

Fact Sheet 18: Running a Business in the Hinterland

Noosa Plan 2020 – As amended 26 September 2025

Noosa Hinterland

The Noosa Hinterland features a mix of villages, rural residential lots, agricultural land, and conservation areas. It supports a diverse community that values rural living, enterprise, and the natural environment. *Noosa Plan 2020* aims to preserve these qualities.

Rural Residential zone

The Rural Residential zone offers spacious lifestyle lots for permanent residents, primarily for *dwelling houses* and residential activities, including *home-based businesses*. Residents enjoy large yards or bushland settings, with some small-scale food production, animal keeping, or low-impact visitor accommodation. While close to town services or part of established estates, many properties rely on on-site water and sewerage systems.

Rural zone

Designed for rural activities and compatible uses, including *dwelling houses* for permanent residents, the Rural zone protects the land's agricultural and environmental value. Properties vary in size and access, are not connected to town water or sewerage, and are often reached via unsealed roads.

Farming

Agricultural land¹ is a limited resource and as such is protected for food, fibre, and foliage production. Once ag land is fragmented or converted, it is difficult to restore the land to a productive state, therefore incompatible uses are restricted and subdivision limited. Many farming activities, like cropping and animal husbandry, may be able to proceed without Council approval, whilst more intensive operations will require planning approval.

Value-adding

In rural areas, enhancing agricultural products on-site is supported and may fall under Rural Industry or Home-Based Business:

Rural industry means the use of premises for—

- a) *storing, processing or packaging products from a rural use carried out on the premises or adjoining premises; or*
- b) *selling products from a rural use carried out on the premises or adjoining premises, if the use is ancillary to the use in paragraph (a).*

Home-based business means the use of a dwelling or domestic outbuilding on premises for a business activity that is subordinate to the residential use of the premises.

Cafés and Restaurants

Subject to impact assessment, planning approval may be sought for a Food & Drink Outlet in the Rural zone where it is:

- in association with, and ancillary to food production undertaken onsite;
- operated entirely within the property and not within the road reserve;
- it does not take vehicle access from a State controlled road or a road with a legal speed limit of 80km per hour or higher; and
- the use area does not exceed 25m² (including any outdoor dining area).

¹ Refer to Council's interactive mapping to confirm mapped Agricultural land <https://www.mapping.noosa.qld.gov.au/>

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Roadside stalls

A roadside stall may not require Council planning approval in either the Rural Zone or the Rural Residential Zone where it:

- is not in a road reserve or beside a State-controlled or high-speed road (≥ 80 km/h)
- is less than 9m² in size
- is ancillary to a rural use conducted on the same site
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- sells only produce grown or made on-site or nearby
- is on a site capable of accommodating 3 cars parked clear of the carriageway and within 20 metres of the stall.

Contact Council to ascertain if planning approval is required for the use.

Tourist accommodation

A range of visitor accommodation types² may occur in the Hinterland (subject to Council approval), including *short-term accommodation*, *home-based business (home hosted accommodation)*, *tourist parks* and *nature-based tourism*³.

The Queensland Government provides advice on starting a business including advice specific to agricultural enterprises. Refer to:

www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business

www.dpi.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/agriculture

This Fact Sheet is intended to assist with interpreting Noosa Plan 2020 and **should not be solely relied on to inform decisions.**

Prior to making decisions or undertaking any development, it is strongly recommended that applicants:

- Review all the requirements of Noosa Plan 2020, and/or
- Seek advice from a qualified planning professional.

Noosa Plan 2020 is available online at:

<https://noosaplan.noosa.qld.gov.au/eplan>

For further information or assistance, contact Council's Development Assessment team:

☎ (07) 5329 6500

✉ planning@noosa.qld.gov.au

² Refer to Council's Short-term Accommodation Guide for further information

³ Refer to Schedule 1 of Noosa Plan 2020 for definition of the different types of visitor accommodation.