

Par Com DO

Reply from Steve Baxter
10-1-96

Dist.

✓ Fenian

✓ Graham (2nd copy 10/2/96)

Down

✓ Hill -

✓ Edche



NEW SOUTH WALES

MINISTER FOR URBAN AFFAIRS AND PLANNING
MINISTER FOR HOUSING

Copy to
Ruth Dobano
16.5.96

Level 33
Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

YOUR REF:

OUR REF: RML 58114

Phone: (02) 228 4499
Fax: (02) 228 3716

10 JAN 1996

Councillor Diana Roberts
Pan-Community Council
PO Box 102
NIMBIN NSW 2480

Dear Ms Roberts.

The Hon Paul Whelan LLB MP, Acting Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning, Acting Minister for Housing has asked me to respond on his behalf to your correspondence concerning the re-instatement of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15 - Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land.

The Policy was repealed on 1 December 1994 by the former government. As you are aware a re-appraisal of multiple occupancy and SEPP 15 is underway in the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. It is expected that this appraisal will be completed shortly. The Minister has noted the concerns raised in your letter in regard to timing and issues to be covered in the review, and has asked the Department to take these matters into consideration as part of its current re-examination of multiple occupancy.

The Minister acknowledges your offer to participate in a review of the Policy and to visit multiple occupancy communities in your area. However, until the Minister has considered the Department's report, it would not be appropriate to respond to these suggestions.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to the Minister's attention.

Yours sincerely

Steve Baxter
Acting Chief of Staff

Pen Com 28/2/96

Re Baxter letter. Why no reasons given for refusing to give us opportunity to be heard.

Why should we not see that such denial is ultra vires "natural justice" & F.P.A.A.!

By it violates the admirable principles of the Acts of F.P.A.A.!

If Grafton not involved, then must be being "redressed" in Lgd, and if -

- if based on Ponder we have legal unsatisfactory

- if not based on Ponder & someone else is involved, then we should be consulted!



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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Steve Baxter', written over a circular stamp.

Steve Baxter
Acting Chief of Staff

Danire

Feedback from Grafton 2008 staff
member (name unknown) 'no cost/should
not rely on exp. review by a Act
Consultant re MO (ref^{to} Pardon)
presumably

Craig Belamie has done a
"plant flammability" list re fire
fighting. This appears to be =
to "fire retardant" species.
used by Robin Francis.

8/1/96

Pen Com DO

Pen Com Strategy/Letter re discussion with Graham

and/or A.G.
Invite Whitton to call on enquiry 5.100?
an 'proceed in affair' not 'followed by'
former Whitton.

ref to our letter for this issue
no us as shareholder is we have
standing.

Graham
Back and Feb.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: Simon Clough

FAX No:

DATE: 17-1-96

*Included letter from
Steve Smith of 10 Jan 96*

Number of pages (including this sheet): 3

SUBJECT: Reinstatement of SEPP-15

COMMENTS: Herewith statutory suggestions for discussion.

Di & Graham have copies and we have had preliminary
joint discussion. Graham will be back on 2nd Feb.

Peter.

11.4.95

DETA

Knowles as Min of Housing can direct
the DWP land be evaluated for land
swap.

As Min of Housing he supports a land swap.

- This is good motivation for him to get
involved. - viz housing (of DETA),
coastal protection policy/management
crown land
native title.
habitat integrity/biodiversity.
zoning
catchment.

re DWP & alternative.

NB the guidelines re A range re 'first principles'
approach can/should be applied by DWP
in considering French rehab. wetland
design. NB DETA may appeal against
DWP decision/stall.

Let DWP go to Steering Committee.

Tel: (066) 22 2019
Fax: (066) 22 0350



The Honourable Janelle Saffin, M.L.C.
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel: (02) 230 2111
Fax: (02) 233 3661

ATTENTION: Diana Roberts Cr 066-891130

FROM: Janelle Saffin MLC

14th December 1995

Dear Diana,

I received your fax and your kind words. They are very welcome at the moment. Government is tough and being a backbencher is tougher.

I (today) put a letter under Craig's door asking him when the SEPP 15 will be reintroduced. I believe it will soon go before Cabinet.

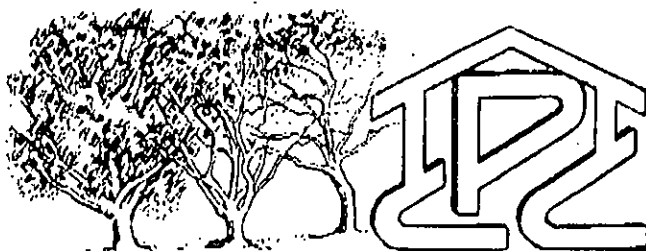
I asked Craig if he was going to visit in December, January and if he was would he consider visiting an MLC community and if so to contact you. I said you would be fine with him.

From the 21st December until 31st January 1996 myself, Tim & Ned (who is already there) will be in Thailand. My Secretary-Researcher Andrew Hagedus will be working through. He operates from my home office so please contact him if you need any assistance. I also told Craig this as well.

I hope Diana you have a pleasant season and like you I hope 1996 is an exciting and fruitful year. Thank you for your support and understanding. It is important to me to hear from you.

Jan B. 24/9/97

- She & Dan had personal session with Carr & Premier's staff re SEPP-15 last week & questions without notice asked on Seaview St DA.
- The officer & Carr concerned at media coverage that Dan Boff is + has got - v. Pam Allen re Highway or NBS. eg Dan's claim re a Commission for NCP & mediator in Kibb.
short & strong
- An assurance SEPP-15 will be reinstated.
- Ditto Coastal Policy, said they are waiting on final legislation re a finalisation of a property on the South Coast. Release said to be a "few weeks away".
- She report to the staff that Jnette Allen (a known staff) had worked for Webster (& spoken highly)



PAN-COMMUNITY
COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 102,
NIMBIN 2480

Hon. Craig Knowles MP,
Minister for Housing and
Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning,
PO Box 30 Governor Macquarie Tower,
1 Farrer Place,
Sydney 2001

November 29, 1995

Dear Minister Craig Knowles,

We are writing in response to your letter dated 17 July 1995 concerning the reinstatement of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15 - Multiple Occupancy (MO).

1. We understood from your letter that a reappraisal of SEPP 15 was to be undertaken by the Dept. of Urban Affairs and Planning. We have not as yet been contacted by your Department in this regard and are most concerned (a) at the delay and (b) that any such review be based solely on the Purdon report. We again draw your attention to the sentiments expressed in our letter of 12 May 1995, that in any review of the former policy we would be "happy to participate and indeed believe we may be able to make a special contribution in this regard".

2. SEPP 15 was an important policy to those of us who live on communities on the north coast of New South Wales. It gave many low-income people an opportunity to buy into or establish a land-sharing community and provided low-cost housing opportunities, particularly important at times of high unemployment and relatively few secure rental housing options.

Houses on MOs are generally owner-built with the community providing labour, a pool of expertise and shared equipment. Houses are constructed on low-incomes without loans which encourages use of recycled building materials, on-site materials such as poles, stone or mud bricks, and low cost materials such as sand, sawdust and cement infill, all to Council's satisfaction.

3. Many MO communities are to be found utilising land that has little value in the traditional rural sense because this is the more affordable land and can be purchased mortgage free. For example, most MOs are situated on degraded or steep land that is not viable for large scale residential or economic farming practices. Land use is therefore devoted to small scale agriculture, horticulture, forestry, wilderness, parkland and recreational purposes. MO communities are gradually rehabilitating their land, eliminating weeds and making a voluntary contribution to reforestation. Such land care and repair will be of State benefit to future generations. In addition, on MO communities solar, water or wind energy and composting toilets are the norm rather than the exception and most communities collect their own water rather than relying on the town supply.

