

Establishing and Operating a Caravan Park or Camping Ground

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This factsheet provides information about establishing and operating a caravan park or camping ground.

How does the planning scheme deal with caravan parks and camping grounds?

Council's Planning Scheme 2017 v2.0 ('Planning Scheme') guides how land can be used and developed. Land use terms and definitions in planning schemes are consistent across Queensland.

Caravan parks, camping grounds and holiday cabins usually fall into the tourist park use, defined as:

Use of premises for:

- holiday accommodation in caravans, self-contained cabins, tents, or other similar structures; or
- amenity facilities, a food and drink outlet, a manager's residence, offices, recreation facilities for the use of occupants and their visitors, or staff accommodation, if the use is ancillary to the use in paragraph (a).

The planning scheme requires a material change of use for a tourist park an impact assessable development across all zones, including rural and urban/residential zones.

Do I need planning approval?

A land use which is accepted development or accepted development subject to maintaining compliance with certain specified requirements does not require a development application to be made and approval for the use (planning approval).

A land use which is assessable development (code assessable or impact assessable) requires a development application to be made and approved before the use can commence.

As a material change of use for a tourist park is an impact assessable development in all instances under the Planning Scheme, to establish a new tourist park or to expand an existing tourist park will require a development approval.

The development application process for impact assessable development, includes public notification of the development proposal and the opportunity for the public to make submissions. In addition to the applicant, submitters also have the right to appeal Council's decision on the development application.

Do I need a planning approval to have occupied caravan/s and camping on my property?

If the use of caravan/s or camping on the property is a temporary use or ancillary to an existing lawful use, then it will likely not amount to development and as a result, will not require a planning approval.

If the land is used to accommodate occupied caravan/s or for camping on a temporary, non-permanent basis and does not involve the construction of any permanent buildings or structures that is likely a temporary use. For example, if you and your family, friends, or invited guests periodically camp or stay in a caravan free of charge on the property for short, non-consecutive periods of time a planning approval will not be required.

If the land has an existing dwelling house established on it or is used for rural activities and the use of caravan/s or camping on the premises is connected with the existing residential or rural use of the land, they may be considered ancillary to the existing lawful use. This does not constitute a material change of use and as long as it meets any conditions of the existing lawful use of the land. This does not require planning approval (for example, a stock camp directly associated with rural activities being undertaken on the property or a caravan which is used in connection with the dwelling house and uses water supply, electricity connection, wastewater and effluent disposal systems and rubbish disposal methods for the house) are typically ancillary to the existing use.

Alternatively, it may fall into one of the other defined uses in the Planning Scheme, such as relocatable home park or nature-based tourism. Relocatable home park is defined as an impact assessable development in the rural and urban zones. Nature based tourism involves accommodation for the appreciation, conservation or interpretation of significant environmental areas and is impact assessable in urban zones and code assessable in the rural zone.

If the use involves caravans and/or camping as the means of accommodation, it is unlikely to meet the use definition of short-term accommodation. In some circumstances, providing short term accommodation on rural zoned land (such as farm stay style accommodation rooms) can be accepted development (no planning approval required) or code assessable development (planning approval required but no public notification as part of the application process).

How long will it take to obtain a decision?

The processing time for a development application can vary, but typically takes three (3) to four (4) months. It may take longer if further information is required to demonstrate a development proposal complies with the Planning Scheme or if public submissions are made about an impact assessable development application.

What fees and charges apply?

The application fee payable for making a development application depends on the category of assessment (code assessable or impact assessable). Some development approvals also attract infrastructure charges. You can request a pre-lodgement meeting with Council's Planning branch to discuss application requirements and fees and charges relevant to your proposal.

If approved, what conditions typically apply?

Conditions of approval will depend on the scale, nature, and location of the proposed development. Conditions may relate to matters including but not limited to:

- infrastructure (for example roads, access);
- services (for example water, sewerage, waste disposal, telecommunication, electricity, facilities);
- landscaping;
- screening;
- amenity and environmental controls;
- stormwater;
- vehicle parking;
- overlays (for example natural hazards); and
- number of camp sites or number of occupants.

Does Council provide any incentives to developers?

A range of discounts for infrastructure charges are available. View the Development Incentives factsheet to find out the eligibility criteria.

How long does a development approval (planning approval) last?

Different currency periods apply to different types of development and several factors can impact the duration of a currency period.

Unless a different currency period is specified in the decision issued (for example by Council, a referral agency, or the court) in response to a development application, the currency periods are typically in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016*:

- six (6) years for a material change of use (such as to establish or expand a tourist park use);
- four (4) years for reconfiguring a lot (other than Boundary Realignment);
- one (1) year for reconfiguring a lot (Boundary Realignment);
- two (2) years for all other development approvals.

If your development is not completed within the currency period (in the case of a material change of use, this means the conditions of the approval), your approval will lapse. If an approval lapses, a new development application will need to be lodged, including payment of relevant application fees, and approved before proceeding with the proposed development.

Before an approval lapses, you can apply to extend the current period. Extensions are granted at the discretion of Council having regard to all relevant matters.

