tourism needs should be incorporated into broader transport planning activity.
### Matrix of tourism places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Natural places</th>
<th>Rural places</th>
<th>Rural towns and townships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
<td><img src="example_natural_places.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="example_rural_places.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="example_rural_towns_and_townships.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>Dominated by the natural environment. Beaches, reefs, lakes, mountains and forests are examples of natural places. Few buildings or roads.</td>
<td>Mostly used for agriculture, from grazing and cropping to forestry and rural industries. Dispersed buildings and roads.</td>
<td>Settlements in rural areas, with strong economic and social links with the surrounding rural communities. Often Australian ‘country town’ atmosphere, buildings and streets. Can be quite dense in centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism experiences</strong></td>
<td><img src="tourism_experiences_natural_places.png" alt="Images" /></td>
<td><img src="tourism_experiences_rural_places.png" alt="Images" /></td>
<td><img src="tourism_experiences_rural_towns_and_townships.png" alt="Images" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common tourism land uses/developments (planning scheme definition)</strong></td>
<td>• Bird hide, boardwalks (Environment facility) • Lodges, cabins, huts and camps (Nature-based tourism) • Resort complex, island resort (Short-term accommodation) • Camping ground (Tourist park) • Café, restaurant (Food and drink outlet)</td>
<td>• Café, restaurant (Food and drink outlet) • Wedding and conference centre (Function facility) • Bed and breakfast, guesthouse (Home based business) • Pub (Hotel) • Health and wellness resort (Resort complex) • Produce stall (Roadside stall) • Souvenir shop (Shop) • Farmstay, camping ground, caravan park, nature-based tourism, holiday letting, hotel (Short-term accommodation) • Theme park, zoo (Tourist attraction) • Holiday cabins (Tourist park) • Winery</td>
<td>• Café, restaurant (Food and drink outlet) • Wedding and conference centre (Function facility) • Bed and breakfast, guesthouse (Home based business) • Pub (Hotel) • Health and wellness resort (Resort complex) • Souvenir shop (Shop) • Historical village (Tourist attraction) • Holiday cabins (Tourist park) • Winery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Next generation tourism planning: A guideline for planners in Queensland*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Suburban and urban neighbourhoods</th>
<th>Town and city centres</th>
<th>Specific use places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Predominantly residential places, where tourism has a minor role.</td>
<td>The biggest centres, with the widest range and greatest intensity of people and activity.</td>
<td>Places with a large single use focus, such as airports, seaports and railways stations, or theme parks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vibrant neighbourhoods, shopping streets and signature parks can be popular with tourists.</td>
<td>The centre of transport networks.</td>
<td>Building and structures are often large and dominating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From single storey houses to apartments and large non-residential buildings. Many streets, parks and infrastructure.</td>
<td>The place most people think of when a town or city is mentioned.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most intense built up areas. Diverse mix of big and small buildings, streets and spaces.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism experiences</td>
<td><img src="example" alt="Bed and breakfast" /> <img src="example" alt="Guesthouse" /> <img src="example" alt="Pub" /> <img src="example" alt="Souvenir shop" /> <img src="example" alt="Hotel" /> <img src="example" alt="Motel" /> <img src="example" alt="Backpackers" /> <img src="example" alt="Holiday letting" /> <img src="example" alt="Racecourse" /> <img src="example" alt="Sports stadiums" /></td>
<td><img src="example" alt="Café" /> <img src="example" alt="Restaurant" /> <img src="example" alt="Food and drink outlet" /> <img src="example" alt="Hotel" /> <img src="example" alt="Motel" /> <img src="example" alt="Backpackers" /> <img src="example" alt="Holiday letting" /> <img src="example" alt="Convention and exhibition centres" /> <img src="example" alt="Casino" /> <img src="example" alt="Pub" /> <img src="example" alt="Bar" /> <img src="example" alt="Souvenir shop" /> <img src="example" alt="Art gallery" /> <img src="example" alt="Museum" /></td>
<td><img src="example" alt="Café" /> <img src="example" alt="Restaurant" /> <img src="example" alt="Food and drink outlet" /> <img src="example" alt="Hotel" /> <img src="example" alt="Motel" /> <img src="example" alt="Souvenir shop" /> <img src="example" alt="Airport" /> <img src="example" alt="Railway attraction" /> <img src="example" alt="Cruise terminal" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common tourism land uses/developments (planning scheme definition)</td>
<td>• Bed and breakfast, guesthouse (Home based business) • Pub (Hotel) • Souvenir shop (Shop) • Hotel, motel, backpackers, holiday letting (Short-term accommodation) • Racecourse, sports stadiums (Major sport, recreation and entertainment facility)</td>
<td>• Café, restaurant (Food and drink outlet) • Hotel, motel, backpackers, serviced apartments, holiday letting (Short-term accommodation) • Convention and exhibition centres, casino • Pub, bar (Hotel) • Souvenir shop (Shop) • Art gallery, museum</td>
<td>• Café, restaurant (Food and drink outlet) • Pub, bar (Hotel) • Souvenir shop (Shop) • Hotel (Short-term accommodation) • Conference centre (Function facility) • Theme park (Tourist attraction) • Railway attraction • Airport • Cruise terminal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 3.0
Planning for the unexpected: Tourism and plan-making

Planning for tourism needs to happen at all levels: national, state, regional and local. The state government has an important role to play in defining how tourism can contribute to the economy and identifying major tourism generators. Regional planning can be used to identify specific tourism hotspots throughout the state, as well as the unique tourism attributes that should be encouraged within each region.

Local planning has arguably the most influential role to play, particularly through the drafting of planning schemes. Long-term visions and goals determined by the strategic framework, as well as the intent and criteria for development within each zone, shape the types, scale and extent of tourism development possible within a local government area.

Most importantly though, communication between all three levels is essential as each has a valuable role and information to contribute. Both top down and bottom up approaches have value when planning for tourism and this needs to be recognised.
Mossman Gorge, a natural place
3.1 Tourism planning

Tourism planning occurs at national, state, regional and local levels. Sometimes tourism planning focuses on a particular destination or market, and other times on a particular segment of tourism, like ecotourism or drive tourism.

Tourism planning is a well developed speciality and it is not necessary for planners to become experts in this field. However, planners can make themselves aware of tourism planning activities and use this resource to inform their planning schemes and planning decisions. Where possible, planners should input into tourism planning processes to provide a feedback loop to tourist planning agencies, informing them about land use planning dimensions of tourism.

At the interface between tourism planning and land use planning there are a few distinguishing features that should be understood.

First, land use planners must recognise the role of both top down and bottom up approaches to tourism development. Sometimes tourism development can be the result of forward planning, but more often projects are the result of entrepreneurial zeal. Expect the unexpected.

Secondly, land use planning is often about the long term. Tourism responds to long-term trends too, but also to market changes which are much quicker. Tourism is a dynamic industry.

Finally, while existing tourism development can be identified and mapped (this is useful for the ‘protection’ of tourism sites) and strategic sites and precincts may be identifiable, it is not always possible to predict where future tourism development will occur. Tourism fits almost everywhere.

3.2 State-wide tourism planning

At the state level, the Queensland Government sets high level policies guiding tourism. Not least of these has been designating tourism as one of the Government’s four economic ‘pillars’ and as a ‘state interest’.

DestinationQ is a partnership between the Queensland Government and the tourism industry. Annual forums are held to guide the development and monitoring of the state government’s progress towards achieving its 2020 targets. A state-wide strategy—The DestinationQ Blueprint—highlights resources and actions that have already been taken to further the tourism industry in Queensland and identifies the goals, activities and aspirations for the 2012–2015 period.

State-wide planning policies have also been prepared, notably a new state planning policy (SPP). This document integrates all of the Queensland Government’s planning interests—including the state’s tourism interests—and outlines how competing interests are to be addressed. Local governments must reflect this policy when undertaking their own planning, including planning scheme preparation and some development assessment.

There are also many reports and documents the state government produces about trends, market sectors and market characteristics. The Commonwealth also has roles and responsibilities for tourism including the National Tourism 2020 Strategy.

Next Generation Tourism Planning supports the SPP and is, in itself, a part of the statewide approach to tourism planning.
Train journey in far north Queensland

Photo credit: Tourism Australia
3.3 Regional tourism planning

Several mechanisms exist to develop and express tourism planning strategies at the regional scale.

**Regional tourism plans**

Regional tourism planning is generally led by the Queensland Government’s tourism agency, Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ). TEQ have produced a series of regional tourism plans and strategies, primarily to support investment attraction and to provide direction on growing markets. These are detailed below.

**Destination tourism strategies**—five year tourism strategies for eleven key tourism destinations (for example, Tropical North Queensland, The Whitsundays) across Queensland. Marketing and promotion activities are identified by the strategies, as are opportunities for growth and improvement, industry development and catalyst projects. Tourism trends and the contribution that tourism makes to the economy are also acknowledged by these plans as a driver for proper planning and considered development.

**Tourism opportunity plans** (TOPs)—cover every region in Queensland. TOPs provide excellent direction and commentary on regional and local tourism opportunities and are useful sources of information to planners.

TOPs typically include:

- a tourism vision for the region
- tourism precincts
- new and upgraded tourism products, including catalyst projects
- the need for new investment in infrastructure that supports tourism
- tourism supply and demand trends.

Other regional tourism planning activities in recent times include:

- **destination hero experiences**—signature experiences for all destinations
- **marketing plans**—can also be developed at the regional or destination scale.

Together this body of regional tourism planning provides an excellent resource for planners preparing regional plans and local government planning schemes.
Regional plans

Queensland has more than two decades of experience preparing regional plans. At first, non-statutory, regional plans which later evolved into statutory plans have effect over state and local government plan making and development assessment (for example, *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031*).

While regional plans are often considered to be ‘land use’ plans, in practice they have often included strategies on other matters such as transport, economic development, environment and community development. Nonetheless, the main aims of regional planning include setting broad land use policy directions and resolving land use conflicts at the regional scale.

Historically tourism has been underrepresented in regional plans. But as regional plans are a major influence on planning, and a comprehensive, relevant and accurate framework for regional tourism planning already exists, an obvious opportunity presents itself to include more tourism content in regional plans.

Should in the future more sectoral regional planning emerge—regional economic development strategies, for example—similar scope exists to further the aims of regional tourism planning within such documents.

Identifying infrastructure assets and requirements to support the tourism industry is also a role that can be played by regional plans.
Local tourism planning including local government planning schemes

Local tourism plans

Tourism planning at the local scale provides critical local context. Queensland councils sometimes prepare tourism plans for their local government area and sometimes for smaller areas or for special tourism features and assets.

Other local government plans—particularly community plans and economic development strategies—provide an excellent opportunity to state tourism goals alongside broader policy objectives. Local government planning schemes are another essential channel for tourism planning and these are addressed separately in the section below.

Like most planning processes, local tourism plans are best developed in collaboration between government, industry and community. Different departments within a council must be engaged, including those responsible for ‘land use planning’. Linking tourism strategies to corporate and capital works plans provides a potential means for funding and implementing tourism-supportive projects.

Local government planning schemes

Local government planning schemes are probably the most important level of statutory planning in Queensland. They set and express planning policy at the local level and include most of the planning regulations that development is assessed against.

The role of local government planning schemes is particularly important for tourism development. According to the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, 85% of tourism businesses in Queensland are classified as small businesses, implying that tourism developments by these businesses are almost certain to be assessed by local governments against their planning schemes. Only rarely are tourism projects large or significant enough to require assessment at the state or federal (in the case of some environmental matters) levels.

As with other forms of development, local government planning schemes have the ability to enable tourism development by encouraging tourism in their strategic frameworks and in a range of zones and, tailoring assessment, regulations, and fees and charges to make the criteria for tourism development clear, achievable and realistic.
Planning schemes can facilitate sustainable tourism development in three key ways:

1. They can be flexible to respond to the market and cater to the needs of the tourist by providing for tourism development—accommodation types, attractions, support facilities, infrastructure and other supporting services.

2. They can recognise, protect and enhance the setting, character, sense of place, identity and key features, assets and values that make a place or destination attractive for tourism.

3. They can encourage and make it easier for sustainable tourism development to happen, including influencing development costs and providing flexibility in the planning scheme.

The Queensland Government’s clear direction is for planning schemes to plan for and facilitate appropriate tourism development.

A planning scheme can be drafted to enable tourism development by following the guidance outlined in the box below with more detail provided on the pages following.
Guiding principles for drafting a planning scheme

General

- Recognise that tourism development can complement but also enhance and improve the setting, character, natural values and economic vitality of a place and community.
- Tourism development and activity involving the natural environment should be symbiotic with the values of nature, and promote the conservation and enhancement of the environment. Developments involving conservation areas are to adopt ecotourism principles as outlined in the Queensland Government’s Ecotourism Plan (QTIC, 2013).