4. A community lifestyle provides many other benefits. Shared skills leads to provision of home heating, home burials, home birthing, local bushfire management, bulk food buying, pooled transport, supplementary garden produce, support for single-parent families and aged residents, shared community childcare and co-operative self-employment. Extended family and community living provides a range of role models for the younger generation and affords a high "quality of life".

5. Ideally we believe that local Councils should put in place their own planning policies to permit Multiple Occupancy development of rural land but this is yet to happen for most Councils on the north coast and possibly elsewhere. One of the main objections that is raised when Councils consider this matter is the claim of there being a rating inequity. While we appreciate that the matter of rating is not a planning matter under your jurisdiction we make the following comments as background information in the event that this may be raised by those on the other side of the House:

On MOs the share of rates paid by a household depends upon the size of the property and the number of houses. This results in those on some communities paying less, and others more, per house than the average rural residential ratepayer. In the case of one of our members with a few families on a large property they are paying three times the average rural residential rate. If opponents of multiple occupancy were genuinely concerned about rating inequity they would be asking questions about caravan parks, mobile home parks, boarding houses, aged retirement units and flats which all have "multiple occupancy" of the land yet pay only one rate, based on land value.

To us it is clear that the opposition to MO development is about far more than rates. Much of it is based on prejudice and ignorance of a lifestyle choice and land ownership option that would be of great benefit to future generations. Shared land ownership is full of personal challenges not the least of which include finding constructive ways to resolve conflict, development of negotiation skills, learning to share, extending trust and openness, a respect for differences and the building of a rewarding lifestyle for ourselves and our children.

6. As you may have been advised, we made ourselves available to assist the Department's consultant, Purdon & Associates, in the conduct of their review of the Policy. We placed on record at the time that aspects of the survey methodology were severely flawed and drew attention to the fact that conclusions based on such data were therefore subject to being flawed. This proved to be the case.

You may not be aware however that the findings, conclusions and recommendations made by Purdon's were not made available to us until some five months later, which was after the repeal of the Policy by Minister Webster. We believe a serious miscarriage of justice occurred when the former Minister denied us the opportunity to see the report and be heard before making a decision that so materially affected our interests. We were advised that at law "procedural fairness" had not been followed by your predecessor. However, we refrained from taking action at that time due to the pending State election.

It is for these reasons that we now seek a partnership arrangement in the review of the Policy. We are willing and able to bring a high degree of expertise and experience to any comprehensive review process. We seek your support to this end.

7. We understand from discussions with your office that you may be visiting the north coast over the December - January period. Should this eventuate we would like to again extend to you an invitation to visit some Multiple Occupancy communities in this area. We feel it would be desirable for you to visit both established communities and more recent communities in order to get a feel for the diversity of our form of housing and the evolution of community life. We would be more than happy to arrange an itinerary to suit your convenience. Please contact us at the earliest opportunity if you are able to visit this area during the forthcoming Parliamentary recess.

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you a strategy for the review and reinstatement of the former Policy.

Yours sincerely,



Diana Roberts
Lismore City Councillor
Co-convenor Pan-Community Council

*Text for my list
of Nov 29, 1995*

Hon. Craig Knowles MP,
Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning,
Minister for Housing,
PO Box 30 Governor Macquarie Tower,
1 Farrer Place,
Sydney 2001

Dear Minister,

We are writing in response to your letter dated 17 July 1995 concerning the reinstatement of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15 - Multiple Occupancy (MO). We understood from your letter that a re-appraisal of SEPP 15 was to be undertaken by the Dept. of Urban Affairs and Planning. We are anxious to know if these investigations have commenced and when SEPP 15 is to be reinstated.

SEPP 15 was an important policy to those of us who live on communities on the north coast of New South Wales. It gave many low-income people an opportunity to buy into or establish a land-sharing community and provided low-cost housing opportunities, particularly important at times of high unemployment and relatively few secure rental housing options. Houses on MOs are generally owner-built with the community providing labour, a pool of expertise and shared equipment. Houses are constructed on low-incomes without loans which encourages use of recycled building materials, on-site materials such as poles, stone or mud bricks, and low cost materials such as sand, sawdust and cement infill.

Many MO communities are to be found utilising land that has little value in the traditional rural sense because this is the more affordable land and can be purchased mortgage free. For example, most MOs are situated on degraded or steep land that is not viable for large scale residential or economic farming practices. Land use is therefore devoted to small scale agriculture, horticulture, forestry, wilderness, parkland and recreation. MO communities are gradually rehabilitating their land, eliminating weeds and making a voluntary contribution to reforestation. Such land care and repair will be of benefit to future generations. In addition, on MO communities solar, water or wind energy and composting toilets are the norm rather than the exception and most communities collect their own water rather than relying on pumping from creeks.

A community lifestyle provides many other benefits. Shared skills leads to provision of home healing, home burials, home births, local bushfire management, bulk food buying, pooled transport, supplementary garden produce, support for single-parent families and aged residents, shared community childcare and co-operative self-employment. Extended family and community living provides a range of role models for the younger generation and a generally high "quality of life".

Ideally we believe that local Councils should put in place their own planning policies to permit multiple occupancy development of rural land but this is clearly not going to occur within most Councils on the north coast. The main objection that is raised when Councils consider this matter is the issue of rating inequity. Certainly, the larger communities pay less per house in rates than the average rural residential ratepayer. However, rating is based on land value and is not a rate for use of Council services. The rural landowner with freehold title has a more valuable asset than the MO resident and the assessed land value on large blocks is less per hectare than on small lots.

If opponents of multiple occupancy were genuinely concerned about rating inequity they would be asking questions about the vacant lot where no-one lives; the farmer who pays very high rates; the pensioner who gets a rebate; caravan parks, mobile home parks, boarding houses, aged retirement units, flats which all have multiple occupancy of land yet pay only one rate, based on land value.

*Council
omit
this
for
length*

As 40% of MO residents in the Nimbin district live at Tunttable Falls Co-operative (the first MO community) it's worth considering Tunttable a little more closely. Tunttable pay approximately \$65 per house in rates a year which, because of their size, is the lowest rate paid by any MO community in the Lismore Council area. However, at no cost to Council, Tunttable has provided a pre-school, a primary school, a community hall, a shop and postal outlet, a youth club and fire fighting equipment. All of these are maintained by the Co-op and made available to the wider community. In addition, as with all MO developments, Tunttable are responsible for the upkeep and construction of their own internal road network, many residents pool transport and the community helps to maintain Council owned roads.

To us it is clear that the opposition to MO development is about far more than rates. Much of it is based on prejudice and ignorance of a

lifestyle choice and land ownership option that would be of great benefit to future generations. Shared land ownership is full of personal challenges not the least of which include finding constructive ways to resolve conflict, development of negotiation skills, learning to share, extending trust and openness and a respect for difference.

We understand from discussions with your office that you may be visiting the north coast over the December - January period. Should this eventuate we would like to again extend to you an invitation to visit some multiple occupancy communities in this area. We feel it would be desirable for you to visit both established communities and more recent communities in order to get a feel for the diversity and the evolution of community life. We would be more than happy to arrange an itinerary for you within a given time frame. Please contact us at the earliest opportunity if you are interested.

We would appreciate hearing from you of progress regarding the reinstatement of SEPP 15. Despite rumours to the contrary we have faith that the Labor party will honour its pre-election promise to reinstate the policy.



