

BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

ALL COMMUNICATIONS
MUST BE ADDRESSED TO
THE GENERAL MANAGER

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Native Vegetation Regulation Review
Conservation Policy and Strategy Section
Level 12, PO Box A290
Sydney South NSW 1232

Dear Sir

Re: Balranald Shire Council Submission on the Native Vegetation Regulation Review.

Council welcomes the freeing up of obligations for landholders presently dealing with fences, roads and land clearing under Native Vegetation legislation and buildings such as sheds, dwelling improvements or worker accommodation under Planning Legislation. However, the concern for Council centres on the complex method of approval via a number of agency processes, to source gravel for road making purposes.

The majority of sites Council uses are from what could be considered the roadside or within a road reserve, and to a lesser degree borrow pits on adjacent Western Land leases. Council has, of recent times, put considerable effort towards restoration of country roads affected by the second of two recent flood events, and this complex approval process has undoubtedly caused some delay and consequent expense.

In respect of the gravel issue, the areas concerned are treated as though they are virgin country, where they are generally highly disturbed sites with little resemblance to the original landscape. A suggestion is to have some exemption process for disturbing sites with little semblance to virgin country. What needs to be balance is environmental protection versus the provision of safe roads for the public to travellers.

There is also a challenge with offset requirements for clearing for new gravel pits. Council has no tracts of land that could be used for offset purposes. The one size fits all approach needs review.

In respect of planting of salt bush, currently a cultivation permit is needed for such activity. Salt bush planting is a form of drought proofing with native vegetation, which should be encouraged. However a cultivation permit is required. The land where a farmer typically would have a cultivation permit is too valuable to plant salt bush. The appropriate location for salt bush is marginal country that is not suitable to crop. This is also something that could be reviewed.

This submission is not confidential.



Chris Littlemore
General Manager
24/08/2012