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**Office of the Director General**

Mr David Evans  
General Manager  
Maitland City Council  
PO Box 220  
MAITLAND NSW 2330

Y09/2115

Attention Leanne Harris

Dear Mr Evans

I refer to Council's request for endorsement of the 2008 Edition of Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy. Endorsement of Council's settlement strategy is an important step under the planning system, and consistency with an endorsed Strategy is a key consideration for the Department when reviewing draft principle LEPs, requests for LEP amendments and consideration of Planning Proposals under the Gateway System which commenced on July 1.

Council's approach to strategic planning demonstrates its commitment to planning the future of its local area. I congratulate Council on producing this document which will continue to provide the strategic basis for detailed local planning of the Maitland Local Government Area (LGA). I am pleased to conditionally endorse the 2008 Edition of the Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy (MUSS) in the following specific terms:

- Category 1 Residential, Category 2 Residential, Category 1 Industrial and Preferred Rural Residential, as mapped within the 2008 Edition, are endorsed. It is noted that the precise boundaries of the nominated sites will be clarified during the rezoning process, and that the prioritisation of sites will be regularly monitored to ensure an adequate supply of land is maintained.
- The concept of identifying areas suitable for 'residential extension' is supported and the 'residential extension' site mapped within the 2008 Edition is endorsed. It is understood that Council will provide details of additional residential extension sites for endorsement, prior to the preparation of the Maitland LEP 2011.
- The concept of identifying areas within the LGA as having potential for infill development and urban renewal is supported. However, the Department has not considered in detail the areas identified and therefore does not endorse the specific boundaries of the areas mapped within the 2008 Edition. In regards to the local renewal corridor in particular, Council will need to consider how to manage potential impacts of the corridor on highway traffic as part of more detailed planning analysis.
- Due to the lack of certainty over the location and nature of development within the preliminary investigation areas, these areas are not endorsed at this time. However, further investigation into the desired future of these areas is supported where consistent with the broader objectives and principles of the MUSS.

The following issues are also noted:

- The MUSS identifies a range of further investigations and studies in relation to most nominated potential release areas (investigation areas) in order to demonstrate the suitability and capacity of particular sites to accommodate future development. It is noted and supported that, in addition to these site-specific investigations, the Council intends to review a broader range of issues, including environmental issues, through the preparation of the new comprehensive LEP and DCP.
- Council's concerns over the ability for new release areas within the LGA to achieve the desired average density of 12 dwellings per hectare, as identified in the LHRS, are noted. Council has highlighted that densities being achieved in recent residential release areas are less than the 10dwg/ha target adopted by Council in 2001. While the Department recognises that varying density outcomes are likely and desirable across the LGA, in response to individual site characteristics and the need for choice of housing types, means of increasing overall densities over time should be examined more fully – either within future editions of the MUSS or by other mechanisms - to ensure efficient use of the available land.
- Council's assessment of population growth, dwelling supply and demand are noted. In particular, Council's attention to addressing the relevant expectations of the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy for the Maitland LGA, with regard to population growth and related employment and dwelling needs, are commended.

Council is requested to make copies of this letter, outlining the Department's conditional endorsement of the 2008 Edition, available to the public via inclusion in hard copies of the document and displayed on Council's website.

Should you have any further enquiries about this matter, I have arranged for Ms Katrine O'Flaherty, Environmental Planning Officer, Hunter & Central Coast Region, to assist you. Ms O'Flaherty can be contacted at the Department's Newcastle Office on telephone number (02) 4904 2718.

Yours sincerely



Sam Haddad  
**Director General**

1/9/2009