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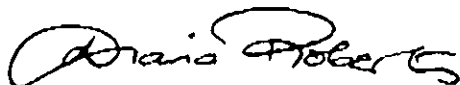
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We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you a strategy for the review and reinstatement of the former Policy.

Yours sincerely,



Diana Roberts
Lismore City Councillor
Co-convenor Pan-Community Council

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: Trevor Prior

FAX No: 420640 DATE: 22-2-96

Number of pages (including this sheet): 3

SUBJECT: Review of SEPP-15

COMMENTS: I append copy of correspondence from Steve Baxter, Acting Chief of Staff for the Acting Minister of 10 Jan 1996, in regard to the above matter for your information.

We note that "a reappraisal of SEPP-15... is underway".

We note also the acknowledgement of our offer "to participate in the review" but that it "would not be appropriate to respond to (this) suggestion".

We seek such support as is open to you to have us invited to participate in the Review in terms of Item 6 of our correspondence to the Minister of 29 November 1995.

In particular we seek that the Minister does not endorse the "procedural unfairies" followed by

2.

his predecessor in this regard.

I would appreciate your phone call to discuss these matters.

Regards;

Peter Hamilton

for Pan Community Council mo Review Collective.

Alan - for your info >

LEP Amendment No. 26 - Community Title Subdivision of Existing Multiple Occupancies
(Responsible Officer - Graham Meineke)

The Department of Urban Affairs & Planning has not issued an exhibition certificate for this amendment. A report on this matter will be before Council at its meeting of March 5 canvassing options to progress this amendment.)

9-12-95

Knowles left for Europe 18-12-95 & will be back end of Jan.

(1) Alice? (Knowles office)

A minute is being prepared to go to the next Cabinet meeting (ie late Jan) to "reintroduce the Policy as is" (in accordance with the undertaking of the Minister & Minister) and then reviewed.

A reply to our letter is being prepared. The normal turnaround for correspondence is 4-6 weeks

Acknowledgement of our letter "probably in next 2 weeks"

Paul Whelan is the Acting Minister while Knowles away. He will not be acting on our matter.

"The Minister has left instructions to 'progress' a report to Cabinet".

(3) Strategic Option. Delegation to Carr. - Mont/James etc

(2) Isabella Adams (Manager - Executive Support Group)
She knows who is likely to be handling this matter (in Lyd staff). She will contact him & get back to me. (Sounds helpful)

(7) Here again. Had spoken with Steve Bower & Chief of Staff & need file. "We would be happy with the result". When? Unknown.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: Isabella Adamson

FAX No: 02-3912351

DATE: 19-12-95

q phone
-2210?

Number of pages (including this sheet): 4

SUBJECT: Review of SEPP-15 Multiple Occupancy

COMMENTS:

Herewith copy of our letter of 29 November as discussed.
I seek your early advice on the status of the
review of this Policy.

Peter Hamilton Co-ordinator Pan Community Council.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

✓
TO: Colin James

FAX No: 02-3513855

DATE: 1-12-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 4

SUBJECT: Visit by Craig Knowles to M.O.s

COMMENTS:

Herewith correspondence for your information.

We understand that Parliament closes on 14 Dec. and will not resume until after the Federal election which is expected may be 9 March.

Peter Coming report is due to be published by DARP under the title "Catchment Planning Approach to Rural Residential Development" and available before Xmas this year.

Any advance indication you or Karine may have on Knowles visit to this area would be appreciated especially as the last time he came to Byron we had only a few hours notice!

Regards to you both.

Peter.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

✓
TO: Dave Lambert.

FAX No: DATE: 1-12-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): This + 6

SUBJECT:

COMMENTS:

1/ Would you please note contents of the enclosed
and pass this on to Tony Belton or appropriate
Coordinator.

2/ Invoice.

Regards Peter

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

✓
TO: Secretary, The Channon Precinct Committee

FAX No: DATE: 1-12-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 7+5

SUBJECT:

COMMENTS: Would appreciate it if you would bring
this to the notice of MO's in the Precinct
area.

Thanks.

Regards Peter

✓ DENISE.

1/17/95

To From

Denise,

This compliments the note
sent with Leah.

Peter

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: Richard Jones

FAX No:

DATE: 1-12-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 4

SUBJECT: Reinstatement of SEPP-15 - Multiple Occupancy.

COMMENTS:

Further to my FAX of 22 Nov. I append our letter of 29 Nov to Craig Knowles for your information. Your continued support is much appreciated.

Regards,

Peter.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: Jan Cohen, Jan Barham

FAX No: DATE: 1-12-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 4

SUBJECT: Restatement of SEPP-15 Multiple Occupancy.

COMMENTS: Our letter to Craig Knowles follows for your information. If you should be able to get any indication of WHEN he may be coming up here I'd appreciate it if you would let me know right away.
Thanks

Regards

Peter.

~~20/11~~
Peter Cunningham Report: 29/11/95
On hand but does not yet have
minutes release ok. but
expected this before Xmas.
She will ring me re release
& cost.

1/4/12/95 Grafta.
Will ring me when avail.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO:

FAX No:

DATE: 1.12.95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 5 5

SUBJECT: Possible visit to mos by Craig Knowles.

COMMENTS: General update

Minister Craig Knowles indicated earlier in the year that he wanted to visit examples of mos but may not be able to do so until the Xmas recess of Parliament. (Parliament closes on 14 Dec and will not resume until after the Federal election which is expected may be 9 March.)

Our "network" indicates that he will be in this area in the forthcoming period.

Knowles has stated publically that he and the Party, are committed to reinstating the Policy.

We are advised of his interests particularly in respect to his responsibilities re housing and the ways mos may be contributing to savings in the cost of the State infrastructure services.

The material in this letter is directed to addressing some of these issues.

On past experience it may be that we will have but short notice of a visit by Knowles. (It appears that he is not anxious to capitalise on such a visit for publicity purposes!)

I am hence flagging to be prepared for a visit by Knowles at short notice.

The DDAP is publishing the Peter Cuming study of alternative forms of rural residential development under the title "Catchment Planning Approach to Rural Residential Development". This is scheduled to be released before Xmas this year! This study supports mo along with a similar physical "cluster" form of development based on Community Title.

The Foreword to this publication has been written by Knowles.

Please keep in touch if you are going to have a different phone/FAX contact over the Dec-Jan period.

Regards

Peter

She has not FAX of knowle
letter to

to Taron P.

o Janelle S

6/12/95

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO:

FAX No:

DATE: 1-12-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 5

SUBJECT: Possible visit of mos by Craig Knowles.

COMMENTS:

Minister Craig Knowles indicated earlier in the year that he wanted to visit examples of mos but may not be able to do so until the Xmas recess of Parliament. (Parliament closes on 14 Dec and will not resume until after the Federal election which is expected may be 9 March.)

Our "network" indicates that he will be in this area in the forthcoming period.

Knowles has stated publically that he and the Party, are committed to reinstating the Policy.

We are advised of his interests particularly in respect to his responsibilities re housing and the ways mos may be contributing to savings in the cost of the State infrastructure services.

The material in this letter is directed to addressing some of these issues.

On past experience it may be that we will have but short notice of a visit by Knowles. (It appears that he is not anxious to capitalise on such a visit for publicity purposes!)

I am hence flagging to be prepared for a visit by Knowles at short notice.

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The Foreword to this publication has been written by Knowles.

Please keep in touch if you are going to have a different phone/FAX contact over the Dec-Jan period.

28.11.95

Di,

Herewith comments for your consideration.

