

Does SEQ plan unleash trouble?

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Just imagine you have finally made it to your broadacre rural retreat in the Noosa Hinterland after years of hard slog, when a nightmare unleashed by the South East Queensland Regional Plan lobs on your doorstep.

A cashed-up motorcycle club buys the property next door, starts building a members' resort for up to 300 people with a racing track and lets the good time roll with lots of dances and loud music.

Noosa Parks Association project officer Aaron White said the SEQRP as of last week had opened the door that would allow a raft of new commercial and industrial activities previously restricted on rural land.

"Developments no longer considered 'urban activity' that are now exempt from referral or impact assessment include factories and shops with a gross floor area of up to 750sq m and service stations with a gross floor area of up to 1000sq m," Mr White said.

"Educational, sporting, community and tourism developments with up to 300 person accommodation also avoid the previous assessment criteria.

"The state government policy to maximise development inside and outside the population centres ignores social and environmental concerns and has jeopardised the potential sustainability of our region."

Former Noosa strategic planning manager Paul Summers believed the doomsday scenario the NPA is warning about, while technically feasible, in practice should not happen.

He said the bulwark against any inappropriate development in rural land outside the urban footprint was the strength of the Noosa Plan.

He said it would be up to the council to ensure the planning scheme was enforced.

Mr Summers said the previous regional plan was far too rigid a document that "captured" any and all proposed land uses.

But Mr White said he feared the new plan allowed for councillors to allow development relaxations and opened the way for costly litigations.