Strategic Framework

- Recognise the strength and importance of the strategic framework to facilitate diverse tourism opportunities in a range of place types and land use settings. Telling the ‘tourism story’ or tourism vision through strategic commentary provides the head of power and policy direction for the planning scheme.
- Establish the overall tourism development objectives and policies that recognise the importance of tourism to a sustainable economy. These are articulated through a strong strategic framework that clearly outlines what tourism aims to achieve and how to deliver these desired outcomes (QTIC, 2013).

Defining Tourism

- Recognise that tourism fits across a broad range of use definitions and activity groups, including mixed use development. Tourism is to be recognised as a product, an experience, an activity, and a set of complementary land uses that requires several sectors and land use components to work harmoniously together. Planning for tourism will require a destination approach that allows compatible land uses to coexist (QTIC, 2013).

Zoning

- A single tourism zone is useful to protect an existing tourism development, larger or specialised tourism uses, cluster of uses or where regional synergies can be predicted and planned for. However, a single tourism zone will not deliver on the planning scheme’s full potential to respond to rapid market changes, entrepreneurial projects and emerging trends. Tourism needs to be facilitated across a broad range of zones and place types and assessed on its merits.

Levels of Assessment

- Include streamlined levels of assessment for appropriate tourism uses. This means being risk tolerant and ensuring levels of assessment are consistent with the policy intent and directions in the strategic framework and zones.
- Planning schemes can also inhibit tourism development that is commercially viable, or is effective in meeting changing market demands. They can do this explicitly by discouraging tourism, or by simply failing to consider tourism adequately.
Assessment Criteria

- Given the diverse range of tourism development, size, locations and impacts, overly prescriptive requirements will be difficult to apply and could lead to undesirable outcomes—be flexible by adopting an approach to assessing development on its merits and contribution to the overall tourism objectives (QTIC, 2013).

Incentives

- Provide incentives to encourage sustainable tourism development and make it more economically competitive—consider infrastructure discounts/subsidies, yield incentives, land use incentives.

Skyrail experience near Cairns

Plants for sale at the Eumundi Markets
Strategic framework

The ‘strategic framework’ is the strategic plan in a planning scheme and is the place to start. It is typically written first, with the rest of the planning scheme written to ‘align’ with it. The strategic framework is where state and regional tourism policies and directions can be integrated at the local level. A strategic framework can ‘tell the story’ about tourism in the local government context, both the story now and the story we want to be reading in a generation’s time. The strategic framework is an opportunity to set a tourism vision or reflect an already established local or regional tourism vision in a statutory plan. The strategic framework is one of the most important and effective ways to enable and streamline tourism development in the planning scheme.

Strategic frameworks also have a critical role in development assessment. The strategic framework is the highest test for development applications in the planning scheme. It is likely to be used when unanticipated development is proposed (not uncommon for tourism development), when zones and codes provide insufficient guidance to decision makers, when there is conflict or tension with the scheme, and is crucial in planning appeals.

The strategic framework is a place to articulate planning strategy but also a place in the planning scheme where some flexibility can be inbuilt. This is after all, strategic planning. A planning framework that can assist with this, and which is ideal for enabling and explaining tourism development policies—is to use a ‘place planning’ approach in the strategic framework. This is explained more fully in Part 2.0.

A strategic framework that supports and promotes the tourism industry should identify the type, scale, location and form of tourism development that is desired, by:

- describing the realistic aspirations of where a local government wants tourism to occur in the future and how it intends to achieve these aspirations
- making clear the priority placed on tourism development, with respect to other forms of development
- describing the values, qualities and standards expected of tourism developments
- considering and reflecting the findings of tourism planning activities and any community consultation activities. Examples of tourism planning activities include existing or future tourism opportunity plans, destination management plans, destination tourism plans or LGA specific tourism strategies/studies
- including land use strategies to support tourism development at the LGA wide, district and local scales and where appropriate, at site level. The location and scale of an area potentially appropriate for tourism development can be determined by consideration of a number of factors including, but not limited to:
  - proximity to existing tourism assets, attractions and facilities
  - existing compatible land use, infrastructure and services
  - character and amenity
  - visitation characteristics for the locality
  - access including transport opportunities
  - capacity to accommodate a mix of uses that complement tourism development
  - existing potential synergies between tourism related land uses, products and activities to create a richer depth of visitor experience
providing the overarching policy position to consider development proposals which are complex or innovative forms of development or are not anticipated by the planning scheme

considering the use of mapping and graphics to explain preferred patterns of growth and change to illustrate how the land uses and spatial development patterns of the LGA will look in the future.

It is also common to write into a strategic framework policies describing and seeking to protect the 'sense of place' of a community. This holds true whether the context is a predominantly urban or rural or natural landscape. Protecting 'sense of place' is justified for worthy community objectives. It should also be realised that protecting 'sense of place' and the urban and landscape values of a place is also essential to supporting tourism. Tourism relies in part on the qualities and attributes of a place to derive tourist experiences. Protecting place then, is an economic imperative as well as a social and cultural one.

Example strategic framework content is included in Part 5.1.

Zones

Zones are a familiar part of planning schemes to many people. Every property is given a zone, after all.

It is possible for existing tourism developments to be identified and placed in a separate tourism zone. Alongside appropriate levels of assessment for development in that zone, this gives clear indication that tourism development is the dominant use of land, and can afford a level of protection from redevelopment for other land uses that may weaken or undermine short- or long-term tourism activity in an area identified as important for tourism. Beachside caravan parks are a land use that may benefit from such protection.

It may also be possible to identify some sites proposed for or strategically important to future tourism development. These may also be located in the tourism zone. Such sites are not necessarily suitable for immediate development but instead might be identified to facilitate long-term protection of land for tourism purposes when economically appropriate and might be identified owing to their special:

- accessibility
- uniqueness
- setting
- tourism activities and amenities
- supply of land
- suitability in a land use context
- capability
- size
- function (WAPC, 2013).
Tourism is an activity that can fit everywhere, often alongside other land uses. It is often difficult to identify in advance properties that are likely to be developed for tourism, and to do so incorrectly may unfairly disadvantage landowners who may have alternative and legitimate plans for the site. Forward zoning of tourism sites is likely then to be the exception rather than the rule.

It is also possible to identify tourism precincts where tourism development is likely to occur or is to be encouraged or incentivised. The Western Australia Planning Commission (2013) describes tourism precincts as ‘localities of tourism value or amenity that incorporate or have the 5A’s of tourism destination development: attractions, accommodation, access, amenities and activities’.

Tourism precincts may require more detailed planning to identify specific tourism accommodation sites, complementary supporting land uses and tourism infrastructure (which can be planned for in an integrated manner) (WAPC, 2013). Areas flagged as suitable for ecotourism or key supporting facilities for drive tourism could be identified in this way.

They can identify opportunities for the clustering of activities to take advantage of synergies between various uses. For example, a precinct in the rural zone could assist in streamlining the development of nature-based tourism, including ecotourism activities and rural tourism. Precincts could also be useful to identify suitable locations for hotels, especially large scale developments.

To provide greater flexibility and to optimise the planning scheme’s potential to promote tourism, it is better to provide for and embed tourism across a broad range of zones supported by overall outcome statements that make this intention clear and with appropriate levels of assessment that take a risk tolerant approach. Precincts may also be used within zones to identify specific areas for tourism development and can vary the zone provisions in relation to height, gross floor area and levels of assessment, etc. This may be appropriate for existing tourism developments in rural areas, coastal and natural places where it is considered desirable to maintain these areas in the predominant rural or environmental management zones, as opposed to a separate tourism zone.

Example planning scheme content related to zones is included in Part 5.2.
Local plans

Local plans are important planning scheme mechanisms that can be used to encourage and provide support for specific land uses within a particular area. What is critical to their success is defining the local context and prescribing both levels of assessment and performance criteria that will either maintain and enhance, or enable land uses that will progressively change the area to align with the vision in the strategic framework. Local plans can vary in scale, but typically relate to smaller areas with a particular vision or prevailing built form.

For each local area, tourism development will play a different role. In an area that is resource focused, tourism development might be only a minor consideration that provides little input into the local economy, limited to only one or two different development types or signature developments. A local plan may support these developments where appropriate, but not necessarily encourage future expansion or additional developments. An example of such an area might be a resource town, which also includes an historic museum and visitor centre.

For other areas, tourism development could be one of a number of land uses that supports the economy. In that instance, a range of tourism development types might be supported by a local plan, the scope of which will depend on surrounding developments and how they interact. Future tourism development might be encouraged, as well as the protection of existing tourism developments of significance. An urban centre such as Toowoomba, which includes a number of short-term accommodation options and tourist attractors, but also includes commercial, retail and residential developments, is an example of such an area.

A local plan can also be used to promote tourism development as the dominant land use for an area, as a form of tourism precinct. For example, natural attractions can act as a common pull for tourists, which can benefit a network of tourism developments that support one another, that is, short-term accommodation options in collaboration with interpretive centres, activity centres, dining opportunities, etc.
Overlays

Overlays are another tool that could be used to support and enable tourism development. Overlays can be used to identify areas that are sensitive to the effects of development and existing or potential assets, features and areas that are important for the tourism industry.

An overlay could be useful for smaller local government areas, where such resources can be easily mapped. It is generally not recommended for larger local government areas. This is largely because mapping key tourism resources can often limit the potential and opportunity for developers to identify appropriate sites for innovative tourism developments. The scope and diversity of tourism products is such that the development potential of a site for an innovative tourism development might be overlooked during the mapping and analysis process.

The use of overlays can also provide additional layers of complexity in development assessment. In the absence of a specific tourism assets overlay, it would be important to recognise and embed tourism values more broadly across other relevant overlays, for example: landscape heritage, heritage, scenic amenity, biodiversity areas, coastal protection and water resource catchments, consistent with the policy directions in the strategic framework. This is critical given that overlays take precedence over zone provisions.

Overlay codes can be structured to support appropriate tourism developments in relevant overlay areas. For example, recreation spaces in low risk flooding areas, lookouts, short-term accommodation and tourism activities in areas of scenic amenity and/or historic museums or educational facilities in heritage overlay areas.

It is also important to ensure that relevant tourism developments are not constrained by overlay overall outcomes or code provisions, that is, camping grounds on land in the coastal zone. The planning scheme should also remain flexible enough for local government planners to apply discretion in identifying compatible tourism uses within the raft of overlays provided by the planning scheme.
Levels of assessment

To enable sustainable tourism development, a planning scheme should ensure that levels of assessment for tourism development are risk tolerant and set at the lowest level possible where appropriate. In most cases it is likely that code assessment will be an appropriate mechanism, although for minor developments, particularly in existing tourism areas, self assessment or exempt development should also be considered.

Impact assessment should only be used for large-scale proposals, and for development in an unexpected location. Again, the use of ‘place planning’ (Part 2.0) provides a mechanism to outline expectations to describe different places, and typical or suitable types of tourism development likely to be found within them. The strategic framework could include some provisions or tests specific to tourism to assist with the assessment of tourism developments not envisaged by the planning scheme.

For example, a farmstay development in a rural place is entirely consistent with the characteristics of the place. Code assessment—or even self assessment up to a certain scale—is likely to be an appropriate level of assessment. Ecotourism development in a natural place (for example, near a national park) should be similarly assessed. Again, the use is clearly in keeping with the values inherent in the place.

Indicative levels of assessment for tourism developments within particular zones are included in Part 5.3.

Codes

Codes are detailed assessment criteria against which development is assessed. Variety in the type, size, design and context of tourism development suggests it is unlikely that acceptable solutions have a major role in regulating tourism aspects of development. Instead, code overall outcomes and performance criteria can be emphasised. These must be aligned to the tourism policies and strategies written into the strategic framework. Some councils may choose to have specific use codes, for example: short-term accommodation code. Alternatively, reliance on zone codes through overall outcomes and performance outcomes may be sufficient.

