Media release

Updated planning controls have been approved for the Uralla Shire in northern NSW, in the first comprehensive overhaul of the shire’s planning rules in nearly 25 years.

The new Uralla Local Environmental Plan (LEP) was approved by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, under delegation from the Minister, and reflects close co-operation between the department and Uralla Shire Council.

The department’s Executive Director of Planning Operations, Neil McGaffin, said the department had provided $70,000 to Uralla Shire Council last year through the LEP Acceleration Fund, to finalise the new comprehensive LEP.

This followed $100,000 provided through the Planning Reform Fund and shared by four New England councils – including Uralla - to help prepare the New England Development Strategy and new comprehensive LEPs for each local government area.

“Council undertook extensive strategic planning work in the New England Development Strategy, which was endorsed by the department in 2010, and I applaud Council’s work in now finalising a new comprehensive LEP that is consistent with that strategy,” Mr McGaffin said.

“This LEP delivers 42 hectares of new low density residential land, or enough to support some 60 new residential lots to meet the Shire’s demand for new housing.

“Furthermore, the LEP has introduced new environmental protection zones for known environmentally sensitive areas, as well as protecting the Uralla and Bundarra drinking water catchments from inappropriate development.”

Council General Manager, Tom O’Connor said: “Council has put a great deal of effort into the new Uralla LEP and expects it to be a blueprint for development for the short to medium term.

“Council expects the new LEP to be a solid grounding for future strategic work to allow more progressive and innovative development, thus benefiting the Shire as a whole.”

Other key outcomes of the new Uralla LEP include:

- Modifying zoning boundaries and dwelling provisions to better reflect the existing and future land uses at Saumarez Ponds;
- Rezoning land to better reflect the existing and likely future uses of the former Bundarra hospital site, Uralla Bowling Club, Uralla Fire Station, Old Uralla Literary Institute building and ‘The Glen’ recreation area north of Uralla;
• Applying a B2 local centre zone and B4 mixed use zone to the general business district in Uralla; and
• Better defining four local heritage locations as heritage conservation areas, namely the Bundarra CBD, Uralla CBD, Rocky River locality and the former Wollun village.

The draft LEP attracted 41 submissions when it was publicly exhibited in August-September 2011, and Council made amendments to the draft, where appropriate, to some of the issues raised in submissions.

“This new plan replaces the previous LEP which dates back to 1988, making this an important milestone for Uralla. It will position the Shire to manage future growth, while recognising and protecting its important natural environments and drinking water catchments,” Mr McGaffin said.

**Department media contact:** Laurel-Lee Roderick, (02) 9228 6128 or 0429 153 139

**Council media contact:** Tom O’Connor, General Manager, (02) 6778 6302