



Department of Primary Industries

OUT16/17637

2 May 2016

General Manager
Great Lakes Council
PO Box 450
FORSTER NSW 2428

Attention: Alexandra Macvean

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Planning Proposal to Permit Dual Occupancy (Detached) in RU2 Rural
Landscape Zone – DPI (Agriculture) Comments**

I refer to your letter dated 18 March 2016 regarding the proposed amendment to the Great Lakes LEP to permit detached dual occupancies in the RU2 Rural Landscape zone.

The Planning Proposal has been reviewed by Department of Primary Industries (DPI), (Agriculture), and the following comments are provided for your consideration.

LEPs in NSW are increasingly permitting housing development within rural zones which is not related to agricultural outcomes. The cumulative impact of the various forms of housing permitted within rural zones has the potential to negatively impact on the productive capacity of agricultural industries and the availability of agricultural resources.

Detached dual occupancy development and secondary dwellings potentially place pressure on the operation of agricultural industries and increases the likelihood of land use conflicts with more sensitive receptors in the vicinity. Impacts from unreasonable proximity to farm buildings, farm boundaries and agricultural industry land uses (e.g. intensive livestock operations, livestock yards, dairies etc.) are the cause of many land use conflicts.

The New South Wales government recently released the NSW Right to Farm Policy that provides a suite of actions that the NSW Government has committed to in order to reduce land use conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land use. Further information is available at: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/resources/lup/legislation/right-to-farm-policy>.

Construction of a second dwelling on a rural property can also inflate property values and can prevent other farmers from purchasing land to start or expand operations. This is a particularly important issue for young farmers wanting to invest in the industry.

It is recognised that changing community needs and aspirations may require a change in the use of agricultural land. However, once land is converted to other uses, it is most unlikely to return to agricultural production. Since these decisions cannot be practically reversed the long term social and economic costs and benefits (including intergenerational equity), should be evaluated before a decision is made.

Having dual occupancies and rural worker's dwellings attached assists in reducing some of these adverse impacts. Determinations based on current agri-business productivity may

change in the future leaving a landscape of houses, making it difficult for new agri-business to develop due to the close settlement pattern to new or current agricultural activities. Please refer to our guideline on rural workers dwellings that discusses these issues further. Refer to: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/resources/lup/development-assessment/rural-workers-dwellings> .

More information on DPI Agriculture's policy 'Maintaining land for agricultural industries' is available at http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/396458/Policy-O-104-maintaining-land-agricultural-industries.pdf

The planned provisions/criteria for assessment of these types of development are acknowledged. It is suggested that should the proposal be approved the following issues should also be considered:

- distances to neighbouring boundaries
- water take for the additional dwelling should not impact on neighbouring water supplies.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please contact Helen Squires on (02) 4939 8962.

Yours sincerely

Liz Rogers
Manager,
Agricultural Land Use Planning