

Media release



Planning &
Infrastructure



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Simplified planning controls and heritage recognition for Richmond Valley

New planning controls have been approved for the Richmond Valley which will provide additional heritage protection for more than 130 sites and buildings, while simplifying planning rules across the valley.

The Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan (LEP) consolidates three existing LEPs operating in the local government area since council amalgamations in 2000 (Casino and Richmond River LEPs) and a boundary adjustment in 2004 (Copmanhurst LEP).

The council-wide LEP was approved by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, under delegation from the Minister, and reflects close co-operation between the department and Richmond Valley Council.

The department provided \$100,000 in funding through the Planning Reform Fund, and \$23,000 through the LEP Acceleration Fund, to support the preparation of the Richmond Valley LEP.

The department's Executive Director of Planning Operations, Neil McGaffin, said the LEP listed an additional 134 items as items of local heritage significance, including the Coraki War Memorial, the Evans Head Scout Hall and additional protection for the New Italy area.

"The Richmond Valley LEP has struck a balance between recognising the region's important heritage, while planning for the future by updating planning controls that have been operating in the Richmond Valley for around 20 years," Mr McGaffin said.

"The LEP brings the council into line with other parts of the State which have adopted new LEPs using a standard template and more consistent language, while providing local flexibility.

"The LEP continues to provide sufficient land for housing into the future, including zoning new rural residential land at Reardon's Lane, Swan Bay, consistent with the Richmond River Rural Residential Strategy.

"Meanwhile, it also maintains the rural character of the area and manages growth by rationalising minimum lot sizes in rural areas."

Richmond Valley Council mayor Col Sullivan welcomed the new LEP.

"It will not only contribute to environmental protection but it also underpins and complements Council's Economic Development Strategy 2010-2015," Cr Sullivan said.

Mr McGaffin said while planning for managed growth, the LEP also recognised the area's important agricultural activities and natural attributes.

"Agricultural lands have been protected while a range of environmental zones have been applied to environmentally sensitive land in the valley to protect those areas from inappropriate future development," he said.

The LEP will commence on 21 April 2012, after Council has adopted its new Development Control Plan (DCP).

Council media contact: Craig Rideout, (02) 6660 0219

Department media contact: Brendan Berecry, (02) 9228 6257