Planning scheme codes need to embrace a level of flexibility that allows tourism developments to respond to market demand, allow for creativity and innovation and ensure that tourism projects are commercially viable (QTIC, 2013). As such, code provisions need to be performance-based, focusing on the good outcomes they are seeking to achieve, rather than how those outcomes will be achieved. In doing so, performance criteria should clearly align with the strategic framework and reflect the relevant tourism interests that it promotes. For example, a subsection of the Transport and Access Code (or equivalent) might include a performance criterion that states, ‘Provide adequate parking spaces for intended guests, having regard to available public and private transport options.’ The Limes Hotel, located in Fortitude Valley, does not include any car parking spaces. This is because it is located within walking distance of a large secure parking station, the major metropolitan train line and several bus stops. Private parking spaces are not required. In comparison, Hartley’s Crocodile Adventures is primarily accessed by private vehicle and includes significant car parking areas for this reason.
The scale of the proposed development and the context within which it is being proposed, will act as self-imposed development controls for inappropriate proposals. For example, a performance criterion in the Environmental Management Zone could state that, ‘Development protects, enhances and promotes the environmental values of the site.’ Subject to site constraints, it may be difficult for a large-scale tourist attraction such as a theme park to meet this criterion. However, a small-scale ecotourism facility that is completely self-sustainable and will be established within a cleared area, could achieve this provision.

**Priority infrastructure planning**

Planning should identify and prioritise infrastructure with tourism benefits. Such infrastructure could include everything from boat launches to walking trails, or a longer airport runway.

Planning schemes identify in advance certain required or ‘priority’ infrastructure that is needed to support development. Examples include new or upgraded roads and transport connections, water and sewer infrastructure, and community facilities. Most infrastructure is multi-function, serving many types of business and community activities, but some tourism-specific infrastructure may also be identified and this can be included in the Priority Infrastructure Plan of the planning scheme. Consideration of tourism functions could increase the benefit of certain infrastructure and assist in infrastructure prioritisation decisions.

Local governments should consider the real demand of land use in different settings and apportion charges accordingly. For example, short-term accommodation in a rural setting may not generate the same demand on infrastructure compared to the same use in centres.

**Planning scheme policies**

Should pre-lodgement processes for the early negotiation of tourism developments be employed (Part 3.6), a planning scheme policy may be used to formalise the process in the planning scheme.

There is opportunity to develop a ‘tourism incentives’ planning scheme policy (PSP) detailing the type of tourism development to which the PSP applies, the types of incentives, eligibility criteria and the circumstances under which incentives will be provided. It is important to be transparent about how development incentives are to be applied and to ensure the head of power to provide for incentives is embedded in the zone code and strategic framework.

**Infrastructure charging**

Discounts or rebates on infrastructure charges for tourism development should be seriously considered by local governments as a means to encourage sustainable tourism development (Part 3.6).
Rural setting near Goondiwindi

Photo credit: © Toowoomba & Golden West South Burnett Tourism
3.5 Checklist for plan making

The following checklist has been developed following a review of numerous tourism development guidelines to assist planners—including planners preparing local government planning schemes. The checklist can both inform plan making in the early stages, as well as acting as a checklist at the end of the drafting process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Strategic Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Does the plan consider the findings of tourism planning activities undertaken for both the local and regional area, as well as national policy documents?</td>
<td>• Does the strategic framework identify the main tourism assets and unique attractions of the area and how they are to be protected, managed and enhanced for the use and enjoyment of visitors over the lifespan of the planning scheme?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has the plan taken into consideration future trends and changes (including both growth and decline) in volume, distribution and type of tourism activities?</td>
<td>• Does the strategic framework reflect the tourism state interest objectives and policies for making or amending a local planning instrument? Does it resolve or provide direction on competing issues or land use conflicts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has the plan considered how best to respond to growth and increased demand for tourism developments, in order to spread the benefits and diffuse the pressure of such growth?</td>
<td>• Does the strategic framework include an outcome that encourages innovative or unique tourism products, activities and experiences and provide flexibility to support this, including in the more detailed provisions of the planning scheme?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has the plan identified the likely implications of future trends in tourism development for land use, labour supply, traffic and the transport system?</td>
<td>• Does the strategic framework identify tourism as a theme that includes strategic outcomes to strengthen the business environment for operators and enhance the visitor experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the plan identify ways that tourism development can contribute to other objectives for the area, including economic growth, conservation and regeneration?</td>
<td>• Does the strategic framework identify to the extent practicable what tourism development or ‘product’ types are in demand by tourists and/or enabling developments that are crucial to meeting the tourism demand in the area? Is there encouragement and support for land owners, developers and operators to seek tourism opportunities that assist in meeting this demand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has the plan considered the potential environmental and community impacts of tourism development and how to avoid/mitigate them and enhance values?</td>
<td>• Does the plan identify the process and scope of future tourism planning to be undertaken?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Did community consultation play a large part in the drafting process of the plan and does it present a shared tourism vision?</td>
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• Does the strategic framework facilitate tourism opportunities by ensuring their protection against competing interests and incompatible development?

• Does the strategic framework demonstrate that tourism developments are often compatible with a mix of land uses and are supported in these instances?

Zoning

• Does the plan identify key tourism assets (both existing and future potential development opportunities) that should be protected to support the continued growth and success of the tourism industry?

• Has the planning scheme identified land that currently contains a major tourism attraction or other large tourism development (for example, resort complex or, caravan park) as being within the tourism zone? In the absence of a separate tourism zone, is the site identified in any other way as a tourism attraction or large tourism development that can be expanded appropriately?

• Are tourism developments listed as permissible developments within the appropriate zones? Are they encouraged as part of a mixed use offering?

• Do the provisions in other zones allow for compatible tourism developments, for example, are appropriate tourism opportunities afforded in rural and environmental areas where there is land use compatibility?

• Is there adequate protection of sensitive land uses (in particularly to the natural environment), in order for tourism development to thrive on and promote the scenic amenity and natural values of these environmental assets?

Assessment Criteria

• Does the plan include provisions that support and actively encourage tourism and supporting development in these areas as a complementary and compatible land use and across a broad range of zones?

• Does the plan, through assessment criteria and development principles, support tourism oriented development that promotes amenity, economic growth, environmental protection and appreciation and existing cultural values?

• Does the plan identify ways that tourism development can integrate with its surroundings, including mixed-use development provisions?

• Does the plan include flexibility, to allow for innovative tourism products and those developments that can be considered neither urban or rural in nature?

Incentives

• Does the plan consider incentives, to encourage tourism development?

Adapted and compiled from QTIC, 2013; WAPC, 2013; DSDIP 2013b; DCLG, 2006.
3.6 Incentives

Economics of development can sometimes mean that non-tourism development provides better short-term returns to developers than tourism development. Instead of planning for the highest and best use of a site, consider planning for the highest and best use for the city. For example, an office tower in a city centre may outperform returns from a similar building functioning as a large hotel. Conversion of beachfront tourist accommodation to permanent residences might be lucrative. This does not mean that the need for the hotel or accommodation does not exist. To the contrary, the tourism economy may depend on it and the community’s broader interests may rely on it.

Tourism can be given a ‘fair go’ in planning through incentives to encourage tourism development, or planning protection of existing identified tourism assets. This is important as tourism provides wider job and economic flow benefits than other industries.

Incentives are a legitimate strategy and a real opportunity for local governments seeking to promote tourism and tourism development. Incentives may be appropriate for:

- encouraging and facilitating bona fide and quality tourism developments
- for people who want to establish tourism development now or in the short term
- but not for people who wish to sit or trade on value added approvals.

Different types of incentives are available to local governments. Here we have put them into three categories.

Yield incentives might include:

- gross floor area (GFA) bonuses over and above normal limits
- plot ratio bonuses
- building height bonuses
- setback flexibility.

Land use incentives might include access to other land uses that support the primary land use. For example, a caravan park might be supported by a small shop, or a farm by a farmstay and a cheese shop.

Decreasing project costs are another area for incentives opportunities. This could be done through:

- car parking concessions
- infrastructure charging subsidies (targeting tourism over other forms of development)
- direct subsiding of infrastructure
- discounts in infrastructure charges (for example, 50% discount if project starts in one year following approval)
- staging or deferred payment scheme
- bonding and returning full or part payments once works completed
- general tax or rate relief
- streamlining and timing through:
  – council ‘fast track team’ to prioritise development assessment
  – up front due diligence identifying ‘investor ready’ land
  – lowest levels of assessment in planning scheme
  – partnering and agreement across three levels of government to facilitate development.

There are lots of options for incentives, which are not a give-away but are instead an investment in broader economic outcomes, and can be used as a ‘carrot’ for not just any development but good quality, sustainable tourism development of the type advocated by this document.

Redevelopment of old or out-dated tourism buildings and infrastructure, as well as ‘new’ development, should not be forgotten when devising incentive programmes for tourism development.
Key questions for planners

When drafting incentives for tourism development, planners will need to consider the following key questions:

1. What are the possible tourism incentives that could be used to encourage and facilitate tourism development in Queensland/your local government area?
2. What types of tourism developments should incentives apply to?
3. Under what circumstances should incentives apply?
4. How can tourism incentives be implemented, looking at planning scheme and non-planning scheme measures?
5. How is it best to maintain and document transparency in applying incentives?
6. Is there a requirement for monitoring of milestones, etc.?

Planning scheme elements—codes versus policies

It is important to consider the best way to incorporate incentives for tourism development into a planning scheme. This can be done through a development code, overlay code or planning scheme policy. Although an overlay or development code might seem like the obvious answer, with acceptable outcomes available to facilitate the targeted implementation of incentives where they are most relevant, these provisions are often not flexible enough in their application. It would also be difficult to draft provisions for every single type of tourism land use that may be proposed within the relevant local government area. Tourism as a land use is difficult to define, with developments taking many shapes and forms depending on the market and location. A planning scheme policy is seen as the most dynamic and flexible planning scheme mechanism through which tourism incentives may be applied. By calling up such a policy in the strategic framework and overall outcomes of the relevant zones, the policy is given sufficient weight and can be applied where it is most relevant.

Pre-lodgement processes

Pre-lodgement processes are best practice, particularly for complex development projects. It is often much easier (and cheaper) to make changes to a project early in the design and development process, and this holds true for tourism as much as it does to other types of development.

Pre-lodgement processes involve one or more meetings or workshops prior to lodgement of the development application. While they are not legally binding (but with clear record keeping), they allow parties to act in a more open and innovative way and with greater certainty.

An advantage of pre-lodgement processes is they can often be linked to a shorter assessment process, enabling key issues to be identified early on and agreement (in most cases) on how certain issues will be addressed in the development application moving forward.

With tourism experts involved, pre-lodgement processes could also be used to assist with the feasibility assessment for tourism proposals, and again before substantial amounts of money have been spent.
Part 4.0
The value of good design in tourism development

Tourism developments can bring a number of economic, environmental and social benefits to their local community, region and wider area. Good design plays a key role in producing these outcomes, often through responding to the natural setting and identified tourism needs.

Having a good design process that is thorough, consultative and innovative is key to realising the full potential of a sustainable and successful tourism development.
Gallery of Modern Art, at South Bank on the bank of the Brisbane River
4.1 Good design

A fundamental premise of this document is that sustainable tourism development provides economic, environmental and socio-cultural benefits (page 8), and should be enabled through planning. Achieving sustainable tourism developments may be supported by ensuring development: knows the needs of the tourist; creates experience; is developed in in context; enhances setting; and utilises good process (pages 10–13).

Good design has a critical role in realising all of these goals.

The economic benefits of well-designed tourism developments

In the end, tourism is a ‘commercial activity that depends on how attractive it is to visitors’ (DCLG, 2006). Attractive, memorable, and financially successful tourist developments do not happen by accident, and will be supported by well-designed buildings, facilities and infrastructure, and indeed, well-designed experiences. Good design ‘makes for a comfortable and pleasant life rather than a mere existence’ (SATC, 2007).

Design of tourism developments—whether buildings or furnishings, car parks or landscaping—is fundamental to building upon sense of place and enhancing setting. Enhancing a setting might be achieved in many ways, from making a bold architectural statement, or designing to bring visitors close to and feel part of a natural setting, but the common theme is design as a creative and a productive process to help find and detail the right solution.

One important design feature to the success of any tourism project is that it is ‘easy to reach, successful in attracting visitors and encouraging them to return’ (DCLG, 2006).

Access that is convenient and effective is particularly important as ‘by definition, visitors are often unfamiliar with the building and its environs’ (DCLG, 2006). The journey is the first impression and well-designed access is a key factor for success.

Finally, as much as the setting and experience of a tourism development and destination, the design of a tourism development can provide a vital input to a project’s marketing and public image.

The environmental benefits of well-designed tourism development

Environmental impacts of tourism occur at development, construction and operational stages of a project. Good design is key to minimising impacts at a time in the development process where changes can be achieved more quickly and cost effectively.

Designing in context (page 12) is critical. Tourism development must ‘complement and improve the wider built and natural environment’ (DCLG, 2006).