I suggest extra paragraphs were indicated, and, numbering by loose subject matter.

I have taken the approach that a review of the Policy (in which we are involved) is appropriate with the implication that "reinstatement" would follow this review.

Having in mind the forthcoming Federal election Knowles may wish to get political mileage by reinstating the Policy as part of the election campaign, especially in view of the marginal seats in this area.

Parliament closes on 14 December and will not resume until AFTER the Federal election which is expected will probably be 9 March.

Regards

Peter

I am hence flagging to be prepared for a visit by Knowles at short notice.

The DVAP is publishing the Peter Cuming study of alternative forms of rural residential development under the title "Catchment Planning Approach to Rural Residential Development". This is scheduled to be released before Xmas this year! This study supports mo along with a similar physical "cluster" form of development based on Community Title.

The Foreword to this publication has been written by Knowles.

Please keep in touch if you are going to have a different phone/FAX contact over the Dec-Jan period.

IP = new para. / space

Hon. Craig Knowles MP,
 Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning,
 Minister for Housing, and (ie put Housing first!)
 PO Box 30 Governor Macquarie Tower,
 1 Farrer Place,
 Sydney 2001

IP — Dear Minister, *Craig Knowles,*

We are writing in response to your letter dated 17 July 1995 concerning the reinstatement of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15 - Multiple Occupancy (MO). We understood from your letter that a re-appraisal of SEPP 15 was to be undertaken by the Dept. of Urban Affairs and Planning. ~~We are anxious to know if these investigations have commenced and when SEPP 15 is to be reinstated.~~

IP We have not as yet been contacted by your Department in this regard and are most concerned (a) at the delay and (b) that any such review be based solely on the Purdon Report.

We again draw ~~to~~ your attention, the sentiments expressed in our letter of 12 May 1995 that in any ~~review~~ review of the former Policy that we would be "happy to participate and indeed believe we may be able to make a special contribution in this regard."

2. SEPP 15 was an important policy to those of us who live on communities on the north coast of New South Wales. It gave many low-income people an opportunity to buy into or establish a land-sharing community and provided low-cost housing opportunities, particularly important at times of high unemployment and relatively few secure rental housing options. Houses on MOs are generally owner-built with the community providing labour, a pool of expertise and shared equipment. Houses are constructed on low-incomes without loans which encourages use of recycled building materials, on-site materials such as poles, stone or mud bricks, and low cost materials such as sand, sawdust and cement infill, all to Council's satisfaction.

3. Many MO communities are to be found utilising land that has little value in the traditional rural sense because this is the more affordable land and can be purchased mortgage free. For example, most MOs are situated on degraded or steep land that is not viable for large scale residential or economic farming practices. Land use is therefore devoted to small scale agriculture, horticulture, forestry, wilderness, parkland and recreation. ^{for use} MO communities are gradually rehabilitating their land, eliminating weeds and making a voluntary contribution to reforestation. Such land care and repair will be of ^{state} benefit to future generations. In addition, on MO communities solar, water or wind energy and composting toilets are the norm rather than the exception and most communities collect their own water rather than relying on ~~pumping from creeks.~~ the town supply.

4. A community lifestyle provides many other benefits. Shared skills leads to provision of home healing, home burials, home birth^{ing}, local bushfire management, bulk food buying, pooled transport, supplementary garden produce, support for single-parent families and aged residents, shared community childcare and co-operative self-employment. Extended family and community living provides a range of role models for the younger generation and, ~~a generally~~ ^{provides} high "quality of life".

5. Ideally we believe that local Councils should put in place their own planning policies to permit Multiple Occupancy development of rural land but this is ~~clearly not going to occur within~~ most Councils on the

^{yet to happen for}
north coast and possibly elsewhere.

~~north coast~~ ^{one of the} ~~the main~~ objections that is raised when Councils consider this matter is the ^{claim} ~~issue~~ of rating inequity. While we appreciate that the matter of rating is not a planning matter under your jurisdiction we make the following comments as background information in the event that this may be raised by those on the other side of the House.

On MOs the shared rate paid by a household depends upon the size of the property and the number of householders.

This results in ~~some~~ those on some communities paying less, ~~per house~~ and others more, per house than the average rural residential ratepayer. In the case of one of our members with a few families on a large property they are paying six times the average rural residential rate?

Certainly, the larger communities pay less per house in rates than the average rural residential ratepayer. However, rating is based on land value and is not a rate for use of Council services. The rural landowner with freehold title has a more valuable asset than the MO resident and the assessed land value on large blocks is less per hectare than on small lots.

Drop? In purchasing a property MO members will normally take into account the economic saving flowing from the assessed land value on large blocks being less per hectare than on small lots.

Drop? If opponents of multiple occupancy were genuinely concerned about rating inequity they would be asking questions about the vacant lot where no-one lives; the farmer who pays very high rates; the pensioner who gets a rebate; caravan parks, mobile home parks, boarding houses, aged retirement units, flats which all have "multiple occupancy" of land yet pay only one rate, based on land value. the

Could omit this for length. Omit. As 40% of MO residents in the Nimbin district live at Tunttable Falls Co-operative (the first MO community) it's worth considering Tunttable a little more closely. Tunttable pay approximately \$65 per house in rates a year which, because of their size, is the lowest rate paid by any MO community in the Lismore Council area. However, at no cost to Council, Tunttable has provided a pre-school, a primary school, a community hall, a shop and postal outlet, a youth club and fire fighting equipment. All of these are maintained by the Co-op and made available to the wider community. In addition, as with all MO developments, Tunttable are responsible for the upkeep and construction of their own internal road network, many residents pool transport and the community helps to maintain Council owned roads.

6. To us it is clear that the opposition to MO development is about far more than rates. Much of it is based on prejudice and ignorance of a

lifestyle choice and land ownership option that would be of great benefit to future generations. Shared land ownership is full of personal challenges not the least of which include finding constructive ways to resolve conflict, development of negotiation skills, learning to share, extending trust and openness, and a respect for differences.

and the building of a new way of life for ourselves and our children.

7. As you may have been advised, we made ourselves available to assist the Department's consultant, Pardon & Associates, in the conduct of their review of the Policy.

We placed on record at the time that aspects of the survey methodology were severely flawed, and drew attention to the fact that conclusions based on such data were therefore subject to being flawed. This proved to be the case.

You may not be aware however, that the findings, conclusions and recommendations made by Pardon's were never made available to us, until some five months later, following the repeal of the Policy by Minister Webster.

We believe a serious miscarriage of justice occurred when the former Minister denied us the opportunity to see the report and be heard before making a decision that so materially affected our interests.

We were advised that at law "procedural fairness" had not been followed by your predecessor.

We refrained from taking action at that time due to the pending State election.

It is for these reasons that we now seek a partnership arrangement in the review of the Policy.

We are willing and able to bring a high degree of expertise and experience in any comprehensive review process. We seek your support to this end.

8. We understand from discussions with your office that you may be visiting the north coast over the December - January period. Should this eventuate we would like to again extend to you an invitation to visit some Multiple Occupancy communities in this area. We feel it would be desirable for you to visit both established communities and more recent communities in order to get a feel for the diversity and the evolution of community life. We would be more than happy to arrange an itinerary for you within a given time frame. Please contact us at the earliest opportunity if you are interested, able to visit this area during to suit your convenience. (the Parliamentary recess. Forthcoming)
- of our form of housing

Orin We would appreciate hearing from you of progress regarding the reinstatement of SEPP 15. Despite rumours to the contrary we have faith that the Labor party will honour its pre-election promise to reinstate the policy.