What are the local law requirements for caravan parks and camping grounds?

Council regulates caravan parks and camping grounds to ensure that they comply with the [Subordinate Local Law 1.6](#) (Operation of Camping Grounds) 2011 and [Subordinate Local Law 1.8](#) (Operation of Caravan park) 2011.

To operate a caravan park or camping ground, you will be required to obtain a local law Caravan Park/Camping Ground permit.

How do I apply for a local law approval?

To obtain local law approval, applicants are required to complete and submit the Caravan Park/Camping Ground Permit Application form. This form is available on Council's website and should be accompanied with:

- plans and other required details (as outlined in the Subordinate Local Law 1.6 or Subordinate Local Law 1.8);
- a copy of all planning, building and plumbing approvals required for the facility; and
- payment of the application fee.

What other criteria is taken into consideration when granting a local law permit?

The operation of a caravan park and camping ground must lawfully be conducted on the premises.

The operation of the caravan park or camping ground must not produce:

- a) environmental harm;
- b) environmental nuisance;
- c) inconvenience or annoyance to the occupiers of any adjoining land; or
- d) a risk to public health.

All facilities at the caravan park or camping ground must be:

- a) of an acceptable standard;
- b) able to be brought to an acceptable standard; or
- c) for use by occupants.

How long does the local law permit last?

Local law permits ensure the activity is maintained at a level to reduce any public environmental risk. Facilities require payment of a renewal fee and an inspection annually to ensure they are maintained in a clean hygienic condition and that they are providing appropriate facilities.

What other Council approvals are required to establish or expand a caravan park or camping ground?

Other Council approvals required will depend on the work/s you need to undertake to be suitably equipped and to comply with any conditions of relevant planning and local law approvals. Some examples of other approvals which may be required include:

- plumbing approval – if you are installing or altering plumbing and drainage for amenities;
- building approval – if you are constructing or renovating any buildings or structures;
- trade waste approval – if there is discharge of trade waste; or
- food license – if you intend to provide food.

When do caravan and camping related activities not require Council approval?

You do not require approvals or permits for the following:

- for an unoccupied caravan lawfully parked on a road (not overstaying any stipulated time limit), holding yard or on the premises of the owner of the caravan;
- camping on a temporary basis at a rural or residential property by a family group at the invitation of the resident (free of charge); or
- camping of organisations, including Scouts Australia, Guides Australia, Army/Navy/Air Force Cadets, Boys & Girls Brigade, sporting clubs, or schools, on private property.

Further Information

For further information in relation to establishing a caravan park or camping ground, 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
- 👤 Visiting a Customer Service Centre

Table 1 – Overview of Planning Scheme Requirements

Use	Definition	Examples	Category of assessment under the Planning Scheme
Tourist Park	Means use of premises for - a) holiday accommodation in caravans, self-contained cabins, tents, or other similar structures; or b) amenity facilities, a food and drink outlet, a manager’s office, recreation facilities for the use of occupants and their visitors, or staff accommodation, if the use is ancillary to the use in paragraph (a).	Camping ground, caravan park, holiday cabins.	Material change of use development application (impact assessable all zones). Application fees vary depending on the proposed number of sites. Refer to the Fees and Charges on Council’s website.
Nature-based Tourism	Means the use of a premises for a tourism activity, including accommodation for tourists, for the appreciation, conservation, or interpretation of - a) an area of environmental, cultural or heritage value; or b) a local ecosystem; or c) the natural environment.	Environmentally responsible accommodation facilities including lodges, cabins, huts, and tented camps.	Material change of use development application (impact assessable in all zones, except the Environmental Management, Conservation & Rural Zone where the use is code assessable). Application fees apply. Refer to the Fees and Charges on Council’s website.
Relocatable home park	Means the use of premises for - a) relocatable dwellings for long-term residential accommodation; or b) amenity facilities, food and drink outlets, a manager’s residence, or recreation facilities for the exclusive use of residents, if the use is ancillary to the use in paragraph (a).		Material change of use development application (impact assessable all zones). Application fees apply. Refer to the Fees and Charges on Council’s website.
Short term accommodation (farm stay)	Means the use of premises for - a) providing accommodation of less than three (3) consecutive months to tourists or travellers; or b) a manager’s residence, office, or recreation facilities for the exclusive use of guests, if they use is ancillary to the use in subparagraph (a); but does not include a hotel, nature-based tourism, resort complex or tourist park.	Short-term accommodation uses include motel, backpacker’s accommodation, cabins, serviced apartments, hotel but in the context of this table relates to a farm stay.	Accepted development in the Rural Zone if using up to five (5) rooms in an existing dwelling house or other accommodation facility on the same site. A use involving caravans and camping are unlikely to fall within this definition.
Temporary use	Means a use that - a) is carried out on a non-permanent basis; and b) does not involve the construction of, or significant changes to, permanent buildings or structures.	School fetes, travelling circus, promotional activities.	A one-off event that is not intended to be repeated is likely to be considered as a temporary use. A use that needs permanent buildings or infrastructure would not be considered temporary.