Good design of buildings and facilities plays a big part in reducing environmental impacts of development, be they: energy use, water consumption, waste, transport, loss of natural habitats and biodiversity, or other effects.

Tourism development can also have a role in improving environmental values ‘on the ground’ and enhancing community awareness and appreciation of the environment. Interpretative and educational experiences with an emphasis on the natural environment should be pursued. That is, tourism development, when done well, can have positive environmental benefits. Everyone wins.
The social and cultural benefits of well-designed tourism development

Well-designed tourism developments offer social and cultural benefits to both visitors and locals. Tourism development can celebrate and bring to life the social and cultural identity of a place.

Considerations include:

- minimising visual, noise, congestion, privacy and other amenity impacts
- providing interpretive and educational experiences with an emphasis on local culture or history
- safe, healthy and secure developments and environments
- local employment and support for local economies including diversification.
- building new facilities accessible to non-tourists
- overall vitality and viability of town and city centres (DCLG, 2006).

Realising good design through the design process

A good design process is essential to realising economic, environmental and socio-cultural benefits in tourism developments. Just as with tourism generally, design is not a ‘one size fits all’ activity. But this doesn’t mean all designs won’t benefit from a rigorous and thoughtful process. Good designs usually result from a collaborative and often iterative process, involving client, designers, other experts, local government and sometimes other community members.

Tourism Western Australia’s *QuickStart Guide to a Tourism Business* suggests a four-step process suitable for tourism development in natural settings, but this guidance has relevance to other place settings too.

1. **Site analysis**—including the Importance of environmental awareness and responsiveness. Consider a broad range of environmental factors and issues (climate, aspect, topography, flora, fauna, amenity, context—historic, scenic).
2. **Master planning**—make broad decisions regarding size, planning relationships, sequence of development and intended character of a project. Consider zoning, circulation, parking, building density type and layout, activity centres, landscaping and staging.
3. **Architecture**—imagery. Should result from masterplanning and site analysis. Each site is unique and has its own characteristic imagery (for example, urban v. rural context). Need for sympathy and consistency in details (study site and surroundings).
4. **Detail control management**—such as signage, fencing, roadways, parking, pathways, BBQ and picnic facilities, information bays, shade shelters, services, rubbish bins, street furniture, lighting, swimming pools and maintenance plan. (TWA, 2006d)

A design process can be as simple as gathering knowledge (about the site, place, etc.), developing proposals and then testing them against the project objectives and all relevant policy and principles. A feedback loop is created whereby testing adds more knowledge and the proposal is refined and improved. (SATC, 2007)
Part 5.0

Using model tourism planning provisions in local government planning schemes

This chapter provides example planning scheme provisions showing how the State Planning Policy (SPP) state interest—tourism industry and the concepts in this document can be implemented in a planning scheme.

These provisions are designed to make it simple for local governments to support tourism through planning, and reflect tourism state interests. They can be readily modified to reflect local circumstances.

The model planning scheme contents should not be seen as the only way to appropriately reflect tourism state interests. There will be variation in approach to reflect the many different forms of tourism and the unique qualities, opportunities and aspirations for each region and local area.
Australian PGA Championship, an example of event based tourism
5.1 Strategic framework

The Queensland Planning Provisions (QPP) indicate that the strategic framework in local government planning schemes is to comprise the following sections:

- strategic intent (mandatory)
- themes (mandatory)
- strategic outcomes (mandatory)
- elements (optional)
- specific outcomes (optional).

Further explanation of the requirements for each of these sections is provided in the QPP. The following sections of this document describe how tourism and tourism state interests can be used within this framework focusing on strategic intent, themes, strategic outcomes and specific outcomes.

The strategic framework can be used to describe existing and potential tourism assets and features. Where considered appropriate, conceptual mapping identifying tourism assets can be included. The method of identifying tourism assets will depend on the local context—assets and features may be specifically identified in the scheme for their tourism values, or a broader recognition of the assets in the planning scheme more generally. For example, areas of high scenic amenity and landscape character or high-quality transport routes are important to tourism, but they are also important in a broad range of other contexts (QTIC, 2013).

Strategic intent (hypothetical)

The strategic intent is a series of locally contextualised statements that describe the aspirations for the future development of the local government area (LGA).

The strategic intent tells the ‘tourism story’ or sets a tourism vision for the LGA and will be unique to the qualities, strengths and aspirations for each region and LGA. Some examples of hypothetical strategic intent statements for tourism are included below.
The LGA contains World Heritage listed natural assets including mountains, forests, beaches and reefs. Other valued qualities include regional recreation resources, high scenic amenity and landscape character and small villages with rural charm. These values and features are important to maintaining the lifestyles and wellbeing of residents and visitors and the ecological sustainability of the region as a whole. They are also the foundation for the further development of a vibrant and sustainable tourism industry that celebrates and supports the region’s unique qualities and tourism assets. It is important these assets are protected for their many values and can be accessed and enjoyed by residents and visitors.

The LGA will continue to maintain and grow its reputation as one of the best winery and regional cuisine destinations in the world. Development supports and enhances drive tourism routes and focuses tourism support facilities and services in existing rural towns to provide economic diversity, choice and enhanced visitor experience.

All types of short-term accommodation particularly hotels, backpacker accommodation, serviced apartments and motels are strongly encouraged and supported in rural towns. Farmstays, bed and breakfasts, cabins and camping grounds are encouraged and supported in rural and natural places.

The built, cultural and heritage tourism assets for the LGA include small rural towns and villages, history and heritage, antiques and art galleries, wineries and regional cuisine, community culture, events and festivals. Tourism development provides for the protection and promotion of these cultural and heritage values including interpretive and educational experiences and enhanced visitor experiences.

The LGA is recognised as the lifestyle and leisure capital of the Asia Pacific. The city and its tourism precincts are safe, well serviced and uniquely subtropical in design. The LGA is renowned for the sustainable management of its natural and built environment, the vibrancy and depth of its service economy, the wellbeing of its community and its unique sense of place as a thriving and dynamic resort destination. Tourism development provides for nature-based and ecotourism experiences in the rural hinterland, adventure based attractions, marine and water based activities, business and events tourism, new and enhanced theme parks and health and well being services including medical and spa tourism.

The LGA is recognised as the ‘gateway to the Queensland outback’ and a genuine Australian destination. The LGA is characterised by spectacular and contrasting landscapes and a diverse natural environment including sand dunes, flat channel country, rich red dirt, spinifex, savannah, waterways, mesas and buttes and large areas of national park. Other valued qualities include ancient Indigenous cultural heritage, the rich rural history of the region including cattle, sheep, mining and pioneering heritage and a relaxed country lifestyle. Tourism development supports and promotes diverse tourism experiences based on the unique values, assets and attributes of the region including opportunities for palaeotourism, astronomy, bird watching, gem fossicking, four wheel driving, in-land fishing, ecotourism, farming, agriculture and local produce.
Themes

For local governments that have a regional plan in place, theme headings for the strategic framework are to be derived from the Desired Regional Outcomes (DRO) in the regional plan.

Where there is no regional plan, QPP identifies the themes that could be used. The following themes are potentially relevant to tourism:

- community identity and diversity
- natural environment
- natural resources and landscape
- economic development
- infrastructure and services

To avoid policy tension or conflict in the strategic framework, it is recommended to provide for tourism uses across a range of themes. Where tourism falls under other themes, ensure that tourism interests are protected if complementary land uses exist.

Alternatively, consideration could also be given to having a separate tourism theme and identify specific outcomes and land use strategies to encourage tourism developments that complement the area. This is likely to be appropriate where tourism is a core area of economic policy.

Strategic outcomes and specific outcomes

Strategic outcomes represent the ‘big picture’ policy direction for the local government area as a whole, relevant to the particular theme. Specific outcomes refine and enable the higher order strategic outcomes.

A ‘menu’ of examples that could be used and adapted as strategic outcomes or specific outcome statements that support tourism and reflect tourism state interests are provided below. It is not expected that these would all be relevant to every local government.

Tourism can fit everywhere

- Tourism development is appropriately located, protects and enhances the setting of the place and provides attractive and memorable experiences for visitors.
- Tourism development is an important economic activity contributing to local and regional economic development, diversification and sustaining and creating employment opportunities. Sustainable tourism development is encouraged, strengthened and expanded based on the needs of the tourist and the sustainable use of natural, cultural, rural and built assets.
- Tourism development is supported and encouraged across a broad range of zones in the (xx) LGA, where it is designed appropriate to place.
- Tourist development involving short-term accommodation is supported in urban and rural areas where designed appropriate to the place.
- Sustainable and well designed tourism development including short-term accommodation, attractions, facilities, infrastructure and support facilities and other ancillary services are encouraged and supported across a range of zones in appropriate locations throughout the planning scheme area. Opportunities also exist for appropriate tourism activities to complement, enhance and coexist with a range of land uses and economic activities.
- Development is supported by well designed buildings, facilities and has appropriate access and infrastructure services commensurate with the type of development, character and setting of the place.
- Potential adverse impacts resulting from tourism development, including construction and operational phases, are minimised and mitigated.
Outside the urban area, the planning scheme provides flexibility for appropriately located and well designed tourism development associated with rural activities or other natural resource values.

Non-tourism development in areas identified as (xx) are of a nature and scale that do not compromise existing or approved tourism development or detract from the tourism values, character and amenity of a place or locality.

A range of tourism opportunities and experiences are encouraged across a broad range of zones in the planning scheme area. This may involve mixed use developments in centres and the establishment of tourism uses that are complementary to and compatible with other land uses on a site, where the primary existing land use is for non-tourism purposes.

Incentives in the form of additional gross floor area, reduced car parking, infrastructure discounts and other complementary land uses, may be considered for tourism developments involving (xx) type of uses in the CBD and in the rural towns, where in accordance with the requirements of planning scheme policy (xx).

Incentives in the form of infrastructure discounts and other complementary land uses may be considered for eligible tourism developments in natural and rural areas, where in accordance with planning scheme policy (xx).

Tourism zoned land and other existing tourism uses are maintained for tourism uses and associated supporting facilities. The caravan parks and (xx) tourism uses in the planning scheme area are protected from non-tourism orientated development. There is opportunity to establish other compatible land uses such as a small-scale shop, café or restaurant for (xx) to support these tourism uses.

Tourism development not anticipated by the zone may potentially be supported in appropriate locations where it can be demonstrated:

- the development is responding to new, emerging or innovative tourism opportunities, trends or market niches
- the development is responding to the needs of the tourist and will enhance visitor experiences
- the development maintains or enhances the economic vitality of the LGA including not detracting from the role and function of the centres hierarchy, provides local employment opportunities and contributes to local economic diversification
- the scale, design and nature of the development is appropriate to and enhances the character and setting of the place
- potential amenity impacts of noise, privacy, traffic, visual and other impacts can be managed and minimised so as to maintain or enhance the amenity of the area
- the development does not give rise to conflicts which would prejudice the existing economic activity in the area or adversely affect natural resources values, landscape character or cultural heritage values;
- where located within or adjacent to natural places or an environmentally significant area, potential adverse impacts (including direct and cumulative impacts) are minimised to the greatest extent possible and environmental values are enhanced.
Tourism in natural places and rural places

- The cultural, historic, scenic, landscape, natural, social and spiritual qualities that create places of local heritage are protected and enhanced for their tourism value and opportunities.
- Within rural places and natural places, new tourism enterprises are supported and encouraged that are associated with rural production or the natural environment and where educational or learning experiences are promoted.
- The development of retreats that cater to the health and wellness tourism market is encouraged and supported in rural areas and may potentially be appropriate in natural areas. Synergies with natural areas and the promotion and enhancement of environmental values is encouraged and supported.
- There is an opportunity to develop a resort and conference facility adjacent to (xx), subject to not detracting from existing economic activity in the area, or adversely impacting on water quality values, natural resource values or landscape character.
- Tourist development that promotes and supports the natural assets of the (xx) River without compromising environmental or water quality values will be supported.
- Small-scale, low-rise tourism accommodation and support facilities are facilitated in appropriate locations on the coastal islands of (xx) and (xx).
- Low-impact, nature-orientated tourism attractions and facilities may be appropriate in or close to areas of environmental significance including protected areas, where the development is undertaken in a way that ensures the impacts on ecological, cultural, landscape character and scenic amenity values are minimised and values are enhanced.
- Tourism development maintains and enhances the image, environmental values and scenic amenity both within and outside of urban areas in the (xx) LGA.
- There is opportunity for some limited small-scale nature-based tourism uses to establish within the water catchment of (xx) Dam and (xx) River, where it can be demonstrated that water quality values of the potable water supply will be protected.
- There is opportunity to establish a small-scale luxury hotel adjacent to (xx) National Park, where it can be demonstrated the development minimises the development footprint, reflects best-practice environmentally sensitive design and promotes ecotourism principles and activities like bushwalking, fishing, wildlife watching and tours.
- Rural land is maintained and protected primarily for its rural production, landscape character and environmental values and also provides for uses including primary production and locally appropriate tourism opportunities.
- Tourism development must be compatible with and not prejudice existing rural activities in the locality.
- Roadside stalls, farm gate and home occupations associated with agricultural and rural pursuits may also be supported in appropriate locations where traffic and other amenity impacts can be minimised.
- Within rural areas, new tourism enterprises are encouraged that are associated with and promote rural production or the natural environment.
• Tourism development opportunities including farmstays, bed and breakfasts, cabins and camping grounds are encouraged to take advantage of the region’s climate, natural assets and high scenic amenity and landscape character and building on its existing industries (for example, wineries, horticulture, cattle grazing), history, culture and lifestyle characteristics.