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you a strategy for the review and reinstatement of the former Policy.

Di RobertsNth Coast Office of Education
Transaction Report by Natural Account

Document	Do	G/L	Adm	Explanation	G/L	Account	Debit
		Date		Account Description			

To
Di Helter

Grand Total

 Posted
Unposted

12,992.

We want a review of ^{old} SBPPs
(we have suggestions for ways in which
the former SBPPs could be improved)
(re general notice to L)

We ask that we be consulted in respect
to any review process.

Some of our concerns do not fall within the scope
of the Pondera Body etc

5-11-95

Di,

Herewith some background notes and suggestions re proposed letter to Craig Knowles for discussion at your convenience.

It may also be worthwhile for one of us to contact Janelle in case she is aware of Knowles visit or has suggestions of other issues not covered here.

Regards

Peter

Discussion notes re proposed letter to Craig Knowles

Aim

On the indication that Knowles does plan to visit this area over the Dec-Jan period and is seriously interested and prepared to visit mo's, that a letter be sent to him, reiterating what we have said before, including the invitation to visit some mo's.

Introduction

The following notes are based on recent discussions with Colin James, Peter Cuming, Trevor Prior and members of the Ministerial staff.

Background on Knowles (the person) and departmental Policy.

Colin has had recent contact with Knowles:—

△ Found him to be responsive, concerned and committed to addressing housing & planning issues.

(Recall he has a planning degree, worked in the Dept. for Gabrielle Kibble, was Mayor of a suburban Council)

△ His "heart is in the right place"!

△ Sees that he perceives himself to be surrounded by conservative bureaucrats!

△ He is committed to honouring the election promise to reinstate the mo policy.

△ He is interested in a "grassroots" approach.

Issues understood to be of interest and concern to Knowles.

- how cost housing, and, housing for those on low incomes
- Concern that the Dept of H. is now facing the cost dilemma of "maintaining -v- replacing" old Dept. houses

He has interest in possibility of a "self-help maintenance" component.

Issues which I see support mo's addressing such concerns:-

- * Use of cheap land, eg recycle banana or dairy land
- * Mortgage free land purchase

* Assessed "land value" on large blocks/ha. is less than on small lots.

* mo facilitates:-

- owner built homes (shared help, shared tools)
- use of recycle building materials,
- use of on-site materials (round poles, mud bricks etc)
- use of low cost materials (cement-sand and sandvust)
- a sustainable lifestyle.

* Re: Dispersed settlement seen as adding disproportionately higher infra-structure costs to the State.

Examples of mo self-sufficiency, ie not dependent on the State - own water

- own electricity (solar, water, wind etc.)

- home health & healing (home birthing - v - hospitals
home burials - v - cemeteries)
- local bushfire management (advance control
of urban areas)
- high "quality of life"
- income generating (self employment)
- bulk food buying
- supplementary garden produce
- shared transport (reduced road usage)
- waste disposal (compost toilets etc)
- facilitates the care of old folk

(1)

- Housing for Aborigines - cluster living and the
individual house form

(cf. Eddie's contract from Dept H re no option
for group of women plus children in Byron Shire
or Lismore (if no reinstated).

- Effect of Dept Health policy re the deinstitutionalis-
ation of having long term patients in
hospitals etc is making an - extra demand
Dept of Housing.

(1)

- environmental care and repair
- educational facilities (Pre, Primary and Secondary
Community run schools.)

Not sent to Dr

(1)

o "A state wide SEPP policy may open the way to unbridled subdivision by speculative developers as happened with Dual Occupancy in some areas.

I maintain SEPP-15 was not subverted, in this way. Nevertheless we are vigilant about this and would like to build in further safeguards in the reinstating policy.

as eg CT

Freehold title, permitting incompatible new residents is inconsistent with the spirit of an "intentional community" lifestyle.

DUAP Publication

The DUAP is publishing the Peter Cuning report on alternative forms of rural residential development under the title "Catchment Planning Approach to Rural Residential Development".

This is scheduled to be released before Christmas. The Foreword has been written by Knowles!

This work strongly supports the mo form of settlement as one model.

Peter H. 5-12-95

Col James 2/11/95 re visit by Knowles?

He recently met with Knowles & found him responsive & concerned. He believes his tent is in the right place. Col senses that he is feeling constrained by conservative bureaucrats around him.

He has a special concern for

- o aboriginal housing
- ooo low cost housing
- o cost of maintenance/repair of state housing
The bill for this has become enormous!
(cf grass lawns cutting in public areas in Aot.)

replacement cost of state housing at point where maintenance no longer cost effective.

Considering leasing (eg for say 20 yrs from a developer) i.e. "asset management planning" - ^{housing} lifecycle

- ooo interested in self help maintenance.
- ooo interested in infrastructure & cost savings to the state by intentional Communities.
(urban style & as being the only model he knows)
- ooo 90% of those on waiting list for housing are already on benefits of the 20% HB, pharma/disabled/health grants etc

NB. The Health Dept - Hospitals, Psych. Clinics etc policy of deinstitutionalising (ie turning people out & back into suburbs) has added to the strain on the housing stock.

ie the problems "unloaded" by Health Care to be picked up by Housing!

○ cost of housing as % of income.

Anette Fairbrother did a study using nationalised data on infrastructure costs (this would not capture HO lifestyle)

Concept of 'housing policy' as a 'safety net' to what?

Apparently 'case management' of SS model is being looked at. ie on a 1:1 basis what would need to happen to get most effective (& I don't think there's a solution).

of Emma management.

SS have contract specialist Companies.

○○○ Still crown/servitude of SS policy being off the rails & being supplied off by the developers.

Smart/utopian schemes referred to as 'see why' stuff.

Leeds House Co - have high flyer 'urban community' planning visiting Aust. Apparently he is into the "urban village". Leeds House seeing themselves as founders/prime actors in this new trend.

① Knowles is entrenched in ^{the} grassroots approach.

4

Peter Cunnings 5/14/95

Spoke with Knowles (or a sister) in Aug-Sept. & asked
had he seen his report on "All Forms of Rural
Dev." Apparently he had.

Travis had advised Peter due out before Knowles

Has been edited without reference (in part) to Peter.
viz the term "Hamlet" is replaced with
"Village" (meaning "inclusion").

New title = "Catchment Planning Approach to Rural
Res. Dev."

This is essentially what Peter submitted. It
includes no mention of Villages, sustainable
planning etc.

Travis has made the comment that it is probably
better to be coming out under their banner, they
may push it.

NB Knowles is/has done "previews" for it.

I suggested Knowles may be prepared to stop
over in Yamba and/or Belconnen

*

(Put Housing first!)

D

Hon. Craig Knowles MP,
Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning,
Minister for Housing, and
PO Box 30 Governor Macquarie Tower,
1 Farrer Place,
Sydney 2001

D

Dear Minister *Craig Knowles,*

(1)

We are writing in response to your letter dated 17 July 1995 concerning the reinstatement of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15 - Multiple Occupancy (MO). We understood from your letter that a re-appraisal of SEPP 15 was to be undertaken by the Dept. of Urban Affairs and Planning. We are anxious to know if these investigations have commenced and when SEPP 15 is to be reinstated.

TP

2.

SEPP 15 was an important policy to those of us who live on communities on the north coast of New South Wales. It gave many low-income people an opportunity to buy into or establish a land-sharing community and provided low-cost housing opportunities, particularly important at times of high unemployment and relatively few secure rental housing options. Houses on MOs are generally owner-built with the community providing labour, a pool of expertise and shared equipment. Houses are constructed on low-incomes without loans which encourages use of recycled building materials, on-site materials such as poles, stone or mud bricks, and low cost materials such as sand, sawdust and cement infill.

