



**SOUTH BURNETT  
REGIONAL COUNCIL**

# What is a Planning Scheme

ECM: 3188805  
Version 1 – August 2024

This factsheet provides information about the purpose of a planning scheme and provides tips on how to use it to find out how you may appropriately develop land. This information on this factsheet is a guide only.

## What is a planning scheme?

A planning scheme is the document a local government uses to inform the public and other levels of government how it plans to manage development and growth in its regions, and in the longer-term respond to change.

Planning schemes are both:

- a policy document, setting out the long-term strategic vision for the local government area (typically about 20 years); and
- a legal document which sets out rules for regulating development and criteria for assessing development applications.

Planning schemes also include:

- the localised expression of state and regional planning policies; and
- planning for major local government infrastructure networks.

Planning schemes are written, adopted, and applied under the *Planning Act 2016* ('Act'). The Act also provides the framework for Queensland's planning system which is performance-based, applicant-driven and established through a hierarchy of planning instruments. These factors influence, and in some respects prescribe, the content and layout of planning schemes.

Refer to the Queensland Government's [Planning Framework](#) website for more general information about Queensland's planning framework.

## What is development?

In Queensland, development includes:

- making a material change of use of premises;
- reconfiguring a lot;
- carrying out building work;
- carrying out plumbing and drainage work;
- carrying out operational work.

## Why does Council have a planning Scheme?

Council has a lawful obligation under the Act, to have a planning scheme and to review it every 10 years.

A planning scheme allows the community and Council to make informed decisions about what development will be appropriately managed. It provides a framework for:

- making consistent, transparent, and accountable decisions; and
- making decisions which contribute to, and do not detract from, achieving a shared longer-term vision for our region.

From an economic development perspective, a planning scheme can offer policy indications to the property and development markets, as to the form and nature of development that would be positively received in the region to support and stimulate growth in various contexts.

## What does a planning scheme contain?

The South Burnett Planning Scheme 2017 v1.4 is similar in structure to most planning schemes in Queensland. The content of the planning scheme is set out in the following order:

<b>Part 1</b>	Introductory and administrative matters about the planning scheme.
<b>Part 2</b>	Statements about how the planning scheme integrates and interacts with state planning instruments.
<b>Part 3</b>	Describes the 20 years strategic vision for the South Burnett region.
<b>Part 4</b>	The local government infrastructure plan (LGIP) – a separately-made plan for local infrastructure networks (for example roads, water, sewerage, parks) which is published as part of a planning scheme.
<b>Part 5</b>	The categories of assessment and development for each type of development in each zone and overlay area – often called tables of assessment.
<b>Part 6</b>	Zone codes.
<b>Part 7</b>	Overlay codes.
<b>Part 8</b>	Development and use codes.
<b>Schedule 1</b>	Use and administrative definitions.
<b>Schedule 2</b>	Planning scheme mapping (strategic framework, zone and overlay mapping).
<b>Schedule 3</b>	LGIP schedules and mapping.
<b>Schedule 4</b>	Registers of certain decisions required to be noted in a planning scheme under the <i>Planning Act 2016</i> (Qld).
<b>Schedule 5</b>	Register of infrastructure designations affecting the region.
<b>Schedule 6</b>	Planning scheme policies.
<b>Appendices</b>	Glossary and table of amendments.

### What is the hierarchy of planning instruments?

A planning scheme is only one (1) of the documents which manage and regulate development within Queensland's planning system. There are other types of plans and planning instruments which sit separately from and may override a planning scheme.

These include the *Planning Regulation 2017* ('Regulation'), various state planning instruments and the following which council may be involved in making:

- Temporary Local Planning Instruments (TLPis); and

- Variation approvals – a type of development approval that varies the effect of the planning scheme over certain stated premises.

### What are the categories of development?

There are three (3) categories of development:

- **Prohibited** - prohibited development is the type of development that is not permitted under any circumstances (for example a proposal to build a childcare centre on contaminated land). Only the State can prohibit development. The Regulation establishes which development is prohibited.
- **Accepted** – accepted development does not require an application or an approval, but in some instances the proposal must meet certain stage requirements in order to be treated as accepted development (referred to as accepted subject to requirements). Accepted development is generally simple, low risk and completely compatible with the planning intentions for an area – which is why a development approval is not required.
- **Assessable** – assessable development is development that requires the applicant to submit an application for assessment and decision by an assessment manager.

### What categories of assessment are for assessable development?

There are two (2) categories of assessable development:

- **Code assessable** – code assessment helps deliver expected development without undue delay. Public notification is not required. Code assessable applications are assessed against the relevant assessment benchmarks set out in the planning scheme and/or Regulation (often contained in specified codes). Where the application meets the set criteria, it will be approved. If it does not meet some criteria, that part of the application can be refused or approved with conditions; and
- **Impact assessable:** impact assessable applications are assessed against the entire planning scheme. The applicant is required to carry out public notification about the development proposal. The community can provide feedback about the impact (good and bad) of the proposed development during the public notification process. This feedback is considered when assessing and deciding the application. A person who makes a submission during public notification process can appeal any decision made by the assessment manager.

## **How to read the planning scheme – How do I know what category of development or assessment will apply to my proposed development?**

To some extent, how you approach reading a planning scheme depends on your purpose for consulting it.

If you are in pre-proposal or speculative stage of enquiry, you may wish to start by reading the strategic vision (part 3) and understanding the existing and planned trunk infrastructure networks (part 4), in conjunction with the supporting mapping.

If you have a development proposal in mind, relating to specific land, then the following approach to reading the planning scheme may be most informative.

This guidance (Appendix A) does not substitute for reading all parts of the planning scheme. the contents of Part 1, Part 2 and the interpretation rules in Part 5 are also of vital importance in reading and correctly interpreting the content of the planning scheme. There may also be other documents which override or apply in addition to the planning scheme, to determine the applicable category of development and/or assessment for a particular proposal.

For example – if the proposal involves clearing of native vegetation, the category of assessment and assessment benchmarks for that aspect of development are prescribed by the Regulation, not the planning scheme. Other times there may be applicable assessment benchmarks in the planning scheme and in the State planning instrument.

### **Further Information?**

If you require further information in relation to what a planning scheme is, or would like to speak to a Council officer, please contact Council via one of the following methods:

- ✉ South Burnett Regional Council  
PO Box 336  
KINGAROY QLD 4610
- ☎ (07) 4189 9100
- @ [info@sbrc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@sbrc.qld.gov.au)
- 👤 Visiting a Customer Service Centre

# Appendix A