• The development of farmstays catering to individuals and small groups that diversify the local agricultural economy and provide employment opportunities is encouraged and supported.

• There is an emerging and growing opportunity for further wineries, cellar door sales and wine tours to develop in the rural area of the (xx) locality. Development supports and promotes the regional synergies of this destination, responds to tourist needs and enhances visitor experience.

• Development within the designated area (xx) on strategic framework map (xx) will provide infrastructure to enhance public access to scenic lookouts with water and hinterland views. Development may also include small-scale cafés, restaurants (including gourmet cooking schools) that promote local produce, regional cuisine and wine.

• There is opportunity to establish a visitor activity node focusing on adventure sports including gliding, hot air ballooning, the flying school and water activities adjacent to (xx). Supporting facilities including restaurant, café and short-term accommodation is encouraged.

• Tourism development in rural areas will focus on food and wine, touring routes, nature-based tourism (including ecotourism), outdoor recreation and adventure sports and cultural heritage tourism. Supporting services and facilities to enrich the visitor experience, boost the local economy and maximise synergies with existing rural uses are encouraged.

• Tourism development maintains and enhances the image, environmental values and scenic amenity both within and outside of urban areas in the (xx) LGA.

• There is opportunity to create a unique wilderness style accommodation experience within the (xx) parts of (xx) National Park, subject to development maintaining and enhancing the park’s natural and cultural values and not impacting on existing operations.

• Development provides for a range of interpretative materials to enhance visitor experiences and foster a greater appreciation of the park’s geology, history, biodiversity and cultural significance.
Tourism in rural towns and townships

- Development provides for a wide mix of tourism development and activities including accommodation of all types, dining, shopping, tourism attractions, tourist information and amenities for travellers. Well-designed short-term accommodation is encouraged in the township of (xx) and incentives will be offered for developments to reuse existing heritage buildings, where in accordance with PSP (xx).

Tourism in suburban and urban neighbourhoods

- Small-scale short-term accommodation being bed and breakfast, motels and small boutique hotels may be appropriate in urban neighbourhoods, where proximate to centres and public transport.

Tourism in town and city centres

- The focus of tourism in the CBD will be anchored by a range of tourist accommodation options, dining experiences and cultural and educational uses.
- Within existing centres, urban areas or designated tourism areas, new larger scale tourism developments are encouraged where they respond to tourist needs, and which are not more appropriately located in a non-urban area.
- Existing tourism developments including tourism zoned land and designated tourism areas on strategic framework map (xx), are maintained and protected for tourism development and associated support facilities and ancillary services.
- Development of tourism zoned land or sites which have an existing tourism function for non-tourism orientated development more appropriately located elsewhere, is discouraged.
5.2 Zones

This section suggests additional overall outcomes to ensure tourism development is facilitated across a broad range of relevant zones within urban, rural, environmental and coastal areas, in addition to the separate Tourism zones category. It is important to ensure the overall outcomes align with the policy directions set by the strategic framework.

Overall Outcomes

Residential zones category—Tourist accommodation

The QPP suggested overall outcomes for the tourist accommodation zone are considered appropriate. Some additional overall outcome statement examples could include:

- Incentives in the form of additional gross floor area, reduced car parking and infrastructure discounts may be possible for appropriate tourism development, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria and requirements of planning scheme policy (xx).
- Development in the tourist accommodation zone is to be maintained predominantly for tourist accommodation purposes and associated support facilities and ancillary services. Development for non-tourism orientated development that can locate elsewhere, is generally not supported in the zone.
- There is opportunity to expand the short-term accommodation offering located at (xx). In particular, there is a need for additional self-serviced apartments and a boutique hotel to increase visitor choice in accommodation options. Other types of short-term accommodation may also be appropriate in this location.
- Non-tourism development is of a nature and scale that does not compromise existing or approved tourism development or detract from the tourism values, character and amenity of a place or locality.

Centre zones category (including Township zone)

Some additional overall outcome statement examples could include:

- Incentives in the form of additional gross floor area, reduced car parking and infrastructure discounts may be possible for tourism development, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria and requirements of planning scheme policy (xx).
- In Principal centres, Major centres and District centre zoned land, residential development, short-term accommodation and tourist accommodation particularly motels, backpackers, serviced apartments and accommodation hotels are provided at an appropriate scale and integrates with and enhances the fabric of the centre.
- In Local centres, short-term accommodation and tourist accommodation may be appropriate in certain locations where the local centre also performs a role in serving the needs of tourists or is located proximate to existing tourist assets, attractions and facilities. In the LGA, these locations are (xx) and (xx). Development is provided at an appropriate scale and integrates with and enhances the fabric of the centre.
- Development involving a resort complex may potentially be appropriate in the (xx) centres zone, where it can be demonstrated the development is at an appropriate scale, designed in context and integrates with and enhances the fabric of the centre. Development for a resort complex is undertaken in accordance with an approved master plan.
Mixed use

Some additional overall outcome statement examples could include:

- Incentives in the form of additional gross floor area, reduced car parking and infrastructure discounts may be possible for tourism development, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria and requirements of planning scheme policy (xx).
- Non-tourism development is of a nature and scale that does not compromise existing or approved tourism development or detract from the tourism values, character and amenity of a place or locality.

Tourism zones category

Suggested local government purpose of the code is to:

- Provide sustainable development of tourism accommodation, tourist attractions, tourist park and other tourism-oriented development including support facilities, infrastructure and other ancillary services.

Some additional overall outcome statement examples could include:

- Non-tourism development is of a nature and scale that does not compromise existing or approved tourism development or detract from the tourism values, character and amenity of a place or locality.
- Incentives in the form of additional gross floor area, reduced car parking, infrastructure discounts and land use incentives may be possible for tourism development, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria and requirements of planning scheme policy (xx).
- Development in the Tourism zone is maintained predominantly for tourism development purposes and associated support facilities and ancillary services. Development for non-tourism orientated development that can locate elsewhere, is generally not supported in the zone.
- There is opportunity to expand the existing tourism development located at (xx) (for example, resort complex, tourist attraction, theme park) where in accordance with an approved master plan.
- Within the (xx) locality, the existing caravan park use is maintained. Expansion of the tourist park use to enhance visitor experience and accommodation choice is supported and encouraged. A small-scale café and shop not exceeding (xx)m² GFA is encouraged.
Environmental zones category

Suggested local government purpose of the code is to:

- Provide opportunities for sustainable, well designed and locally appropriate tourism development opportunities and associated uses that are compatible with, promote and enhance landscape character and natural environment values.

Suggested additional overall outcomes are:

- Low-impact nature-based tourism development, including short-term accommodation options and associated facilities may be appropriate in or close to areas of environmental significance including protected areas, where it can be demonstrated that the development minimises impacts on ecological, cultural, landscape character and scenic amenity values. Development enhances environmental values and is undertaken in accordance with an approved master plan.
- Tourism development in the zone is appropriately located and protects and enhances the natural setting and environmental values of the site. In particular, development avoids impacts on significant wetlands and habitat and breeding areas for (xx) species.
- Expansion of the existing tourism development adjacent to (xx) National Park is supported where it can be demonstrated that vegetation clearing is minimised and environmental values are enhanced where practicable. In particular, the existing wildlife corridor (xx) is maintained and protected from development impacts, including vegetation clearing.
- The (xx) locality provides opportunity to develop tourism uses that cater to the health and wellness tourism market, including short-term accommodation options that promote and take advantage of the high scenic amenity, landscape character and natural assets. Development provides for interpretative and educational opportunities to promote awareness of environmental values.
- Non-tourism development is of a nature and scale that does not compromise existing or approved tourism development or detract from the tourism values, character and amenity of a place or locality.
- Incentives in the form of infrastructure discounts may be possible for tourism development, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria and requirements of planning scheme policy (xx).
Rural Zone

Suggested local government purpose of the code include:

- The local government purpose of the code is to maintain and protect rural zoned land primarily for its rural production, landscape character and environmental values and also provide locally appropriate tourism development and enterprises.

Suggested additional overall outcomes are:

- Tourism development is supported in the Rural zone where associated with rural production, agricultural pursuits and promoting the natural environment. Farmstays, bed and breakfasts, cabins, camping grounds, road side stalls, home occupations, small-scale food and drink outlet and small-scale shop uses are encouraged.

- Low-impact nature-based tourism development, including short-term accommodation options and associated facilities may be appropriate in or close to areas of environmental significance, where it can be demonstrated the development minimises impacts on ecological, cultural, landscape character and scenic amenity values.

- There is opportunity for limited small-scale nature-based tourism development to establish within the following locations:
  - the water catchment of (xx) Dam and (xx) River, subject to demonstrating the water quality values of the potable water supply will be protected
  - the coastal islands of (xx) and (xx)
  - adjacent to (xx) National Park with access off (xx) Road.

- Within the (xx) locality, development involving wineries including cellar door sales, wine tours, restaurants (including a culinary teaching school) and short-term accommodation is encouraged. Other tourism support uses and facilities are clustered in the local centre on (xx) road.

- Non-tourism development is of a nature and scale that does not compromise existing or approved tourism development or detract from the tourism values, character and amenity of a place or locality.
5.3

Assessment levels

The table below suggests indicative levels of assessment for those tourism developments that are desirable within particular zones. Please note, this table focuses on those developments that should be facilitated within the relevant zones. It is up to each council to consider the thresholds for assessment in relation to the individual context of each local government area and determine what is appropriate. However, the tables below provide a general indication of what could be considered appropriate.

Where a threshold has been applied, if the proposed development does not sit within this threshold, the next level of assessment applies. The application does not automatically default to requiring an impact assessable application. For example, according to the table below, an application for a food and drink outlet in the Tourist Accommodation Zone is self assessable, where less than 200m² and directly associated with a tourism development. If the proposed food and drink outlet is more than 200m², a code assessable (the next level of assessment after self) assessment is triggered.

All tourist attraction and resort complex land uses have been allocated an assessment level of ‘S/C/I’ across each of the relevant zones. This is because the appropriate level of assessment for each of these land uses will largely depend on the context and scale of what is being proposed. Council should require an application for these land uses (most likely impact assessable) and assist the proponent with the process, with the idea being to issue an approval that is wide in scope and ensures that subsequent additions (within reason) to the approved development are made self assessable where in accordance with an approved plan of development. This will reduce red tape and timeframes in the long term.

The level of assessment assigned to these land uses and others listed in the table below that may not have been allocated a level of assessment, may also be reduced, subject to council due diligence work being undertaken. More specifically, if council can identify a site that, after having undertaken the necessary environmental/social/economic investigations, is suitable for a low-impact or large-scale tourism development, they may assign a lower level of assessment in that particular instance as the front end planning has been done and the site is investor ready.
### Assessment levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QPP defined land use</th>
<th>Tourism examples</th>
<th>Tourist accommodation</th>
<th>Centre zones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker’s accommodation</td>
<td>Caretakers accommodation at a tourist attraction, for example, zoo</td>
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<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment facility</td>
<td>Nature-based attractions, walking tracks, seating, shelters, boardwalks, observation decks and bird hides</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and drink outlet</td>
<td>Café, restaurant, snack bar, take away</td>
<td>S, where less than 200m² and directly associated with a tourism development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Function facility</td>
<td>Wedding venue, conference centre</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home based business</td>
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<td>Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major sport, recreation and entertainment facility</td>
<td>Convention and exhibition centres, entertainment centres, sports stadiums and horse racing; casino</td>
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<td>Market</td>
<td>Souvenir and famers markets</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature-based tourism</td>
<td>Examples include environmentally responsible accommodation facilities, including lodges, cabins, huts and tended camps</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resort complex</td>
<td>Island resort, health and wellness resort</td>
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Assessment levels
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<tr>
<th>Legend</th>
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<th>I Impact Assessable</th>
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<td>S, where associated with a bone fide rural pursuit or nature-based tourism, that is, agricultural production, health and wellness, food production, wine manufacturing, etc. C otherwise</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Tourist attraction</strong></td>
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5.4

Tourism incentives planning scheme policy: A possible approach

Tourism as a land use is difficult to define, with developments taking many shapes and forms depending on the market and location.

