



WAYNE SAY & ASSOCIATES PTY LTD

LICENSED SURVEYORS AND LAND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

ACN 010 786 820 ABN 67 010 786 820

Wayne Say, B.Surv., M.I.S., M.A.C.S.
Cadastral Surveyor

'The Bellevue', 47 Churchill Street
PO Box 91, CHILDERS, QLD 4660.
Ph: 07 4126 2555 Mob: 0427 062 714
Email: admin@waynesay.com.au

13 January 2017

Our Ref: Wilson 16017
Your Ref: 199/16

The Chief Executive Officer
North Burnett Regional Council
PO Box 390
GAYNDAH QLD 4625

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION – RECONFIGURING A LOT
ONE LOT INTO FIVE LOTS – LOT 37 ON CK2495
EUREKA ROAD, GOLDEN FLEECE – WILLIAM & CHRISTINE WILSON
RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

Dear Sir

I refer to the above mentioned Development Application and your communication received through Smart eDA on 29 November 2016. You have asked for further information to assist with your assessment of the application.

Community need:

The settlement pattern that exists in the North Burnett and adjacent regions has changed markedly over time. At the time of settlement in the mid to late 1800s properties were surveyed into allotments as basic roads and communities were established. The more fertile land in the west of the region adjacent to watercourses, was surveyed into smaller allotments and used for citrus (eg Gayndah & Mundubbera) or used for sugarcane in the east (Childers & Maryborough). Other less fertile land was used for grazing (Eidsvold), dairy or mineral exploration (Mt Perry).

During the early to mid 1900s the communities of the region provided basic services such as schools, shops and medical facilities with those people living close by able to take advantage of these on a daily basis and those living further out less so. Travel to the larger towns outside the area was generally undertaken for any major requirements.

The progressive increase and accessibility to services in the region's towns and outlying areas in the late 1900s and early 2000s has enabled rural families and visitors increased opportunities for education, socialisation and access to services. Biggenden, for example, has seen an increase in tourism and related services with travellers able to visit Paradise Dam or the Nature Parks in the area and access the supermarket, petrol station, cafes and commercial services in the town.

Bus transport services now provide access for rural residents to schools, shops, medical and other services and families bring their children into the towns after school and on weekends for sporting, cultural and other events. The increased accessibility to these services shows a change in the concept of a rural family in the last century from one that would home school their children and visit/shop in towns once a month or longer to the 'modern' rural family that accesses available services on a daily basis. The Council is committed to improving the roads in the region which further improves accessibility for residents and visitors to the region. Mount Goonaneman hosts television, radio and mobile towers which also improves services for residents and visitors.

The construction of water storages along the Burnett River and improvements to infrastructure has worked to ensure the sustainability of citrus and other rural practices that require access to irrigation, electricity and other services. Other areas of the region that are unable to access irrigation are typically used for grazing or lifestyle pursuits due to the unsuitability of the land for sustainable production.

Grazing practices have altered in the last century with graziers finding it increasingly difficult to support a family from primary production income with the costs of sustainable farming increasing at a far greater rate than the income derived. Many grazing families now rely on secondary incomes to meet financial commitments and, with improved accessibility to services, less family members are available on farms to help with maintenance, mustering and other grazing needs. The regulation of vegetation clearing under current legislation sees a further restriction on sustainable grazing with areas of vegetation unable to be cleared for increased pasture. Feedlots are an example of modern 'finishing' methods for beef production rather than grazing natural pastures.

An increasing number of families are moving from the capital city locations of Australia to the rural areas where opportunities for "tree change" lots abound. As stated in the enclosed letter from A1 Realty, blocks of the size of the proposed 100ha lots are generally listed as "For Sale" for less time than the market average. This would indicate that lots of this size meet a community expectation and therefore satisfy a community need.

Farming families from central Australian areas are also looking for opportunities to move to coastal land that still offers a rural aspect without requiring the maintenance burden incurred on vast acreages. Minimum lot sizes in western Queensland communities are generally around the 1,000ha size (with some smaller and others much larger) thereby reducing opportunities for people to remain in their current location. Whilst not part of the 'community' until they settle in the North Burnett the purchase of land parcels of the size of the proposed lots introduces families to the community and satisfies their 'need' for rural land of a manageable size.

