

Response to the Northern Star about Environmental Zones in the White Paper and the e-zones review for Northern Councils

Claim: That by listing the E3 zone under a “Rural” category and the E4 zone under a “Residential” category in the White Paper, the government is planning to abolish the environmental protections that currently exist in those zones.

RESPONSE

The White Paper has been released for public comment and feedback on the indicative list of zones is encouraged.

The zones are yet to be finalised and the transitional arrangements for Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plans (including transition of current zones) into Local Plans are still to be prepared.

However, it is incorrect to suggest that the changes would abolish the environmental protections that currently exist in the E3 and E4 zones.

The important environmental values of areas currently in those zones will still be protected.

This will be achieved by development guides in the Local Plan which would specifically address the impacts of development.

Protection will continue to be provided because the guides will control the intensity and extent of development and will require the planning authority to consider potential impacts on the environment.

The E3 Environment Management Zone has been categorised as 'Rural' in the new indicative zones list because councils have generally allowed for a wider range of uses in this zone, such as agriculture, bed and breakfast accommodation, farm stay accommodation, farm buildings and educational establishments.

The E4 Environmental Living Zone has been categorised as 'Residential' in the new indicative zones because it is currently used for low impact residential development in an area with special ecological, scientific or ecological value.

However, as noted above, guidelines to protect and manage lands with special ecological attributes, whether in Rural or Residential zones, will form part of the Local Plan to ensure that development does not adversely impact on those values.

More information, including how to lodge submissions, can be found at:
www.planning.nsw.gov.au/newplanningsystem

Question: When will there be an announcement on the e-zones review of North Coast councils?

RESPONSE

The consultant's interim report on the review of environmental zones on the Far North Coast is scheduled to be submitted in June.

The public will then have further opportunity to comment on the review and the Interim Report through a formal public exhibition process.

Following a review of submissions, the consultant will submit a Final Report.

Detailed information about the review can be found at:

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/planning-reviews-and-panels#ezones>