A planning scheme policy is seen as the most dynamic and flexible planning scheme mechanism through which tourism incentives may be applied. By calling up such a policy in the strategic framework and overall outcomes of the relevant zones, the policy is given weight and can be applied where it is most relevant.

Planning scheme policy structure and examples

Although each council should consider their individual circumstances and policy priorities before drafting a planning scheme policy for tourism incentives, the following structure can be used as a guide during the drafting process:

- Introduction and purpose
- What is a tourism land use?
- Tourism place types
- Relationship between land use and place type
- Scope of incentives
- General eligibility criteria
- Application of incentives.

Introduction and purpose

The first section of the policy should include a brief background about the policy and its place within the planning scheme. It should also clearly state the intentions of the policy and what it hopes to achieve. It is up to council how much detail they provide. It could be as simple as a single statement, that is, ‘This policy seeks to provide incentives for tourism developments of an appropriate scale and type in the most suitable locations throughout (xx) LGA,’ or even a series of strategic, overarching objectives, such as:

1. ‘Encourage key investments in tourism infrastructure.
2. Increase tourism visitation and expenditure.’ …

Specific and targeted objectives specific to the context and policy position of the council are also recommended, that is:

1. ‘Encourage short-term accommodation development in the CBD.
2. Support sustainable ecotourism development in areas of high environmental and scenic amenity.
3. Encourage tourism-supportive elements in commercial and retail developments, that is, public showers and bathrooms, lockers, etc., where located near natural attractions, that is, the beach, etc. …’

Specific objectives like the ones listed above can really help to reinforce the relevance, applicability and exact scope of the policy, right at the very beginning of the document. This will ensure transparency and clarity from the get go.
What is a tourism land use?

This section of the policy should set out what the planning scheme considers to be a tourism land use. Again, this can be as simple or as complex as council would like to make it. For example, ‘The following defined land uses are further identified as tourism land uses: short-term accommodation facilities, theme parks …’ but could even go so far as to say, ‘commercial activities where 80% of the identified target market is tourists, that is, the Storey Bridge Climb in Brisbane …’

Tourism place types

In this section of the policy, council should identify, define and provide examples of tourism place types that are relevant to the local government area. For example, ‘Natural places are areas dominated by the natural environment. Beaches and reefs, mountains and forests are all examples of natural places. Natural places include national parks and other relatively undisturbed areas, but some privately owned land will have the same attributes. Often large areas including whole islands can be described as a natural place.’

Relationship between land use and place type

This section of the policy could comprise a matrix, identifying the tourism land uses that are considered suitable by council within the various tourism place types. Council may also decide to include an exclusionary statement that prohibits particular tourism developments in certain place types. This should be at council’s discretion.

Scope of incentives

This section of the policy should introduce the scope of incentives that are made available by the policy, within each of the three incentive categories. A short summary such as the one provided above would be suitable.

General eligibility criteria

This section is optional. Council may wish to specify general eligibility criteria for all tourism development that may be considering applying for an incentive, regardless of the incentive category. Additional eligibility criteria specific to the incentive category are to be included later in the policy.

Examples of possible general eligibility criteria are included below:

1. ‘The proposed development will provide a significant economic benefit to the wider community.’
2. ‘The proposed development will not adversely impact on the operation of any existing businesses in the surrounding locality or region.’
3. ‘The proposed development and investor are environmentally responsible.’
4. ‘The proposed development is consistent with the strategic framework of the planning scheme and overall outcomes of the relevant zone.’
5. ‘The proposed development will contribute to the long-term sustainability and growth of the tourism industry.’…
Sections 7, 8 and 9—Application of incentives

This is where detailed information about the application of yield incentives should be provided.

The application of the three incentive categories should be contained within separate sections of the policy. However, each section should contain similar information (detailed below), relevant to the particular incentives being offered.

Each incentive category should include eligibility criteria for the application of their particular range of incentives. The criteria can be set up in several ways:

1. Incentives may be granted to proposed developments, based on the simple fact that they are predominantly a tourism land use. In that instance, the eligibility criteria could simply specify that a certain percentage of the proposed development is a recognised tourism land use (defined earlier in the policy).

   For example, ‘The proposed development has designated a minimum of 75% of total gross floor area to an identified tourism land use.’ This could also be expanded to make reference to the place type, that is, ‘The proposed development is predominantly a tourism land use and is located in an appropriate place type for that land use.’

2. Incentives may be offered to those developments that offer elements above and beyond what is required by the scheme. For example, a hotel that offers public toilets and showers on the ground floor, free for use by tourists and visitors to a nearby natural attraction, such as the beach, may be offered additional gross floor area. Another example is an ecotourism resort that is seeking to undertake significant site rehabilitation works, where this has not already been mandated by the state or local government. Leniency may be afforded with regards to setbacks from built structures to vegetation, etc.

3. Incentives may also be offered on a sliding scale, combining options 1 and 2 above.

It is up to council to decide on the range of incentives they will offer and how they wish to structure their application, as well as how detailed their eligibility criteria should be. It is also up to council to decide whether or not to include an exclusionary statement to prohibit the use of particular incentives for specific tourism land uses or in particular place types.

The individual eligibility criteria should be matched up to the relevant incentives on offer. It is thought that the best way to present this section would be in the form of a table. Please see below for examples of eligibility criteria and incentives for each of the three incentive categories:
Yield Incentives
Eligibility Criteria:
The proposed tourism development will include the restoration of a heritage listed building of great significance to the history and amenity of the surrounding locality.

Incentive:
A 20% increase in gross floor area is permissible.

Decreasing Development Costs
Eligibility Criteria:
The proposed short-term accommodation is located in an activity centre and CBD place type.

Incentive:
15% decrease in car parking rates others applied under the planning scheme for the relevant zone or precinct.

Land Use Incentives
Eligibility Criteria:
The existing caravan park includes, at a minimum, a camping area with the capacity for 50 people, 20 van sites and 10 permanent caravans.

Incentive:
An ancillary retail tenancy less than 150m² is self assessable under the planning scheme.

Depending on the scope and specificity of the eligibility criteria and incentives on offer, council could also decide to list the incentives according to place type or tourism land use.
Part 6.0
Sustainable tourism development case studies

What better way to understand how to promote, encourage and support tourism development than to talk to people who have already made it happen?

A desktop analysis and, in some cases, site visits of existing, successful tourism developments from a variety of place types was invaluable in determining the critical success factors for tourism projects.

Understanding what makes these developments so successful has been essential for drafting comprehensive guidance for new planning scheme provisions that actively seek to encourage tourism development.
Binna Burra Mountain Lodge—a heritage listed eco-lodge and campsite within Lamington National Park in the Gold Coast hinterland.

**Needs of tourist**
Binna Burra attracts Brisbane-based couples and families with young children. The lodge has been operating since 1933. It is a pioneering Queensland tourism development and is a landmark in the surrounding area.

**Creates experience**
Binna Burra offers nature-based, adventure and recreation activities for its visitors. Accommodation includes camping, safari tents, cabins and luxurious sky lodges. Most staff are locals and there is a strong focus on the history of the lodge and the development of Binna Burra.

**Enhances setting**
The original cabins are built from local timber and hand carved wooden shingles. The newer sky lodges include stonework and timber with natural colours used integrate with the original buildings and the surroundings. Balconies and large windows take advantage of the hinterland views.

**In context**
Binna Burra is located on the edge of the World Heritage listed Lamington National Park, containing Australia’s largest area of pristine subtropical rainforest. The climate is characterised by frequent mist and significant rainfall and these conditions contribute to the character and experience of the place.

**Good process**
A masterplan for Binna Burra was approved in 2008 providing for the future development of tree houses and conference facilities over the next 15 years. Consultation with the local community informed the masterplanning process.

There is a strong focus on environmental protection at Binna Burra including reducing energy and water use across the lodge.

*Source: Interview with Karen Duncan*
Kingfisher Bay Resort, opened in 1992, is an ecotourism resort located on the world heritage listed Fraser Island.

**Needs of tourist**

Kingfisher Bay Resort attracts couples, families and groups from across Australia and internationally, marketing itself as Fraser Island’s ‘premier eco-resort.’ It provides tourists with the opportunity to explore a unique and remote location.

**Creates experience**

The resort offers fine dining, a range of accommodation, ranger-guided walks, water sports, fishing and Segway tours, alongside the natural attractions of the island. Guests are able to book the resort for weddings and other events, and educational adventures are offered to school groups.

**In context**

Kingfisher Bay Resort is a certified Green Travel Leader, identified by Ecotourism Australia as being a leader in responsible travel for over 10 years. The landscape planning and architectural design of the resort responds to the environment and includes energy and waste minimisation.

**Enhances setting**

Buildings have been constructed from timber, with the colours and roof projections inspired by the natural surrounds. Buildings have been established below the tree line, limited to two levels and built around mature trees. The resort buildings are floated on piles to reduce impacts on the dunal system. Views of the surrounding landscape are maximised by large windows and verandahs.

**Good process**

The 67 hectare site for the resort was purchased in 1986, with its proposed subdivision and development heavily opposed by the Fraser Island Defenders Organisation (FIDO), who appealed council’s decision to approve the development. The application process was supported by an environmental impact assessment process and took two years.

Sources: http://www.kingfisherbay.com; http://www.seefraserisland.com/about/fraser-island-history.html
The Mossman Gorge Centre was opened in June 2012.

**Needs of tourist**

The centre attracts Australian families, couples and international tourists, marketing itself as a ‘world class ecotourism visitor and interpretive centre.’ The project promotes Aboriginal heritage and the significance of the World Heritage listed Daintree Rainforest.

**Creates experience**

Visitors can take self-guided walks through the Daintree, or participate in guided walks led by local Indigenous staff. The centre includes a restaurant and Indigenous art gallery. Engagement with indigenous community and access to the rainforest is what makes this experience unique.

**Enhances setting**

The centre is built with natural materials and large glass windows. It has high ceilings and allows natural light to penetrate. The centre is well positioned in a valley and is set against the spectacular backdrop of the Mossman Gorge and dense rainforest.

**Good process**

Roy Gibson, an elder of the local Aboriginal community, wanted to create employment opportunities and to prevent further environmental harm to the gorge. The land for the centre was acquired by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) who sought the relevant approvals. Extensive public consultation was undertaken.

**In context**

The impact from high tourist traffic into the Mossman Gorge was a significant concern for the preservation of the natural environment. A shuttle bus service now takes tourists into the heart of the gorge, with parking available at the centre. The Mossman Gorge Centre offers a range of training and recruitment programs in the tourism and hospitality industries for Indigenous Australians and is staffed by local residents, 90% of whom are Indigenous.

Sources: Interview with Greg Erwin; http://www.mossmangorge.com.au
Kuranda Scenic Railway and Skyrail

Needs of tourist

Tourists who experience the Kuranda Scenic Railway and Skyrail include all ages and nationalities.

Creates experience

Together the Kuranda Scenic Railway and Skyrail offer nature, adventure and cultural heritage experiences. The combination of the historic railway with the modern Skyrail, spectacular views of the wet tropics, including Barron Falls, and access to Kuranda village (a tourist attraction itself), is what makes this experience so unique.

Enhances setting

The original carriages from the Kuranda Railway are still in use today, enhancing the authenticity of the experience.

Good process

The Kuranda Scenic Railway line was originally built as a means of getting supplies to miners in Herberton, who were routinely cut off from Cairns by extreme flooding. The Skyrail was opened in 1995 after seven years of planning controversy.

In context

The Kuranda Scenic Railway and Skyrail takes tourists up to 327 metres above ground level over dense rainforests. Visitors undertake boardwalk tours of the rainforest at stops along the Skyrail.

Source: http://www.ksr.com.au
Southern Ocean Lodge is a 21-suite luxury hotel in a dramatic coastal location on Kangaroo Island.

**Needs of tourist**

Southern Ocean Lodge attracts upmarket Australian and international tourists, and markets itself alongside other Australian ‘luxury lodges’. The project is an example of a prestigious tourism project helping to put a destination ‘on the map’. The developers have extensive experience in tourism including luxury travel.

