



Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Our ref: IRF25/152

Ms Laura Black
General Manager
Clarence Valley Council
Locked Bag 23
GRAFTON NSW 2460

By email: council@clarence.nsw.gov.au
jasmine.oakes@clarence.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Black

Subject: **Clarence Valley Local Housing Strategy 2024**

I refer to Council's correspondence requesting the Department's approval of the Clarence Valley Local Housing Strategy 2024.

I would like to acknowledge and commend Council on its significant efforts and commitment to strategic planning for the Clarence Valley in preparing the Strategy.

I note that council has considered and made changes to the strategy based on community and agency feedback. I also note and support that the proposed planning interventions outline matters requiring further investigation and the triggers for when these investigations will take place.

I am pleased to conditionally approve the Clarence Valley Local Housing Strategy and the identified interventions for further investigation, with the exception of planning intervention 13 Palmers Island. As this land is highly flood prone and subject to riverbank erosion, mapped as regionally significant farmland and located within the sensitive coastal strip, use of this land for permanent housing is not consistent with the state and regional planning framework.

In implementing the strategy and undertaking further investigations into the identified interventions, I encourage Council to take appropriate measures to ensure that:

- future planning proposals for rezoning of land are supported by detailed studies into the site-specific development constraints, including potential high environmental value, bushfire, traffic, potential contamination, land use conflict, probable maximum flood levels, velocity, flood planning levels, evacuation and access to critical services during flood events, to confirm land suitability and consistency with the North Coast Regional Plan 2041, relevant local planning directions, and applicable State Environmental Planning Policies;
- future planning proposals that seek to rezone employment land to residential such as planning intervention 3 South Grafton Waterfront (employment land component) will need to consider and strategically justify the impact of the loss

on employment opportunities, that sufficient employment land is available for future needs and consider the Department's Industrial Land Action Plan 2025;

- infrastructure delivery and staging plans are to be prepared to inform the appropriate sequencing and coordination of the planning interventions to ensure timely and cost-effective infrastructure and housing delivery; and
- when undertaking flood investigations, updating floodplain risk management plans for the LGA or if the flood planning level is amended in the future, the appropriateness and suitability of infill housing and greenfield investigation areas be considered concerning the probable maximum flood levels, velocity, flood planning levels, and access to critical services during flood events, and amend the strategy and plan as necessary for return to the Department for further review and approval.

In addition, it is recommended that Council consider whether the following matters should be amended prior to the strategy being published on Council's website to provide better clarity for the local community and users of the strategy:

- planning intervention 5 South Grafton Centre being amended to detail the correct name and number;
- planning intervention 12 Boundary Road being amended to correct the existing minimum lot size applying to the site as 40ha; and
- removal of planning intervention 13 Palmers Island.

Ongoing collaboration with the Department along with other key agencies including, but not limited to, NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, NSW Biodiversity Conservation and Science, and Transport for NSW will be vital in the successful implementation of the strategy. I encourage Council to proactively engage and work with these agencies in relation to matters such as important farmland, potential high environmental lands, flood prone land and transport management.

Should you have any enquiries regarding this matter, I have arranged for Mr Sam Tarrant, Planning Officer, to assist you. Sam can be contacted on 6643 6410.

Yours sincerely



19/2/25

Craig Diss
Director, Hunter and Northern Region
Local Planning & Council Support