

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Our ref: IRF 25/648

Mr Derek Finnigan
General Manager
Muswellbrook Shire Council
PO Box 122
MUSWELLBROOK NSW 2333

Via email: council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au
sharon.pope@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

6 May 2025

Muswellbrook Shire Council Local Housing Strategy 2024

Dear Mr Finnigan

I refer to Council's request that the Department approve the Muswellbrook Local Housing Strategy 2024 (LHS). I would like to acknowledge and commend Council on its significant efforts and commitment to strategic planning in Muswellbrook in preparing the Strategy.

I am pleased to approve the LHS, subject to the following conditions:

- the preliminary strategic investigation of land on Lot 121 DP 568222 and Lot 102 DP 819359 for residential accommodation is supported considering its proximity to existing urban land.

Further detailed investigations will be required to address a range of issues such as the management of areas of high environmental value, strategic agricultural land, natural hazards including bushfire risk as well as land use conflict including proximity to land zoned SP2 Sewerage System;
- the proposed investigation of 8637 New England Highway, Muswellbrook for temporary worker accommodation is not approved at this time due to its existing conservation zoning and isolated location. Zoning of this land can be reviewed via an addendum to the LHS upon delivery of enabling infrastructure and completion of appropriate supporting studies; and
- any future proposals must demonstrate strategic merit consistent with the requirements of the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 and be supported by an assessment of site-specific development constraints to confirm land suitability and consistency with relevant State Environmental Planning Policies and section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.

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Ongoing collaboration with the Department along with other key agencies such as Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and Transport for NSW (TfNSW) will be crucial in the successful implementation of the LHS.

Preliminary consultation has been undertaken with DPIRD and DCCEEW regarding the final LHS and their correspondence is enclosed for Council's information. I encourage Council to proactively engage and work with relevant agencies in relation to matters such as important farmland, land use conflict and potential high environmental lands.

When undertaking the next update of the Local Strategic Planning Statement, Council should ensure that it is consistent with the Department's approval of the LHS. It is also recommended that Council consider the completion of a rural land use strategy to address how productive agricultural land in the local government area will be protected into the future, noting that the LHS will replace the Muswellbrook Residential and Rural Residential Strategy 2014.

Should you have any enquiries regarding this matter, I have arranged for Ms Kate Campbell, Senior Planning Officer to assist you. Ms Campbell can be contacted on 5778 1401 or via kate.campbell@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Diss".

Craig Diss

Director, Hunter and Northern Region

Encl.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development correspondence

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water correspondence