The Golden Fleece locality provides land that suits the increasing need of new and existing community members with the hilly slopes around Mount Goonaneman a scenic backdrop to rural land that can be used for light grazing or lifestyle lots. The ease of access in this modern day afforded to towns such as Biggenden and Gayndah to the west and Childers, Bundaberg, Maryborough or Hervey Bay to the east makes land such as the proposed lots desirable with sufficient area for families to build houses, graze horses, cows, goats or sheep for pleasure and area for recreational pursuits without detracting from the amenity of neighbours.

The Bundaberg Regional Council Planning Scheme appears to acknowledge this requirement with a minimum lot size requirement of 100ha for rural lots incorporated in the new planning document. The settlement pattern in the adjoining Bundaberg Regional Council area sees numerous lots around the 100ha size, some created many years ago and others created more recently. In contrast, the North Burnett Regional Council Planning Scheme document has not incorporated the flexibility for smaller rural lot sizes in the new planning scheme document other than for the sustainable agricultural areas. The planning scheme does not consider the growing use of unproductive land by families seeking lifestyle lots and therefore is stifling not stimulating growth.

The Golden Fleece, Eureka, Dallarnil and Kullogum localities have predominantly smaller lots (100ha or less) created many years ago. This settlement pattern is broken occasionally by large State Forestry blocks. The planning scheme requirement for a minimum lot size of 400ha in the Hinterland precinct appears out of character with the existing subdivision pattern in the eastern section of the North Burnett Region.

As with other residents in the Golden Fleece, Eureka, Dallarnil and Kullogum localities, Childers will be the main service centre providing access to government medical and educational services

as well as access to employment, professional, retail and commercial services. The viability of Childers and its ability to sustain and expand existing services, attract new services and industry depends on a growing population. It is becoming more and more difficult to create affordable lots in and around Childers with development contracting markedly since the global financial crisis. The development of rural lots on land that is not viable for sustainable agricultural production is an alternative to the smaller rural residential/residential lots and provides an attractive rural lifestyle with lots having a high degree of amenity within close proximity to the services provided in Childers. The enclosed letter from Childers First National further supports the requirement for lots of this size close to Childers.

Your communication makes reference to the *relativity high number of vacant rural lots in the Eureka Road, Mount Goonaneman Road and Berries Road localities*. Properties of this size in the local area that appear to be vacant may be used for alternative purposes such as weekend retreats or grazing lots. The owners may not wish or may not need to build on the land and simply utilise it for purposes other than residential use. A check of the North Burnett website did not show any rates arrears property auctions for the Golden Fleece locality indicating the owners of these lots are still contributing effectively to the rates base for Council.

Sufficient grounds test:

The demand for these types of lots is readily documented. This demand transfers to need when one looks at the following:

- A need for consistency in the land use patterns of various areas;
- A need to provide alternative living environments;
- A need for a variety of lot sizes with smaller lots near towns and larger lots as the distance from service centres increases;
- A need to better utilise unproductive land, i.e. optimising land use by allowing the creation of smaller lots suitable to the local area;
- A need to increase the population in the area in order to sustain and grow existing services, and generate the need for new services; and
- The limited areas available for this type of rural lifestyle lots.

With all issues considered, it is considered that there is a need for the proposed development and this type of development in the area.

Building envelopes or building exclusion areas:

With regard to the matter of perceived constraints please find enclosed DA Plan Drwg 2 showing a building exclusion zone over areas of regulated vegetation and mapped flood hazard areas. As can be seen there are numerous areas available to future owners for the establishment of houses and associated facilities free from constraints should the land be used for such purposes.

I trust the information provided assists Council with the continued assessment of this application. We look forward to receiving an approval with reasonable and relevant conditions.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



WAYNE SAY

Enclosed: Building Exclusion Zone Plan:

(Reference: 16017; Drawing: Wilson16017 DA Plan – Drwg 2; Date: 13.01.2017)