



Mr Alex Davidson
President, 5 Acres Now Inc.
PO Box 6164
DURAL NSW 2158

11/13356

Dear Mr Davidson

I refer to your letter of 25 July 2011 to the Director General regarding the Hills Shire Council draft Principal Local Environmental Plan. The Director General has asked me to thank you for your letter and reply on his behalf.

I note your comments concerning the minimum lot size standard for rural areas under the draft Hills Principal Local Environmental Plan. I note that you have made a submission to Council regarding this issue when the Hills Shire Council draft Principal Local Environmental Plan was recently exhibited, and thus have taken the appropriate course of action in this instance.

As stated in your correspondence, the main reason for a 40 hectare minimum lot size in rural areas is to protect agricultural land and to prevent fragmentation of the land in the potential urban areas.

I have been advised that the Department supported Council's resolution to reduce minimum lot size in the Rural 1(a) zone in Nelson and Maraylya as this land:

- o Already comprises numerous existing small lots;
- o Directly adjoining North West Growth Centre with access to roads and services;
- o Is relatively unconstrained land with few threatened species, bushfire hazard and slope constraints; and
- o Is directly opposite small lots in the adjoining local government area.

As per previous correspondence on this matter, were Council to decide to significantly increase subdivision potential in other rural areas that do not share these characteristics, the Department is likely to require such a resolution to be supported by appropriate strategic studies. This is a matter for you to discuss with the Hills Shire Council in the first instance.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely


Neil McGaffin 6.9.11
**Executive Director
Planning Operations**