

# Tension at Helidon meeting

Strong feelings about private ownership in the Helidon Hills area emerged at the two public meetings in Gatton and Helidon held last week as part of the public consultation process for the Sustainable Management of the Helidon Hills Project.

Project co-ordinator Bruce Boyes has described the input that has come from public consultation so far as very good:

Possible solutions to the issues of fire management, landholders' rights, nature conservation, timber harvesting and the development of tourism and recreation were generated from workshop groups and will be fed back into the project.

They will be developed into a draft management plan and draft action plans in the next three months to take the solutions forward to implementation.

"A clear view has emerged that we must come up with solutions that benefit both sustainable management and the rights and needs of landholders," project co-ordinator Bruce Boyes said.

"The Sustainable Management of the Helidon Hills Project is definitely not about coming up with yet more rules and regulations that a

rural community already pushed to the limit has to cope with

"We are looking at innovative, co-operative solutions to the complex issues that have emerged.

"For example, we are seeking funding to carry out a feasibility study into the establishment of a trust fund that would provide financial assistance to landholders who voluntarily conserve or implement sustainable land management practices"

Agriculture, mining, forestry and explosives industries operate in the area at present which lies in the north-western part of the Gatton Shire.

About half of the land is owned by private



individuals with the balance comprising leasehold land and state forest.

The area has already been identified as containing signifi-

cant economic, recreational and conservation values and cultural values are currently being assessed by cultural heritage consultants from Brisbane