

Workshop: Identifying and protecting scenic resources of coastal landscapes

**Tuesday, 18th September
3.55pm – 4.25pm
Supper Room, Anglican Church**

Facilitator: Robert Preston, Forest Images Consulting

Background

While Schedule 2 of the 1999 State Coastal Management Plan outlines criteria for identifying coastal landscapes of state significance based on the 1996 report 'A View of the Coast: An Overview of the Scenic Resources of the Queensland Coast', the state plan also encourages the use of other relevant regional landscape studies. The 2006 SEQ Regional Coastal Management Plan recognises the SEQ Regional Scenic Amenity Study as providing a framework to estimate or rate the most scenic areas in SEQ. The SEQ Regional Plan seeks to 'acknowledge, protect and manage significant scenic amenity areas and features such as coastal waters, wetlands, dunes and foreshores'. Plans for other coastal regions provide other references to the identification and protection of scenic resources.

While the SEQ Regional Scenic Amenity Study provided a toolkit for assessing the visual impact of development and a series of interim maps to identify areas of high scenic amenity, a final map has yet been produced and uptake of these procedures to date has been limited.

An earlier scenic amenity study for Caboolture Shire has been adopted in the Council's planning scheme and Brisbane City has also undertaken a Scenic Amenity mapping project based on regional data. Local governments in SEQ and other parts of Queensland use a range of techniques to identify and protect areas of high scenic amenity, landscape character or visual quality. Interim Scenic Amenity mapping from the SEQ Regional Scenic Amenity Study has been included in the NRM Plan for SEQ.

At present, it is not clear whether any State Agency accepts lead agency status for the identification and protection of scenic resources. There is no state planning policy on the protection of scenic resources and no definitive statutory basis for protecting these values other than through council planning schemes.

Discussion

In the current operating environment, is the protection of scenic resources in coastal landscapes best served through current arrangements? Are scenic values of any great importance in comparison to other social, economic and environmental imperatives? Are there advantages in maintaining a range of methods and terms to identify important scenic resources? Is there a need for state agencies, NRM bodies, local government or other organisations to have an understanding of the relative merits and suitability of various methods for identifying and protecting scenic resources?

What opportunities are there for NRM bodies, Universities, Local Governments, the Department of Local Government, Planning Sport and Recreation, the Department of Infrastructure, or the Environmental Protection Agency to provide guidance or leadership in resolving these questions - within what time frame and to what gain?

Some issues and ways forward about protecting scenic coastal resources

- Strengths and limitations of alternative assessment methods
- Strengths and limitations of current planning policies
- Is the protection of scenic resources a priority compared to other current issues?
- What are some options and mechanisms for advancing these questions?

What was discussed
 (please list the main dot points such as identified issues or threats)

- Difficulty translating state wide strategies to specific area ie how much development is too much to ruin aesthetics?
 - Community groups use photo's to scale (numerically) according to concrete Vs trees
 - Assessing scenic stories
- Part 1
- Stories: tackle scenic landscapes but hard to get off ground and subjective (EPA) – Wide Bay Coastal Plan. Includes policy statement 'don't impact on scenic'. EPA can't be involved, it has to be LGAs
 - Is it a priority / important and do we care?
 - What is the exact statutory requirement?
 - Who is responsible?
 - Action comes from development and therefore extreme community outrage
 - Guidelines SEQ to be sent out for adoption and uniformity. Scenic resources include scenic walkway and bit in-between ie a whole and keep in good condition
 - SEQ hesitant initially to adopt as don't want to be see 'anti developing'
 - All sectors represented at workshop
 - Community Story: Burnett Heads – Port of Brisbane don't want to see town shaded out by development, still want 'our patch'. Port of Brisbane been supportive, but looking forward to guidelines.
 - Timeline for plan? EPA: still got public consultation
 - Concern that while waiting for WB Coast Plan, the state plan will have to be reviewed
 - Community has own view of scenic therefore does scale work?
 - Workshop strength and weaknesses of process
 - Photography and scale is one section
 - Tests done on community Vs professionals
 - Community don't mind rural, but professionals do. Ultimately scale is very similar – hasn't been a problem. Professionals view rural as clearing – environmental damage ie 7 = rural; 8 + environment
 - Q – is using numeric scales and saying development scores low is negative
 - Q – is not what is acceptable but what you like to see. How do you put design process into design? Try to separate planning schemes.
 - Mapping process to identify ugliest – beautifying strategies/process
 - 4 is considered ok
 - Some areas that score high should not be developed
 - Do the guides enable action. They stipulate/compare view corridors which restrict development. Not saying can't develop, just have to minimise impact.
 - Guidelines compliment as minimise impact
 - Need to appreciate scene without impacting on it
 - Great Ocean Road good example with board walks and view platform and have high visitation but not impacted

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA think guidelines have state wide need? Yes, there are existing guidelines, but it all helps. <p>Part 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths and limitations of assessment methods? • Virtually every town has been scenic coastal towns at some stage • Until now there hasn't been assessment method, unless extreme outrage • With rating doesn't type of development sway ie harbour Vs high rise (urban) – maybe emphasis on good design • Placement of development is part of other issues such as storm/tidal • Scenic isn't only factor, wetlands etc also have importance • Development still alive and well. Community views Vs developers. An issue that's not going away. • Be interested in what public want. Survey completed: highest or second highest (ie scenery and recreational) scenery does count. Especially in spectacular area. 	
Suggested follow-up actions	Action	Who will undertake this action?
1.		
2.		
3.		