TP

3.

Many MO communities are to be found utilising land that has little value in the traditional rural sense because this is the more affordable land and can be purchased mortgage free. For example, most MOs are situated on degraded or steep land that is not viable for large scale residential or economic farming practices. Land use is therefore devoted to small scale agriculture, horticulture, forestry, wilderness, parkland and recreation. MO communities are gradually rehabilitating their land, eliminating weeds and making a voluntary contribution to reforestation. Such land care and repair will be of benefit to future generations. In addition, on MO communities solar, water or wind energy and composting toilets are the norm rather than the exception and most communities collect their own water rather than relying on pumping from creeks. *the town supply*

D

4.

A community lifestyle provides many other benefits. Shared skills leads to provision of home healing, home burials, home births, local bushfire management, bulk food buying, pooled transport, supplementary garden produce, support for single-parent families and aged residents, shared community childcare and co-operative self-employment. Extended family and community living provides a range of role models for the younger generation and a generally high "quality of life".

TP.

5. B

Ideally we believe that local Councils should put in place their own planning policies to permit multiple occupancy development of rural land but this is clearly not going to occur within most Councils on the north coast. ^{get to happen for} The main objection ^{is not} that is raised when Councils consider this matter is the issue of rating inequity. Certainly, the larger communities pay less per house in rates than the average rural residential ratepayer. However, rating is based on land value and is not a rate for use of Council services. ^{even where multiple occupancy may not be placed at the discretion} The rural landowner with freehold title has a more valuable asset than the MO resident and the assessed land value on large blocks is less per hectare than on small lots.

As you are aware TP

6

If opponents of multiple occupancy were genuinely concerned about rating inequity they would be asking questions about the vacant lot where no-one lives; the farmer who pays very high rates; the pensioner who gets a rebate; caravan parks, mobile home parks, boarding houses, aged retirement units, flats which all have "multiple occupancy" of land yet pay only one rate, based on land value. ^{the}

Could limit this for length

As 40% of MO residents in the Nimbin district live at Tuntabale Falls Co-operative (the first MO community) it's worth considering Tuntabale a little more closely. Tuntabale pay approximately \$65 per house in rates a year which, because of their size, is the lowest rate paid by any MO community in the Lismore Council area. However, at no cost to Council, Tuntabale has provided a pre-school, a primary school, a community hall, a shop and postal outlet, a youth club and fire fighting equipment. All of these are maintained by the Co-op and made available to the wider community. In addition, as with all MO developments, Tuntabale are responsible for the upkeep and construction of their own internal road network, many residents pool transport and the community helps to maintain Council owned roads.

Drop in site or into inst.

6

To us it is clear that the opposition to MO development is about far more than rates. Much of it is based on prejudice and ignorance of a

lifestyle choice and land ownership option that would be of great benefit to future generations. Shared land ownership is full of personal challenges not the least of which include finding constructive ways to resolve conflict, development of negotiation skills, learning to share, extending trust and openness and a respect for difference, *care for & repair of the land & safety & security in numbers.*

[] We understand from discussions with your office that you may be visiting the north coast over the December - January period. Should this eventuate we would like to again extend to you an invitation to visit some multiple occupancy communities in this area. We feel it would be desirable for you to visit both established communities and more recent communities in order to get a feel for the diversity *& owner built homes* and the evolution of community life. We would be more than happy to arrange an itinerary for you within a given time frame. Please contact us at the earliest opportunity if you are interested *able to visit this area to suit your convenience.*

2/ We would appreciate hearing from you of progress regarding the reinstatement of SEPP 15. Despite rumours to the contrary we have faith that the Labor party will honour its pre-election promise to reinstate the policy.

Accommodation for yourself (and family if applicable) can be arranged if so desired.

14 Dec MO

~~Wed back~~
~~R. Janelle~~

~~Fed March 92~~
~~after Feb election.~~

End

Some of our members have been involved in the
workshops run by ~~Participatory Planning~~ for your
Department ^{in all areas of rural res dev} ~~to~~ ^{the} results of which we can
understand are to be published in

(7) We understand that the findings of this study are due
to be published in "Catchment Planning Approach to
Rural Res dev". We believe that our 20
years of experience in this regard has a valuable
contribution to make in this regard.

2. In relation to this review we wish to point out that we are ~~convinced~~^{evidently} on record in previous correspondence as stating that the so called Ponder Report is seriously flawed in its methodology & its conclusions and, as such, any Dept review which draws conclusions or draws from it will be similarly inacceptably flawed

Many of the gross shortcomings of the Ponder Report are documented in a critique written by one of our members which we hereby offer to make available to the officers conducting the review

3. We would also point out that since the instigation of the Ponder Report, Pen Com has requested adequate consultation with these consultants which despite undertakings given to us, never eventuated. ~~For this~~ In this situation we believe we have clear grounds at law to challenge the consultants' process of investigating persons, based on consideration of "procedural fairness".
4. Such a challenge may be extended to any Departmental decision based on this Report.

Addendum to Knaule's letter from Pancom re SEPP 15

— From business reports near it is currently reviewing the former SEPP 15.

In addition to this review we wish to point out that we are consistently on record in previous correspondence as stating that the so-called Purdon Report is seriously flawed in its methodology & its conclusions & as such, any Departmental Review which draws conclusions or data from it will be similarly unacceptably flawed.

Many of the grave shortcomings of the Purdon Report are documented in a critique written by one of our members which we hereby offer to make available to the officers conducting this review.

We would also point out that since the issuance of the Purdon Report, PanCom has requested adequate consultation with these consultants which despite undertakings given to us never eventuated. In this situation we believe we have clear grounds to lawfully challenge the consultants' process of ^{investigation} ~~action~~ based on considerations of "procedural unfairness" & such a challenge may be extended to any Departmental decision based on this Report.

Dear Peter,

I printed this out today on someone else's printer
I'll be home tomorrow evening or Tuesday morning if
you want to give me feedback.

Diana.



PAN-COMMUNITY
COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 102,
NIMBIN 2480

July 16, 1995

The Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning
Mr Craig Knowles
Level 33, Governor MacQuarie Towers
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Craig Knowles,

re: The Minister for Planning's upcoming visit to the North Coast region later in July.

The Pan Community Council, as you are no doubt aware, is an organisation which represents Multiple Occupancy Communities (MOs) primarily on the North Coast of NSW.

It is our understanding that you, the Minister for Planning, will be visiting the North Coast of NSW on or around July 19-20, 1995.

We, the members of the Pan Community Council would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you while you are here. If time permits, we would also appreciate the opportunity to arrange an inspection for you of a member Multiple Occupancy community.

In particular we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the urgent need for the Government to reinstate SEPP 15 or similar planning provisions for Multiple Occupancies in NSW.

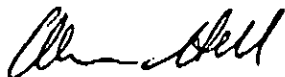
Arrangements for this meeting can be made by contacting Simon Clough on telephone number (066) 88 6217, or myself, Alan Hill, on telephone number (066) 89 7464 or Facsimile (066) 89 7552 anytime.

If the time does not permit a meeting with you during your visit here later in July, the invitation is always open at any time for you or any other Minister visiting this area at any time to meet with the members of the Pan Community Council. We would also appreciate the opportunity at any time of arranging an inspection of a member Multiple Occupancy community.

Thanking you in anticipation of your positive consideration of our requests..

We await your reply

Yours sincerely,



Alan Hill Dip.T., B.Sc.

