

PLANNING PROPOSAL – INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the proposed amendment to the Walgett Local Environmental Plan 2013 (WLEP)?

Answer: The intended outcome is to enable intensive plant agriculture to be undertaken within the shire without development consent being required. These provisions have preliminary support from the Department of Agriculture and similar proposals have been adopted by other NSW Councils including; Moree, Warren, Narrabri and Coonamble.

2. What is intensive Plant Agriculture?

Answer: “intensive plant agriculture” is defined in the Walgett Local Environmental Plan as being any of the following—

- a) the cultivation of irrigated crops for commercial purposes (other than irrigated pasture or fodder crops),
- b) horticulture,
- c) turf farming,
- d) viticulture.

3. Why has Council decided to allow intensive plant agriculture in the Walgett Shire

Answer: Intensive plant agriculture is a legal and legitimate use of land. Council is allowing an opportunity for public comment regarding these proposals. Council will be guided in its consideration by the NSW Government, relevant legislation and submissions from the public.

4. The planning reports and documentation seem unnecessarily complex.

Answer: The planning documents and explanative material are complex, but the reader will be rewarded with a better understanding of the proposal and the process for considering amendments.

5. Will the amendment change the process for allowing land clearing.

Answer: Council has made a decision to exhibit an amendment to the current planning Scheme (WLEP) this does not remove the role of the various NSW Government departments involved in issuing approval for land clearing.

6. Will the proposal remove Council from the process of approving land clearing?

Answer: Under the existing planning scheme, Council would be required to refer a development application for land clearing to the NSW Department of Agriculture and NSW Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment who have expertise and legislative responsibility in relation to these matters. If the amendment was approved landowners would deal directly with the various government departments.

7. Does Council intend to proceed with the proposal for intensive plant agriculture?

Answer: The planning proposal does not reflect any decision or intent by Walgett Shire Council. Council will fully consider the proposal and any submissions following public exhibition.

8. How do I make a submission regarding the proposed planning proposal?

Answer: Council's community consultation policy allows a period of 28 days for receipt of submissions and outlines the requirements for making a submission. A copy of the policy is available on Council website.