



## USER GUIDE - RURAL TOURISM USES

This user guide provides information on how the [Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017](#) (planning scheme) applies to rural tourism uses and covers:

- the importance of rural tourism in the Mackay region,
- how development is defined in the planning scheme,
- whether an application to Council is required,
- ancillary activity limits, and
- how to make a planning enquiry.

The planning scheme facilitates the establishment of rural tourism uses (such as tourist accommodation, tourist attractions and making agri-products), including supporting ancillary commercial activities, in rural areas, where these uses and activities:

- are small-scale, low intensity and fit in visually with the surrounding landscape,
- do not compromise the role and function of commercial centres or townships,
- do not further fragment Rural zoned land or diminish the productive capacity of agricultural land, and
- maintain the amenity of surrounding residents.

In most circumstances, a development application for rural tourism uses will be required to be submitted to Council for assessment against the planning scheme.

### RURAL TOURISM IN THE MACKAY REGION

Rural tourism, including agritourism, is an emerging growth industry in Queensland. Council understands the importance of facilitating rural tourism, and tourism in general, in the region. Enabling rural tourism uses will:

- diversify and complement the region's range of tourism products,
- strengthen the region's attraction as a tourist destination of choice,
- increase visitor numbers and extend overnight stays,
- allow agricultural industry / businesses to diversify, prosper, and showcase local produce,
- contribute to the regional economy,
- support rural communities and townships,
- support projects like the Pioneer Valley mountain bike trails, and initiatives like farmers markets.

The planning scheme, alongside a range of Council initiatives to support tourism, sets the planning framework to facilitate rural tourism uses.

### DEFINING THE USE / ACTIVITY

Rural tourism uses include the following land uses and activities in the Rural zone - see Schedule 1 of the planning scheme for the relevant land use definition or administrative term.

Land uses	Activities
<b>Tourist attraction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adventure tourism</li> <li>Farm based tourism</li> <li>Food tourism</li> </ul>
<b>Short-term accommodation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farm stay</li> </ul>
<b>Low impact industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brewery</li> <li>Coffee roasting</li> <li>Distilling alcohol</li> </ul>
<b>Nature-based tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cabins / huts</li> <li>Eco-accommodation</li> <li>Glamping</li> <li>Self-contained RV grounds</li> </ul>
<b>Tourist park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>caravan park</li> <li>camping</li> <li>Self-contained RV grounds (as an extension)</li> </ul>

### IS A DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NEEDED?

In most circumstances, the level of assessment for the uses and activities mentioned in the table above, except for RV grounds with 10 or less sites (refer to [RV grounds](#) on Council's website), will be code assessment. This means that a development application will need to be submitted to Council for assessment against the following planning scheme codes:

- Rural zone code
- Industry activities code (if applying for low impact industry)
- Nature-based tourism code (if applying for nature-based tourism)
- Short-term accommodation code (if applying for farm stay)
- Tourist park code (if applying for tourist park)
- General development requirements code
- relevant overlay codes where identified - for example, Agricultural land overlay code - see [MADI](#) for mapping.

### ANCILLARY ACTIVITIES

Rural tourism uses may be supported by ancillary buildings or commercial activities like bar, food and drink outlet or shop, to further enhance the tourist experience. Ancillary activities must be subordinate to, and have a direct relationship with, a rural tourism use. These ancillary uses must also utilise produce grown on the premises or products made from produce grown on the premises.

Ancillary activities have the following maximum gross floor area (GFA) limits to ensure they are small-scale and do not compromise the role and function of commercial centres or townships:

- bar - 100m<sup>2</sup>
- food and drink outlet - 100m<sup>2</sup>
- shop - 50m<sup>2</sup>
- packing / storage building - 150m<sup>2</sup>
- building associated with tourist attraction - 150m<sup>2</sup>

### PLANNING ADVICE ENQUIRY

The Planning Advice team is available to answer general questions about development proposals, including:

- is a development application required?
- what information is required as part of a development application?
- what are the likely development application fees?
- how will the development assessment process work?

Planning advice enquiries can be lodged online, in person, by phone or an appointment can be arranged to discuss your proposal with a Planning Advice Officer. Please phone 1300 622 529 to request advice or head to Council's website to [lodge a written enquiry](#).

Pre-lodgement meetings are available to provide advice about more complicated development applications. Submit a [Pre-lodgement Meeting Request Form](#) to Council via [development.services@mackay.qld.gov.au](mailto:development.services@mackay.qld.gov.au) to organise a meeting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PHONE COUNCIL  
ON **1300 MACKAY** (1300 622 529)  
OR VISIT THE WEBSITE **MACKAY.QLD.GOV.AU**