What are the key changes in the draft SEQ Regional Plan 2009–2031?

Why has the SEQ Regional Plan 2005–2026 been changed?

South East Queensland is one of the most liveable places in the world.

In 2005, to manage the growth and development occurring within SEQ, the Queensland Government developed the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005–2026.

A review of the SEQ Regional Plan 2005 is being undertaken to respond to growth management issues that have emerged since 2005. These include:

- higher than expected population growth
- housing affordability pressure
- transport congestion
- the urgent need to respond to climate change

In response, the Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 refines the strategic directions, principles and policies of the existing Regional Plan.

What are the key changes?

The draft SEQ Regional Plan makes key changes in the following areas:

- boundary of the SEQ region
- time horizon and population projections for the plan
- Urban Footprint boundary
- addressing climate change
- delivering smart growth
- supporting housing affordability
- facilitating economic growth
- reducing congestion
- developing strong communities

Boundary of the SEQ region

The SEQ region covers 22,890km² and stretches 240km from Noosa in the north to the New South Wales border in the south, and 160km west to Toowoomba.

The draft SEQ Regional Plan was expanded to include additional growth areas in the Toowoomba Statistical District, around the City of Toowoomba. It also includes the Charlton-Wellcamp industrial area, west of Toowoomba.
Time horizon and population projections

The time horizon for the draft SEQ Regional Plan has been extended five years from 2026 to 2031. New population projections have been prepared to 2031 estimating the population of SEQ will be around 4.4 million people.

Urban Footprint boundary

Principles for the Urban Footprint boundary have been developed and included in the draft SEQ Regional Plan. A review of the capacity of the Urban Footprint has been undertaken. The draft SEQ Regional Plan identifies sufficient urban land to accommodate a projected population of 4.4 million people and their employment needs to 2031. Small changes to the Urban Footprint are proposed in the draft SEQ Regional Plan. Additions are proposed at: Elimbah East, Beachmere, Steiglitz, Purga, Plainland, Gatton North and Toowoomba. As a result, the Urban Footprint covers less than 14% of the region and the Regional Landscape and Rural Production area covers more than 85%. Deletions are proposed at: Bracken Ridge, Nudgee, Chapel Hill, Mt Gravatt, Rochdale, Kuraby, Parkinson, Springfield and the Southern Moreton Bay Islands.

Addressing climate change

An SEQ Regional Climate Change Management Plan is being prepared to establish the region’s long-term climate change goals and ensure the region moves to a low-carbon future. The draft SEQ Regional Plan proposes the establishment of a greenhouse gas emissions trend for the region, annually monitoring trends and developing a consistent methodology for assessing the impacts of urban development.

The draft SEQ Regional Plan encourages the development of energy efficient housing through siting, design and construction to reduce energy demand. Councils will also take into account greenhouse gas emissions in local planning decisions.

Delivering smart growth

Our dispersed, low-density settlement pattern has become unsustainable and puts pressure on the natural landscape and regional ecosystems. It causes SEQ residents to have longer journeys to work, school and recreation opportunities and leads to traffic congestion.

The draft SEQ Regional Plan tackles these problems through smart growth policies. It promotes compact urban development and sets new dwelling targets for infill and redevelopment areas in each local government area to 2031.

Supporting housing affordability and choice

The draft SEQ Regional Plan responds to housing affordability issues by:
- facilitating timely and high quality land use and infrastructure planning
- establishing a Metropolitan Development Program to monitor land supply and facilitate delivery of land for residential and employment
- establishing Identified Growth Areas as additional future urban land supply that can be made ready for development subject to master planning and the provision of required infrastructure
- setting a minimum yield of 15 dwellings per hectare net for new development in Urban Growth Areas

Facilitating economic growth

The draft SEQ Regional Plan identifies three types of economic opportunity areas:
- science and technology opportunity areas
- health, education and training opportunity areas
- enterprise opportunity areas.

The plan includes policies aimed at maintaining these opportunities.

Reducing congestion

The draft SEQ Regional Plan directs a proportion of new growth to existing communities and supports jobs and housing at activity centres and along high frequency public transport corridors. This will help reduce the distance between where people live, work and play, and reduce the need for private car travel.

The Queensland Government is developing a new transport plan, called Connecting SEQ 2031: An Integrated Regional Transport Plan, to support the draft SEQ Regional Plan.

Developing strong communities

Good planning and design of the built environment will encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices, provide a sense of community safety and assist in preventing crime. Strong, functional, connected communities provide a great social and economic benefit to SEQ.

Regulatory provisions

The revised draft SEQ regulatory provisions were released in conjunction with the release of the draft SEQ Regional Plan. They replace the previous regulatory provisions from the date of their release (7 December 2008). The regulatory provisions continue to support the draft SEQ Regional Plan by restricting urban development outside the Urban Footprint. However, they now support medium scale economic and tourist activities in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area.