For and on behalf of the Pan Community Council Coordinators:

Peter Hamilton

Architect-Planner

Alan Hill

Social & Environmental Planner

Dianna Roberts

Councillor, Lismore City Council

Simon Clough

Eddie Bulvids

Rob Doolan

TAFE Teacher

Architect

Planner

Facsimile

To Peter Hamilton

From: Alan Hill

Peter I have sent the
following two-page letter
because it is coming so
close to the time

Sorry for not having sent
a copy earlier.



6 pages following.



**MINISTER FOR URBAN AFFAIRS AND PLANNING
MINISTER FOR HOUSING**

Level 33 Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

YOUR REF:

OUR REF: **RML54191**

PO Box 30 Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Phone: (02) 228 4499
Fax: (02) 228 3716

17 JUL 1995

Cr D Roberts
Pan-Community Council
PO Box 102
NIMBIN NSW 2480

Dear Cr Roberts

I refer to your letter of 12 May, 1995 concerning the former State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) No 15 - Multiple Occupancy, which as you know, was repealed late in 1994.

In accord with the new Government's pre-election policy I have asked the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning to report to me concerning a number of current and former State Policies and I expect to receive advice on SEPP No 15 in due course.

Once the review is complete I will contact you again. Thank you for writing to express the Pan-Community Council's views.

Yours sincerely



**Craig Knowles MP
Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning
Minister for Housing**



PAN-COMMUNITY
COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 102,
NIMBIN 2480

MASTER

Letter to Knowles
12 May '95

Hon. Craig Knowles M.P.
Minister for Planning and Housing,
Parliament House,
Macquarie Street,
SYDNEY 2000

12th May, 1995

Dear Minister Knowles,

**Re: STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY 15 -
MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY**

I write on behalf of the Pan-Community Council (Pan-Com), established in 1989, which is an umbrella organisation for Multiple Occupancy (M.O.) communities in northern New South Wales.

Following our representations to Janelle Saffin prior to the recent State election, we were advised by her of the Party's support for the reinstatement of the above Policy. We understand that you were also involved in these negotiations.

Pan-Com was very concerned when Robert Webster repealed SEPP 15 without any public consultation on the report and recommendations made by the consultant engaged by the Department to review this Policy. This was regrettable, particularly in the light of our repeated unsuccessful requests to obtain a copy of this report.

Pan-Com is of the view that the M.O. Policy introduced by Premier Carr during his time as the Minister for Planning, has been achieving the aims of the Policy and has been very effective legislation.

SEPP 15 has enabled a sustainable family lifestyle option not otherwise available. This is particularly true in enabling owner-built, debt-free housing for those on low incomes.

U
In repealing the legislation Minister Webster proposed that M.O. settlement should be available at the discretion of each local Council.

Lismore City Council, which contains the largest number of M.O.s of any Council in the State, has declined to amend its LEP to permit new M.O. applications or to allow the expansion of existing communities.

Many existing M.O. communities have developed on the understanding that they would be able to expand if and when the need arose, for example when their children came of age and were looking to construct a house for their own family. (Such expansion of course, still being within the population threshold set in the Policy).

Several cases are known to us where existing M.O.s have already been disadvantaged in this way.

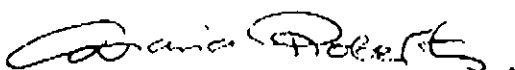
We submit that the above clearly demonstrates the need for a State Environmental Planning Policy for M.O.

We hence request that the SEPP 15 be reinstated in its present form, without alteration, as a matter of urgency.

We understand that there is a proposal to review all SEPPs. In the event of this happening we would be happy to participate in a review of SEPP 15 at that time, and indeed believe that we may be able to make a special contribution in this regard.

In conclusion we wish to extend to you a cordial standing invitation to visit representative M.O. communities in this area. We would welcome the opportunity to facilitate such a visit when you are next visiting the North Coast area.

Yours sincerely,



Diana Roberts
Lismore City Councillor
on behalf of Pan-Community Council

11/1/95

Jan Barlam

- Jan met with Knowles recently
- The review of a Liddle of SEPR is with Cabinet now & due to be released this month.
- SEPR15 is NOT end in this let

- Knowles says he wants to visit some mo's & ^{by end of the year} indication is that he may be clearing up the over time - and in particular to look at alternative (low cost) housing

- Knowles is cautious of an "involvement" & commitment to the no policy. He met Helman & was taken with his EXTS work on "sustainable planning" & has engaged him on an 'issues' basis.
- Pete is impressed with him in that he is personally committed to planning but has difficulty with accepting poor advice/proposals!

Apparently Housing takes up a lot of time & day to day issues.

- Caffer continues to following up the M.O. ^{"banseting"} as his constitutional concern. (the get one election endorsed it has taken so long policy in place).
Jan will try to find out when it goes to be sent & advise.

- Worth while to write a pair - reinforcing enviro/housing/inspection/consultation/no reliance on London
he definitely

① Helman was present in first meeting on NC issues
by his presence of planning. Took his share no.

① Sean O'Toole ^{As did}. He said under review - in other words he knew less
than I did. I advised him of bundle to Cabinet, &
SEPP-15 rep. That we were happy for re-iteration
provided consultation in review & no reliance by
the Dept on Pardon & reaffirming invitation to visit
over Dec.

4/11/95 TRM x 3

PAN Com

Dir Dick had heard via Gabrielle that
SAPP-15 not to be reinstated
Speculated reason being that it should be
dealt with at the local level

We to check with Cal

TRM Steve Baxter

PAM Sean O'Toole

TRM Cal

NR Janelle-Allen → Webster interaction

hobby car.

In Cohen etc to lobby car.

11/1/95

Alison Spizzo for Steve Easter
claimed "revised" did not imply
"reinstatement."

To check & ring me back.
I stated revised OK, provided we
had app to the hand.

Ref to R-Com.

① w/ Reply knowles no our doing revised &
this not helping solely on Pardon
cf with Trevor re this.

TR

~~D Conner~~
~~C Grant~~
~~T Coles~~
~~K Barlow~~
~~B Wilson~~
~~B Richards~~
J Skennar
C Flanagan

PS. keep
copy with
RHV appns

} re allowances
to replacements.

For info and return
to me please. It
will be filed under
QA at my desk.

Note to Kading.
to provide
Awareness.



20/7/95

Paul Lewis (D) 02-2284495

Press Sec? to Knowles

met at Byron Press Conf.

Knowles said in reply to Q from
Shard - Osborne is negotiating
SEPP-15.

- 0/ "Will be reinstated following review
which is taking place"
- 0/ Cabinet meeting in Manawellbach 25 Jan
(today)

0/ Send Photo Album with cover letter

✓ letter re arranging Mo in sp

3 issues re review of Policy, who/ how/
when/ consultation/ our input/
staged process as rec. etc

Vernon

28/7/95 via Graham I
Jan - John Maxwell will write
to knowles re to counter Switish
(Unclear if this in his name or
branch or both).

Graham will attempt to get
copy of letter if pass:

18 May 1995

reps

The Hon. Craig J. Knowles, MP
Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning and
Minister for Housing
12th Floor, Westfield Towers
100 William Street
DARLINGHURST 2010

Dear Craig

I am writing in support of the Pan-Community Council's application to have the State Environmental Planning Policy 15 - Multiple Occupancy reinstated.

You would well know that a number of conservative farmers were concerned at young people in particular moving into their communities on multiple occupancy.

I have visited several of these multiple occupancies and they are very valuable to establish communities for people who may in some cases be otherwise displaced in our community.

