

6 December 2018

William Ginn
Capital Country Estate
capitalcountryestate@gmail.com

Dear Mr Ginn

Vision Statement – Peri Urban Area

I refer to the recent meeting with representatives from your group regarding a vision statement for the peri urban area along the NSW/ACT border. I apologise for the delay in responding.

Council considered the Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) response to its request for endorsement of the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy at its meeting on 24 October 2018. The Department endorsed the strategy other than the transition zone/buffer area along the NSW/ACT border. However Council resolved that:

1. *The endorsement of the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy by the Department of Planning & Environment be noted.*
2. *The Department of Planning & Environment be requested to reconsider its view on the proposed Transition Zone or buffer area as:*
 - a. *It is considered to be an essential element of the Settlement Strategy to:*
 - *Maintain the rural landscape and environmental values of this area on the approaches to and departures from Canberra*
 - *Restrict speculative urban development along the NSW/ACT border*
 - b. *The South East & Tablelands Regional Plan does not identify growth areas for Yass Valley other than Parkwood. The Regional Plan recognises that each jurisdiction plans for its own population growth and the Settlement Strategy details the priorities for the growth areas in Yass Valley not provided for in the Regional Plan*
 - c. *The Settlement Strategy has identified urban growth areas at Yass, Murrumbateman and Parkwood. Cross border planning, as outlined in the Regional Plan, should focus on these areas only*
 - d. *The ACT Planning Strategy does not identify any cross border growth areas to meet its growth needs and representations made by the ACT Government have supported the transition/buffer approach outlined in the Settlement Strategy*
3. *Local State and Federal Members be made aware of Council's position in relation to development and growth for the Yass Valley.*

Council has requested a joint meeting with DPE and ACT Planning to discuss further this element of the strategy.

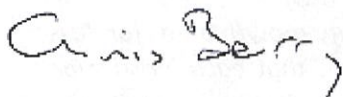
Council has already established its vision for Yass Valley and the area along the NSW/ACT border. In addition Council has set its priorities for the projects to implement the strategy recommendations and will scope these projects closer to when they are due to commence. In the interim the vision in the strategy for the transition zone/buffer area to remain generally unaltered, protecting the identity and containment of Gundaroo and Sutton settlements, protecting the biodiversity, important environmental corridor and natural resources of the area, containing the urban growth of the ACT will remain the Council's policy position in considering any development proposals.

Your group's paper outlines a possible process for developing an alternate vision and/or more detailed plan for the area with a view to progressing planning ahead of Council's priorities. Your review of the strategic context seems to suggest a vision based on rural residential development of the area which is inconsistent with Council's current position for the area to remain largely unaltered. It is also inconsistent with the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan Direction 25: Focus housing growth in locations that maximise infrastructure and services. This direction states *"Pressure for housing in NSW is driven by ACT policies for more compact settlement and housing affordability. Demand for lower density or semi-rural housing in NSW is leading to development proposals that are inconsistent with current planning strategies in areas close to the NSW-ACT border – mostly within Yass Valley Local Government Area. These proposals could undermine sustainable urban outcomes from identified new urban areas and place undue pressure on infrastructure capacity."*

Your group is entitled to develop its own draft planning proposal and Council would consider it in light of the current NSW Regional, ACT and Yass Valley planning strategies and form its view as to whether or not the proposal should process to the next stage in the planning process. There are mechanisms to have a decision of Council reviewed if you are dissatisfied with the outcome.

The process you outline for developing your vision and proposal is based largely on engaging with elected representatives. This in my view needs to be balanced with a similar level of engagement with planners and representatives of State agencies and Council. The DPE web site outlines the process for Planning Proposals at <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Local-Planning-and-Zoning>.

Yours sincerely



Chris Berry
Director Planning