



12 August 2013

Ms Sherilyn Hanrahan  
Strategic Land Use Planner  
Lithgow Council  
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Lithgow NSW 2790

Email: lep@lithgow.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Hanrahan

**RE: Public Exhibition – Planning Proposal for Draft Principal Lithgow City  
Environmental Plan 2013**

I am writing in response to the Public Exhibition of the Planning Proposal for the Draft Principal Lithgow City Environmental Plan 2013. Please find below a response from Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District.

**Potential to Influence Health through the Local Environmental Plan**

Lithgow Council through its Local Environmental Plan has the potential to impact on the underlying causes of acute and chronic illness and injury, by zoning and facilitating the development/ creation of local environments that are conducive to health. This in turn, can have positive impacts for the local communities. Diseases and injury such as cardio-vascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, depression, obesity, some cancers, asthma and fall injuries are influenced by lifestyle factors. Evidence shows that the built/ urban environment can influence the prevalence of these illness through providing opportunities for recreational/ physical activity (for all ages), promoting access to affordable and healthy food choices, providing shade to protect from the sun and ensuring that families and communities are connected and not isolated from each other and from essential services.

Some healthy built environment recommendations that may be considered by council to minimise any of these influences include the following:

- Explore how planning instruments can support increased availability of healthy food such as fruit and vegetables to support its residential areas. Consideration of preserving specific areas for agricultural lands should be balanced with other land uses.
- Town centres are spread throughout the LGA and there should be provision during the planning phases to provide accessible, viable public transport. In terms of active transport consideration should be given to cycleways and pathways to and around major residential and commercial centres. Active transport requires a considerable investment in infrastructure and would require its own action plan.

- The plan indicates that the supply of affordable housing is considered in its strategic planning and that the dwelling mix is considered. There is a mix of large residential lots as well as higher density such as multi dwelling houses.
- The connectivity for both public transport and communication needs to be considered around and between town centres.
- Lithgow Council's LEP provides a mix of residential and industrial zoning which should support the stimulation of the local economy and help meet the need to offer an increased choice and number of local jobs and training. This also supports the local environment and health of the community with less travel time and car usage. This is better addressed at the Development Control Plan and Development Application level.
- To assist the community in active transport, use of public recreation, cycleways and pathways would require Council to focus on crime prevention and community safety. This would increase the use of cycleways and pathways and therefore the physical activity within the community if safety is addressed correctly.
- Green spaces, parks and natural environments are considered. When allocating this usage beyond just the zoning there are many healthy built environment factors to consider. These are better addressed at the Development Control Plan and Development Application level.
- The natural environment adds the community's desire to be out and about to enjoy what is around them. Consideration of appropriate use of these areas would support the community's physical activity. Where zoning provides open space for public recreation consideration needs to be given to planning for appropriate shade, bubblers and setting along with other facilities such as toilets.
- The LEP as a planning tool does not address social infrastructure component from a transport perspective. There is limited or no mention of other social cohesion infrastructure such as community centres, community day care centres, pre-schools etc to support this. These again, are best addressed at the Development Control Plan and Development Application level.

### **General Environmental and Health Considerations**

While not necessarily considered at the LEP stage these should be incorporated by council at other stages of planning:

- Declare publicly managed areas smoke-free within the LGA such as sporting fields, parks including children's playgrounds, pedestrian malls/ plazas, covered bus stops and taxi ranks and outdoor dining areas. This aligns with recent changes to legislation.
- Provide a permeable network of physically separated off-road pedestrian and cycle lanes for all roads that connect destinations such as transport hubs, schools, workplaces, shops and community facilities. It is vital on safety and usage grounds that these pedestrian

and cycling pathways are physically separated by barriers or buffers such as a high gutter or a vegetation border.

- Provide adequate cycle parking and bicycle lockers at key destinations such as neighbourhood and local centres, shops, workplaces and other major destinations throughout the LGA (not just at railway stations and bus interchanges).
- Provide signage with appropriate information about walking and cycling routes, including destinations, distance and travel time, at appropriate locations.
- Provide adequate rest stops such as shaded seating areas on walking routes and footpaths.
- Encourage the collection and appropriate use of rainwater for non-potable uses in areas where a town water supply is available. The enHealth Rainwater Guidelines provide guidance on safe use of rainwater.
- That all rainwater or other water sources provided to the public by Commercial operators for potable use in non-reticulated areas (no town supply) should provide a Water Management Plan and must comply with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.
- That all proposed new developments which include constructed wetlands or other open stormwater management structures should be required to provide a risk management plan for mosquito management.
- That all recycled water is assessed and managed using the Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling.
- That all proposed new developments should be required to assess the risk of excessive heat and other extreme weather events impacting on residents this should include strategies to limit the impact of heat waves and other extreme weather events, including but not limited to building design and landscaping modifications (mitigation and adaptation).

### **Health Services Provision and Staffing**

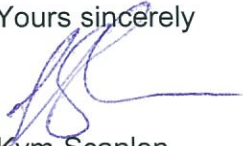
Another issue for the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District arising from the LEP concerns the provision of appropriate health care services in the Lithgow LGA. Lithgow Hospital provides district level health care to the residents of the Lithgow LGA, with links to Nepean Hospital which provides for tertiary/ specialist level health care. Portland Tabulam Health Centre provides residential aged care as well as sub-acute health care services. Community health centres are located in Lithgow and Portland providing community based services to residents.

It is important that the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District remain informed of developments within the Lithgow LGA that may impact on service provision, particularly for community based health services.

The Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District is a large employer in the Lithgow LGA, generally relying on staffing being recruited locally. This in turn is impacted by having local job opportunities for partners, having housing options available and schools which children can attend. These issues are reflected in the economic and residential developments outlined in the Lithgow LEP.

If you have any further queries please contact Kym Scanlon on 4734 2497.

Yours sincerely



Kym Scanlon

**Director, Planning, Strategy and Epidemiology**  
Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District