**Creates experience**

The national parks, wildlife and cuisine of Kangaroo Island attract increasing numbers of visitors. Southern Ocean Lodge offers fine dining, luxury accommodation and a ‘wow factor’ location alongside the broader natural attractions of the Island.

**In context**

A hotel in a highly sensitive location and protection of rare coastal vegetation were major concerns. Southern Ocean Lodge is sandwiched between national parks and is relatively isolated. Large windows take in views of the surrounding landscape and ocean. The lodge has been designed to the height of existing ridge lines, stepped in accordance with the topography of the site.

**Enhances setting**

The design of the hotel positions visitors in the midst of a spectacular Southern Ocean setting.

**Good process**

It is reported that the development of Southern Ocean Lodge in the mid 2000s was controversial. The project was approved under a state government major developments process, and not by the Kangaroo Island Council. A development fund for environmental projects was a condition of clearing native vegetation.
Hartley’s Crocodile Adventures is a wildlife park and crocodile farm located on the edge of the world heritage listed Wet Tropics, in Wangetti Beach, north of Cairns.

**Needs of tourist**

Hartley’s Crocodile Adventures attracts Australian families and international tourists who are seeking an Australian wildlife experience. The park is an example of a tourist attraction that educates about the importance of conservation.

**Creates experience**

The adventure park includes self-guided wildlife discovery trails, crocodile farm tours, educational shows and feedings and lagoon cruises. The park caters for school groups and is located in proximity to other tourist attractions in Port Douglas and Cairns.

**In context**

The 29 hectare site was once degraded but has been restored through an ongoing revegetation and weed management program. Water quality is regularly tested and efficiently used throughout the park. The centre raises funds for the conservation of native wildlife and rehabilitation of natural habitat. The adventure park relocated to its current site in 2002 to provide better expansion opportunities and continues to grow.

**Enhances setting**

Hartley’s Crocodile Adventures is built around the natural habitats of the wildlife it exhibits. Timber boardwalks provide access throughout the site, with buildings and amenities constructed from timber.

**Good process**

Approval of the park’s relocation faced many challenges including two court cases. The approval, which took eight years to obtain, involved the rezoning of the site, which had been included in the Wet Tropics area. There was community and state government opposition to the park relocation, primarily in response to environmental and amenity issues.

Source: [http://www.crocodileadventures.com](http://www.crocodileadventures.com)
Mount Barney Lodge

Natural places

Mt Barney Lodge, located at the edge of Mt Barney National Park, provides a range of accommodation and adventure-style activities for tourists.
Mount Barney Lodge caters primarily for domestic families and groups looking for a nature-based holiday experience. The location of the lodge at the edge of Mt Barney National Park attracts those tourists interested in nature, relaxation and adventure-based activities. The lodge markets itself as ‘sharing our wilderness heritage’ and has a strong synergy with surrounding business owners, who also seek to protect and enhance the environmental values of the locality.

The lodge includes a range of accommodation, including homesteads, cabin-style accommodation and camping. Visitors can take guided or unguided walks through the national park, participate in abseiling and rock climbing sessions and children’s night adventure tours. As an ecotourism development, tourists are encouraged to be environmentally conscious during their stay, with regards to resource consumption and waste management.

The two homesteads at the lodge are Queenslander houses relocated from other sites. The design of these buildings means that they are responsive to hot weather. Minimal earthworks have been undertaken for their establishment. A proposed function facility will be constructed from recycled materials and materials found at the lodge. The owners of the lodge actively monitor the use of trails through the national park and encourage visitors to use those that are less degraded. They have a self-imposed limit on the capacity of visitors they will accommodate at any one time, to limit the impacts of the facility on the environmental values of the site.

The lodge buildings have been painted and restored to reflect their traditional Queenslander appearance, whilst being complementary to the surrounding landscape. The design of the new function facility will be inspired by the rare black cockatoo, a regular visitor at Mt Barney Lodge.

The proposed function facility has been approved for a federal grant and received preliminary support from council.

Sources: Interview with Tracey and Innes Larkin, owners
Spicers Peak Lodge attracts upmarket couples looking to reconnect and relax, travelling predominantly from Brisbane and the Gold Coast. It markets itself as one of only twelve branded ‘luxury lodges’ in Australia, with a guiding philosophy of creating an atmosphere and experiences of ‘relaxed luxury.’

Creates experience

Spicers Peak Lodge offers fine dining, luxury accommodation (including a day spa) and various activities that capitalise on the natural attractions of the adjoining nature refuge and surrounding national park. All twelve staff live on-site and create a personalised experience for guests, imparting the history of the lodge and surrounding property.

In context

The lodge overlooks Main Range National Park, the Great Dividing Range and Spicers Peak Nature Refuge. The owners of the lodge own 30% of all nature refuges in Queensland, with a driving focus on conservation and rehabilitation. Once a working potato farm, the site is now also used for cattle breeding. The lodge is accessed via a dirt road, which adds to the sense of remoteness.

Enhances setting

The lodge is located on a cleared plateau, providing guests with spectacular views of the surrounding Scenic Rim. Large windows throughout the lodge take advantage of these views, as does the positioning of the pool in the hillside. Natural timbers, stone and quality furnishings contribute to the luxury of the lodge and complement the surrounding landscape. Inspiration was taken from mountain lodges in New Zealand and the desire of the owners to showcase the unique landscape.

Good process

The lodge was opened in 2004. The approval process took approximately two years and was supported by the council and local community. Given the location of the site, consultation with national park officers was an important part of the process.

Sources: Leasa Harris (General Manager) and Jude Turner (owner)
Spicers Peak Lodge
Rural places

Spicers Peak Lodge is a luxury lodge providing accommodation for up to 26 guests, set above the rolling landscape of the Scenic Rim.
Mt Quincan Crater Retreat is a luxury cabin-style retreat in the Atherton Tablelands.

**Needs of tourist**

Mt Quincan Crater Retreat is marketed towards Australian couples seeking a relaxing holiday, in a secluded and private location. As an adult only retreat, the focus is on indulgence and capitalising on the views and ambience offered by the natural landscape surrounding the retreat.

**Creates experience**

The main focus of the retreat is on privacy and luxury accommodation. The retreat offers massages and includes walking tracks, crater discovery tracks and viewing platforms across the estate. Functions and events are often held at the retreat.

**In context**

The owners of the retreat continue to operate grazing on the property. Each cabin has been embellished with paintings depicting Quincan (Indigenous spiritual creatures) created by a contemporary Indigenous artist. The tree house style cabins have been designed using timber pole construction, to reduce potential impacts on the natural landscape and wildlife habitats below.

**Enhances setting**

Large windows provide views of the surrounding landscape.

**Good process**

The owners of the retreat grew up and lived in Cairns. The accommodation facility respects the historical nature of the site, its environmental values, the traditional use of the land and the traditional beliefs of the local Indigenous community.
Lillydale Farmstay
Rural places

Lillydale Farmstay is located in South East Queensland and offers accommodation and rural farming experiences for up to 25 guests. It is also a fully operational cattle farm.

Needs of tourist

It caters primarily for families with young children, who are looking to reconnect and spend time as a family. The farm experience and opportunity to interact with animals attracts local and international tourists. Strong relationships with other tourism operators nearby provide guests with a network of activities to choose from.

Creates experience

Lillydale Farmstay is a small-scale tourism operation offering activities to its guests across 300 acres, including horse riding, animal feeding, fishing, abseiling and bushwalking. The local Aboriginal community also conduct workshops and story telling sessions at the farmstay.

In context

The property has new koala corridors that have been created by the owners. The farmstay is considering an extension to attract more day tours and school groups.

Source: Interview with Bec Hardgrave

Enhances setting

Each room includes a private kitchenette, while communal barbeques, a small café, pool and children’s play equipment are also available to guests. The newest cabin has been designed to be wheelchair friendly (in accordance with council approvals).

Source: Interview with Bec Hardgrave
Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) is a large, private museum that opened in 2011. As well as its collections, MONA offers pavilions for short stays, a restaurant, brewery, café, winery, bars, library and—for committed visitors—a cinerarium.

In 2012, a well known guidebook publisher listed Hobart as one of its global top 10 cities to visit. This status was gained on the back of MONA. The museum presents a fresh, even confronting image which has done nothing to deter visitors and in fact has helped put it and the city on the tourism map.

MONA dispenses with many of the usual trimmings of art galleries. There are no labels on the walls, or windows. Visitors are invited to immerse themselves in the art, an experience aided by the accommodation and other supporting services and infrastructure.

The building is nearly completely built into the sandstone cliff of the peninsula on which it is located, in part to preserve the heritage setting of two existing houses on the site.

Access is by car, ferry, bus or bicycle.

Appreciation of the setting is encouraged by the passenger ferry access, contrasting the better-known Hobart character with the modern architecture and experience of the museum.

Source: http://www.mona.net.au
Limes Hotel is a 22 room boutique hotel and rooftop bar located in Fortitude Valley, which has been open since 2008.

**Needs of tourist**

Limes Hotel attracts corporate guests during the week, with entertainment-seekers frequenting the hotel on the weekend. The majority of guests are from Queensland, with few international travellers visiting the hotel.

**Creates experience**

Limes Hotel markets itself as a hidden urban retreat, a boutique hotel that offers personalised service, high-quality amenities and luxury complimentary gifts. It has a strong affinity with nearby restaurants and is located in the vibrant Fortitude Valley. The rooftop bar, which offers regular wine clubs and an open air movie theatre, is part of the unique experience offered by the hotel.

**In context**

The Limes Hotel is located on a narrow block and makes the most of the site. An option has been retained for a four storey extension. The hotel does not include any on-site parking, capitalising on nearby public transport, multi-storey car park and taxi services.

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*Source: Interview with Magnus Hojden (General Manager)*
Brisbane YHA
Town and City Centres

Brisbane YHA is a modern 373 bed hostel on the fringe of Brisbane CBD providing accommodation for individuals and groups.

Photo credit: Michael McKeown
Needs of tourist

Brisbane YHA caters for independent travellers of all ages and nationalities. It also has a growing business catering for groups including schools. The majority of travellers are looking for budget accommodation that is clean, safe and located near public transport, special events venues and other attractions.

Creates experience

Brisbane YHA is a large, well run and modern hostel. It offers excellent facilities, even including a rooftop pool and dining area. Many staff members are locals with knowledge about Brisbane and can advise guests on the best places to eat, be entertained and shop.

In context

The design of the buildings responds well to the subtropical climate of Brisbane, including simple things like windows which open and plenty of natural light. Brisbane YHA is close to regional and interstate rail and bus stations, and is a short walk from local centres and shops.

Enhances setting

The hostel offers various facilities, including numerous common rooms, a rooftop pool, ground floor restaurant, communal kitchen, lockers (for food storage) and internet facilities. Spectacular views of Brisbane are also available from the roof. Room sizes are adequate and include lockable cupboards for all guests. The buildings are designed to take advantage of the steeply sloping site.

Good process

Brisbane YHA was refurbished in 2009. One of the original two buildings was pulled down and completely rebuilt whilst the other was refurbished. The hostel remained operational throughout the process.

Source: Interview with Peter Miller (Manager)
The two towers of the Hilton Hotel comprise 169 hotel rooms, 250 residences and a retail precinct overlooking the beaches of Surfers Paradise.

**Needs of tourist**

The Hilton Hotel attracts families, couples, business people and international tourists. It markets itself as a luxury accommodation brand that is perfectly positioned to take advantage of the dining, adventure, recreation and entertainment opportunities available on the Gold Coast.

**Creates experience**

The Hilton Hotel is located in the heart of Surfers Paradise. The location affords each guest a spectacular view of the coast and surrounding hinterland. The hotel itself offers fine dining, luxury accommodation, spa treatments and other recreation facilities, in addition to the range of activities and experiences offered by the Gold Coast.

**Enhances setting**

The curved façade and simple lines of both towers are a classic example of the sleek, modern hotels that are so iconic of the Gold Coast. Both towers are identified as individual, yet distinctively related buildings that share a ‘vertical dialogue’. The different building plates emphasise particular components of the towers, including the base retail area. The large windows of each guest room provide views of the coastline and surrounding developments.

**Good process**

The application for the Hilton Hotel was supported by council for the economic and community benefit that the brand and scale of development would contribute to the Gold Coast. An existing planning scheme policy that supports incentives ensured that council processes were targeted, transparent and visible to the community and key stakeholders, who largely supported the development.

The Emporium Hotel is a five star hotel located in a mixed use precinct in the heart of Fortitude Valley that was opened in 2007.

