



Mayor's Office

LISMORE CITY COUNCIL

BP13/1078

EF12/514

15 October 2013

The Hon Brad Hazzard
Minister for Planning and Infrastructure
Governor Macquarie Tower
Level 31
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Minister Hazzard

RE: Coal Seam Gas (CSG) Exclusion Zones

I write to you as Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and Lismore's Mr Thomas George MP and Premier O'Farrell in relation to the proposed exclusion zones for Coal Seam Gas (CSG) as released on October 3, 2013.

Firstly, Lismore City Council congratulates you and your government on the introduction of the two kilometre residential exclusion zones to prevent CSG affecting populated areas. We are very pleased with this initiative that gives comfort to many in our Local Government Area in both urban precincts and areas of rural settlement.

We have some concerns however about the criteria used to determine other exclusion zones and seek clarification on how they are determined.

As an example, we seek a review from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure on the definition of 'village'. Council notes that Modanville and Bexhill are included in the proposed exclusion zones while other localities with similar amenities and land uses are not. Council respectfully requests that the exclusion zones include all localities with a school and a 'village type population' with a variety of lot sizes. These localities would include, but not be limited to Rosebank, Richmond Hill, McLeans Ridges, Goolmangar, Jiggi, and Coffee Camp. Council would welcome the opportunity to have further discussions regarding these communities that have schools, preschools, halls, sporting facilities and, in two cases, general stores.

In addition, Lismore LGA is the home of Rural Land Sharing Communities (multiple occupancies) with land use patterns similar to rural residential development. These RLSCs have a variety of residential lot sizes and some have a school, hall, communal meeting space and a shop.

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Council has noted with some interest that particular protections have been proclaimed for the Hunter Valley's wine making and horse stud industries. We congratulate the government for recognising the value of these areas of the economy and request that the highly-productive food producing area of the North Coast also be afforded similar protection. Our LGA is unique in its small scale farming of sub-tropical crops such as mangoes, macadamias, coffee, tea, custard apples, low chill stone fruits, citrus and a myriad of other crops. Our farmlands including dairies are small and highly productive and we have a growing farm tourism market with an emphasis on organic farming practices. Council is committed to protecting our food growing sector and would like the State government to offer the same level of protection as is offered in the Hunter Valley.

Council would also like to see exclusions zones to include our precious water catchment areas. Rocky Creek Dam is one of the most pristine catchments in the state and should be protected from disturbance. In addition, Rous Water supplements the region's drinking water by pumping from Wilson River on the outskirts of Lismore. This water is collected from an extensive catchment of creeks and streams.

In short, our community is expressing considerable concern about their lack of protection from CSG to which 87% of our LGA's population expressed opposition in the poll conducted in September 2012.

On behalf of Council and the community we serve, I therefore request that the contents of this letter are carefully considered by our state government so that the strongly-held views of our people are respected and represented.

I look forward to receiving your response to these requests and express Lismore City Council's willingness to work with you on these important matters.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Dowell'.

Cr Jenny Dowell

Mayor – Lismore City Council