
INTRODUCTION

Larissa Waters, EDO Qld

1. Context of the SEQ Plan

- Population in SEQ forecast to rise 1 million by 2026, from 2.7 to 3.7 million;
- Will another 1 million people exceed the carrying capacity of SEQ and threaten the region's environmental, social and economic systems?
- SEQ Plan produced by the State Government (Office of Urban Management – 'OUM') to manage (but not limit) this growth by 'sustainable development which protects and enhances the quality of life in the region.'
- Region covered by the SEQ Plan extends from Beaudesert to Noosa and west to Toowoomba, covering 18 local government areas.
- Draft Plan released on 27 October 2004 for public comment - 8,500 submissions received! EDO Qld ran series of 8 community workshops in February 2005 to assist people to make comments on the Draft Plan, with over 200 attendees.
- Final Plan released 30 June 2005, followed by non-statutory Infrastructure Plan and Program.

2. Legislative basis for SEQ Plan

- Integrated Planning Act 1997 ("IPA") amended in 2004 to provide a statutory basis for the SEQ Plan – Chapter 2, Part 5A. First statutory regional plan for Queensland, despite previous non-binding efforts (eg SEQ 2021).
- SEQ Plan has the legal status of a State Planning Policy and applies as a Temporary Local Planning Instrument until incorporated into the local planning scheme. So Councils are bound to apply the SEQ Plan when assessing development applications, and OUM has a concurrence role in relation to applying the Regulatory Provisions to development applications (and thus has the power to condition or require Council to refuse a development application which conflicts with the Regulatory Provisions).
- No compensation payable for landowners adversely affected by the SEQ Plan.
- SEQ Plan to be monitored annual and formally reviewed every 5 years.

3. What's in the SEQ Plan?

- Limits on urban development (including subdivision) outside the "urban footprint", set up by the important Regulatory Provisions in Part H of the Plan.
- Special rules for koala protection - *Interim Guideline: Koalas and Development* under the SEQ Plan, available from www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature_conservation/wildlife/koala_conservation_plan/interim_guideline_koalas_and_development/.

See Jo Bragg's paper for more detail on the content of the SEQ Plan.

4. What's changed from the Draft SEQ Plan?

- More Regional Policies, new Koala protection strategies, changes to land use designations and Investigation Area, and changes to the Regulatory Provisions.

See Jo Bragg's paper for more detail on the changes made to the Draft SEQ Plan.

5. What happens to the SEQ Plan now?

- SEQ local Councils must reflect the SEQ Plan into their local town planning schemes.
- Councils must advise the State of any necessary changes to their planning schemes (including to Priority Infrastructure Plans) by early November 2005, and must also complete Local Growth Management Strategies by June 2007 stating how the projected additional residents will be catered for.
- The State Planning Minister Desley Boyle has the power to require amended local planning schemes to go out for public notification and submissions. EDO has urged Minister Boyle to require Councils to do this so the public can comment on changes due to the SEQ Plan.

6. Does the Plan deliver for the environment? Key issues for discussion at tonight's briefing

- Should development levels should be limited by thresholds for air and water quality?
- Should nature conservation areas (outside reserves) be protected by Regulatory Provisions, with EPA or OUM having a concurrence role? (*Estimated that 27,000 hectares of remnant bushland not in national parks is within the urban footprint*)
- Should local governments be required to release draft amended local planning schemes for public comment?
- When is the best time to lobby Council to highlight the environmental sections of the Plan to try to green up the amendments that Council may make to reflect the Plan?
- Should the Plan prioritise nature conservation desired regional outcomes (DROs) over other DROs?
- Should the Regulatory Provisions (and hence OUM's concurrence power) extend beyond urban development to regulate, for example, extractive industries, tourist developments, large scale recreation developments like golf courses and high environmental risk rural industries such as intensive animal husbandry and aquaculture?
- Should regional recreational parks should be designated to accommodate high impact recreational activities outside the protected area estate?
- How effective is the biodiversity policy guidance in the final plan compared with hard regulatory language based on hard boundaries (*Martin Taylor, National Parks Association*)
- How are Key Resource Areas for extractive industries affected by the SEQ Plan?
- How will OUM ensure that Councils apply the body of the SEQ Plan when assessing development applications (as opposed to the Regulatory Provisions, which OUM will apply)?
- We understand the reason why the Plan does not specifically identify and protect high nature conservation areas is that there was not time to draft codes in lieu of maps. Can the Plan be amended before its 5 year review?

7. More information and copies of the Plan

- More information is available from:
 - EDO Qld on www.edo.org.au/edoqld;
 - QCC on www.qccqld.org.au;
 - OUM on 1800 021 818 or www.oum.qld.gov.au (also for e-copies of the Plan)

8. Speakers tonight

LINDSAY ENRIGHT, Office of Urban Management + JO BRAGG, Principal Solicitor of EDO Qld