**Needs of tourist**

The hotel attracts corporate guests and leisure seekers. The hotel markets itself as a boutique, service-focused hotel that creates ‘exquisite stays’ for its guests.

**Creates experience**

The Emporium Hotel creates a feeling of relaxation, luxury and indulgence. The level of service, quality amenities, fixtures and fittings and overall design of the hotel all contribute to this atmosphere. The hotel provides excellent facilities which are a major attraction for visitors and includes a cocktail bar, pool, gym, sauna, patisserie and conference centre.

The Emporium Hotel also capitalises on its premium location within Fortitude Valley and proximity to restaurants, retail, commercial and entertainment opportunities.

**In context**

The Emporium Hotel has a strong environmental and social responsibility focus and has established a detailed waste management strategy. The design of the hotel is also responsive to the subtropical climate. Staff members have local knowledge, with trainee and work experience opportunities also available. The Emporium Hotel includes basement parking for private cars and is also readily accessible by train or bus.

**Enhances setting**

The Emporium Hotel was one of the original urban renewal projects in Fortitude Valley, converting an old Brisbane City Council bus depot into a mixed use precinct that is now considered the gateway to the valley. The hotel engages with the street and surrounding urban environment; the large, open lobby welcomes guests and interfaces well with the adjoining commercial, retail and restaurant land uses. The frangipani features in every aspect of the hotel, as the key inspiration and design feature for the overall precinct and a reference to its Queensland setting.

**Good process**

The Emporium Hotel formed part of a mixed use precinct project and was one of the first projects of its kind in Brisbane.

*Source: Interview with Angela Loucaides (Marketing Manager)*
The Story Bridge Adventure Climb offers tourists the opportunity to climb an historic Brisbane icon, commencing operations in 2005.

**Needs of tourist**

The Story Bridge Adventure Climb attracts tourists from Brisbane and across Queensland, as well as some interstate and international visitors. The bridge offers an adventure experience to anyone over 10 years of age.

**Creates experience**

Climbers are provided with views of Brisbane and a history of the bridge and the city as they climb. It is one of only three bridges across the world that is available to the public to climb. It is also the only bridge that climbers are permitted to abseil off.

**In context**

The administration centre is accessible via public transport (ferry) and car. Limited car parking and on-street parking is available near the climb administration centre. The bridge is also located in proximity to several dining and accommodation opportunities.

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**Enhances setting**

The Storey Bridge has architectural, engineering and historical values. The administration centre (base headquarters) is located near the base of the bridge. It includes change rooms, a safety briefing area and waiting area for family and friends.

**Good process**

Part of the application process for the administration centre involved community consultation and liaison with Heritage Queensland. One objection was made to the proposed operation and the application went to the courts before being approved.

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*Sources: http://www.storybridgeadventureclimb.com.au; http://www.yourbrisbanepastandpresent.com; Paul Lewin (CEO)*

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*Figure ground diagram*
Portside Cruise Terminal, part of a waterfront urban redevelopment project, is a passenger cruise ship terminal that can handle 2,000 passengers at one berthing.

Needs of tourist

Tourists visiting the terminal are mainly embarking cruise ship passengers and their family and friends. Cruises from Brisbane attract a local market, with nearly 80% of passengers coming from Queensland.

Creates experience

Portside is the only privately owned cruise terminal in Australia. Brisbane’s location allows tourists to visit three Pacific islands within seven days, a voyage that other capital city ports in Australia cannot offer. The adjoining shopping, leisure and residential precinct highlights the ongoing urbanisation process of this part of the Brisbane River.

Enhances setting

Portside is a contemporary urban place successfully integrating city uses and buildings with a large piece of tourism infrastructure. Environmental considerations did not feature heavily in the design.

Good process

The inclusion of the cruise terminal in the Portside development was a condition of the development approval for the precinct. A staged approach was used for the construction of both the residential apartments and terminal complex. The flexible design of the departure and arrivals ramp allows for ships to berth in the best location at the time, whilst allowing for the safe journey of passengers. However, windows of the residential apartments facing the terminal are close to the departure and arrivals ramp for passengers. The original terminal building was soon found to be too small.

Source: Matthew Osborne
The XXXX Ale House, opened to the public in 2003, is a brewery tour experience in the heart of Brisbane.

Needs of tourist

The XXXX Ale House attracts beer lovers and businesses looking to provide a location for corporate events. The brewery markets itself as being an entertainment venue that offers an educational experience of an Australian icon.

Creates experience

The Castlemaine Perkins Brewery was first established in 1878 and has been fully restored as a heritage-listed icon of Brisbane. The brewery offers tours, lunchtime dining and function facilities. The brewery tours focus on the 135 year history of the ale house, as well as teaching guests about how beer is made and how to pour the perfect beer.

In context

The XXXX Brewery is an important part of Brisbane’s history and the experiences offered at the brewery highlight the significant role it has played in the economy. The brewery is accessible via public transport and car.

Enhances setting

The XXXX Brewery is a fully functional brewery. As such, the XXXX Ale House experience has been designed around the requirements of operations and machinery. The brick façade of the building has been maintained and restored to its original condition. Function areas have been also been retrofitted.
Appendix A

Other tourism features of relevance to local government planning

Events and tourism

Events and tourism go hand in hand, acting as major or short-term attractions to visitors. Events can sometimes put pressure on local infrastructure which can create challenges for local communities.

Events should be consistent with the type of tourism in the locality and ensuring shared community goals are identified and worked towards.

Events are a good way for locals and tourists to enjoy the same attractions, and can be a rare opportunity for locals to access and use tourism infrastructure which may not normally be open to non-guests.

Events also help to promote a destination and its tourism assets; tend to generate higher per visitor expenditure which represents an important economic generator for an area and are an excellent way to generate visitation and expenditure in an area in low season and foster use of otherwise under-utilised tourism assets at these places.

Nature-based tourism and eco-tourism

Nature-based tourism and ecotourism are two closely related areas of tourism with growing importance. Tourism Western Australia suggests the following definitive characteristics for nature-based tourism:

• nature-based tourism includes a range of tourism experiences, such as adventure tourism, ecotourism and aspects of cultural and rural tourism (such as farmstays).

The Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2020 (Queensland Government, 2013) defines ecotourism as encompassing:

• a broad spectrum of environmentally responsible activities that increase visitor appreciation, develop a better understanding of the natural and cultural heritage and are carefully managed to be ecologically, economically and socially sustainable. Ecotourism Australia defines ecotourism as ‘ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation.’ Ecotourism requires tourism to contribute to the well-being of the natural areas and local communities in which they operate, and to educate and inform visitors.

Ecotourism is a growing part of the tourism industry and experience. Queensland's bountiful natural places make the state well placed to benefit from interest in ecotourism.

Specific strategies and actions for ecotourism in the Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2020 focus on five strategic areas:

• deliver world class experience
• facilitate best practice and innovation
• raise the profile of Queensland's ecotourism experiences
• foster thriving operators
• embrace a partnership approach between the tourism industry, government and community.
Drive tourism

DTESB’s drive tourism strategy, the *Queensland Drive Tourism Strategy 2013–2015*, suggests several factors to consider when seeking promoting drive tourism. Many of these require local government support and implementation, often beyond the role of the planning department. They include:

- meeting consumer needs (well informed, service quality)
- road quality, safety and maintenance (capacity, flood immunity, driver education and road safety, roadside rest areas, user conflicts)
- signage (maintain aesthetics, easy and accessible)
- roadside infrastructure (greater investment in rest areas)—enhance experience
- accommodation and facilities (small-scale facilities for drive visitors on farms and other land use types, caravan park development project, camping, raise awareness of appropriate behaviours and required permits)
- visitor information and technology applications (access information on events and facilities)
- provide suitable accommodation and services (facilities). (DTESB, 2012b)

Scenic Amenity

In Queensland, ‘scenic amenity’ has received only occasional prominence in planning, but the importance of scenic amenity to tourism should not be underestimated. Enjoyment of scenic amenity can be supported in many ways, from providing access to lookouts, to careful road design, or by celebrating historic or significant urban landscapes.

There are many ways by which scenic amenity values may be identified, protected and integrated into tourism experiences.

- Locate and protect public access to viewing locations.
- Publish promotional material to communicate the location of scenic locations.
- Implement wayfinding strategies (directional signage from main transport routes), considering different languages, abilities and ages.
- Provide additional facilities at or near viewpoints to increase useability, appeal, community education and further the multipurpose nature of the site.
- Ensure all necessary safety standards are met.
- Identify and develop a network of viewing locations, linked by scenic travel routes and visually significant scenic corridors along transport networks.
- Provide clear policies that discourage or manage built elements to protect scenic amenity.
- Fragmentation of rural production areas should be discouraged (unless supported by scenic assessments).
- Tourism prospers in areas where the urban design aesthetics of the built environment are recognised as essential to building community. This extends to public art, architecture and heritage, which can help create meaningful connections between people and places.
- Visual design treatments can be highly effective, such as entrance roads as the ‘gateway’ to a town.
Appendix B

Common problems and tensions in tourism planning

While researching this document, some common problems and tensions in tourism planning were identified. Planners may wish to inform themselves of these problems to support their own knowledge, their planning and development assessment work.

Common problems for strategic planning

1. Tourism assets and the aspirations for future tourism development need to be part of economic development strategies.
2. It is often difficult to determine land use elements from tourism developments in strategic economic documents.
3. There is an identified need to build capacity and enhance existing levels of awareness and appreciation of tourism, and how to plan for it, amongst local government planners and other relevant professionals.
4. Existing tourism information, plans and strategies are often disjointed and difficult to use statutorily.
5. Councils have an essential role to play in facilitating appropriate tourism development and associated services and facilities.
6. Rural, natural and urban areas have very different attributes and challenges—they must be treated individually. Context is key.
7. Allocating responsibility for infrastructure provision through fair apportionment processes, whilst facilitating the bigger development picture.
8. Managing impacts on tourism developments from other activities. For example, dredging impacts on Great Barrier Reef tourism operators.
9. Unlike other assets, such as resources, tourism is difficult to quantify.
10. Attempts to replicate successful tourism projects in inappropriate locations reflects badly on tourism—location is key.
11. Some land uses are not explicitly limited to being tourism activities. The categorisation of tourism land uses depends largely on the context and terminology must be clear to avoid confusion.
12. Planning often focuses on the long term and it needs to recognise and understand that tourism primarily responds to market changes which are much quicker.
13. A lack of cross agency co-operation and dialogue can result in conflicting priorities, extended timeframes and duplication of assessment processes.
14. There is often a lack of understanding about planning for tourism developments, particularly from councils and the public.
15. Tourism is not always supported or considered in strategic planning processes and resultant plans and strategies.

Common problems for development assessment

1. Pre-feasibility work needs to be undertaken. Public money is often invested in business plans with no prior feasibility work being undertaken.
2. Pre-lodgement discussions between council and the applicant are necessary to avoid wasting time, money and resources in the long term.
3. There are often a number of hoops to go through before a fast tracking process can be entered, often reducing its effectiveness.
4. Tourism developments predominantly include mixed or multiple uses on one site, which can be difficult for council to interpret or understand when they often expect single land uses only.
5. Tensions and amenity impacts (for example, noise and odour) can often arise between tourism and rural and agricultural land uses.
6. The potential for encroachment issues and areas transitioning to tourism as the dominant land use or activity.

7. Infrastructure charges and associated costs can be a significant issue for tourism developments, particularly car parking requirements.

8. Tourism projects typically go through quite a reactive process, with developers and communities often having opposing views.

9. The lack of communication between state and local agencies can lead to multiple regulators and the duplication of referrals. Clear direction on what referrals are required is also necessary.

10. Approval conditions for tourism developments are often inappropriate and not relevant to the context. This is because planning schemes and/or council may not be flexible enough to amend conditions to make them relevant to the place and setting. Furthermore, state and federal level legislation often mandate certain provisions, e.g. wheelchair access, that are simply not appropriate for the land use and activities that are proposed.

11. Local law licenses and permits can be overwhelming, confusing and not always well explained or obvious.

12. The planning system does not know how to respond to staged development from an entrepreneurial perspective. Not all stages are or rather, can, be planned for at the beginning of a tourism development. They often emerge over time as the market, climate and other drivers change.

13. Extended timeframes and costs to developers as a result of all of the above.
References and further reading


Council of Mayors (SEQ) and Queensland Government (Department of Local Government and Planning) (DLGP) (2011), Next Generation Planning: A handbook for planners, designers and developers in South East Queensland, Council of Mayors (SEQ), Brisbane.


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- Mt Barney Lodge
- Binna Burra Mountain Lodge
- Spicers Peak Lodge

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