The introduction of the MO policy by Bob Carr was an enlightened advance in planning in New South Wales.

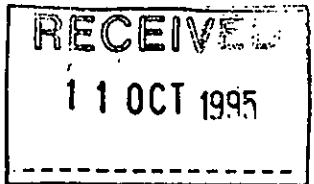
The greatest opposition to the old SEPP 15 was from National Party supporters. I might say that part of the reason for this, apart from having "undesirable" neighbours, was the fact that this skewed the voting towards progressives and did not favour National Party control of Local Government in particular Lismore and Byron Bay.

I believe that young people and alternative life stylers should have the greatest flexibility possible to allow them to pursue their lifestyles at an economical cost. I have noted that these multiple occupancies tend to improve the condition of the land with the planting of rainforest trees and intensive production of fruit and vegetables. It is my view that the land is actually more productive with MOs than with dairy farming.

I do hope you will act swiftly on this matter.

With best wishes

RICHARD JONES



MINISTER FOR URBAN AFFAIRS AND PLANNING
MINISTER FOR HOUSING

Level 33
Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

YOUR REF:

OUR REF: RML 54753

Phone: (02) 228 4499
Fax: (02) 228 3716

10 OCT 1995

The Hon. Richard Jones MLC
Legislative Council
Parliament House
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Jones,

I write in response to your letter of 18th May where you state your support for the Pan-Community Council's application to re-instate State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15 - Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land. This policy was repealed by the former government on 1 December 1994. The delay in replying to your letter is regretted.

A re-appraisal of SEPP 15 is currently underway by the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. Once I have considered a report on these investigations, I will write to you again with a decision on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Craig Knowles MP
Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning
Minister for Housing

Tel: (02) 230 2858



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
SYDNEY 2000

*Please excuse delay - due to staff changes
this got lost in files.*

Forwarded with the Compliments of

The Hon. Richard Jones, M.L.C.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

✓
TO: Ian Cohen, Jan Barham

FAX No: 02-230-2267 DATE: 17-11-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 3

SUBJECT: Reinstatement of SEPP-15 MO.

COMMENTS: Herewith copy of letter from Richard Jones to Knowles and reply for your information.

We are currently preparing a letter to Knowles in the hope that he will be visiting this area in the Xmas recess. Will keep you posted.

B. Peter

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: Richard Jones

FAX No: 02-2302871

DATE: 22-11-95

Number of pages (including this sheet): 1

SUBJECT: SEPP-15 Multiple Occupancy Reinstatements

COMMENTS:

Many thanks for your great letter to Craig Knowles re the above and his reply. Re the Government election promise to review all SEPP's, we are advised SEPP-15 is NOT part of the bundle of SEPP's currently before Cabinet for approval. We are not concerned by this and hope to see Knowles up here in the Xmas recess period. Kindest regards
Peter for PAW.com

Knowns

Potential moonsp. dates

- 5th Aug?
- 25 July ± 1 day?
- Special date?
- other?
- After next sub-orbital Dec.?

Advise Dr. particularly re 5th.

05 Aug - pourbaire. ~~Time~~ This?

0 Set

TRY Paul Stevens - ~~Set~~ number?

0 day ± 1 of 25th in Monroville

Knowles visited Ab. Housing at

Tabulum. Thurs. 20

21.7.95 Paul Levins (Chief of Staff)

Knowles visited Tabochem & his HQ discussing
some "food", some "pam/and". Flew out 3pm.

I advised if Knowles next visit was after next
sitting this would be late Dec. Inconvenient &
long way off!

I asked about Knowles opening of w/s 5 Aug in Bolivia.
He confirmed he was opening only & would not be
there all day.

He will check with his "movement/diary" sec & get
back to me. (He has my number)

[NB Send photo album]

Di has offered insp. of Pimpura, if connection
with Cabinet meeting at Monmouth on 25 July
is possible.

Heme 7.7.95 11044 B: 443

Roy Haywood. Computer officer Grafton DUP.

Steven Baxter, Senior Policy Advisor to Ministers
in the Ministers office.

02-2284499

A letter written to Minister will be given to
Dept for reply.
If a letter to Baxter, he may talk to the
Minister about it. It may then be
given to Dept for reply.
Rec. as "best opportunity of considered response"
(in light of his experience of how the "system
works")

He is aware of the many other things that Len O'Toole
has on his books, & in light of this, would
be surprised if he would treat me as of high
priority.

The "Urban Consolidation" SPP is one under active review
& hardly likely to be a review of anything else
in next 12 months (eg mo)

Jan Com

Yvonne Pison 20/7/95

He had seen today's NS
I advised Sam. O'Boyle had said statement
was being looked at in terms
of the Pardon Report.
He said he had not been involved in this.
In response to my comment, of his involvement
with it, he said it was prob. best that
someone else look at it fresh! (This is
a neat out for him & the Dept.)

Conclusion

Write to Whistler again re the Pardon issue.

I advised re.

○ mu → CT

○ see Scott Report & said I read there

the tonight. - + Handsard of Knowles &

Allen statement of policy

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979
STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY No. 42—
MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY OF RURAL LAND (REPEAL)

HIS Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, and in pursuance of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, has been pleased to make the State environmental planning policy set forth hereunder in accordance with the recommendation made by the Minister for Planning.

ROBERT WEBSTER MLC Minister for Planning.

Sydney, 19 October 1994.

Citation

1. This Policy may be cited as State Environmental Planning Policy No. 42—Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land (Repeal).

Aims, objectives etc.

2. The aims of this Policy are:

- (a) to repeal State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15—Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land; and
- (b) to allow a period of 2 months after the repeal of that Policy for the determination by a council of development applications made before the repeal concerning development to which that Policy applied.

Commencement

3. This Policy commences on 1 December 1994.

Definition

4. In this Policy, "SEPP 15" means State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15—Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land.

Land to which this Policy applies

5. This Policy applies to the land to which SEPP 15 applied immediately before its repeal.

Repeal

6. SEPP 15 is repealed.

Transitional provision

7. (1) A council may, at any time before 1 February 1995, determine a development application made to it before 1 December 1994 as if SEPP 15 had not been repealed by this Policy.

(2) Such a development application, if not determined before 1 February 1995, is taken to have been determined on that date by the refusing of consent.

(3) The Land and Environment Court may hear and dispose of an appeal made against a determination of a council pursuant to SEPP 15, or this Policy, as if SEPP 15 had not been repealed by this Policy.

END



13 October 1994

CHANGES TO MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY PLANNING

Following an independent review of the State policy on multiple occupancy of rural land, Minister for Planning and Minister for Housing, Robert Webster, today announced he would move for its repeal.

In future, local councils will need to prepare provisions in their local plans for the assessment of multiple occupancy applications.

Mr Webster said the use of the policy (*State Environmental Planning Policy No. 15 - Multiple Occupancy of Rural Land*) had declined since its inception in 1988, to the point where it no longer had a statewide application.

He said the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 specifies that State policies can only apply to matters of State significance.

"The review, undertaken by Purdon Associates, found that about 80 per cent of multiple occupancies are located on the North Coast," Mr Webster said.

"It is clear that in terms of the extent and range of its use the policy is not now serving a State need."

The Minister said he would seek to make a new policy which would introduce transitional provisions, enabling applications to be lodged with councils under SEPP 15 until 30 November 1994.

"The new SEPP would mean that councils may assess multiple occupancy applications, using the provisions of SEPP 15, until 31 January 1995," Mr Webster said.

"If councils have not prepared their own provisions by then, applications will be assessed using the matters outlined in section 90 of the Act," Mr Webster said.

end.

NOTES FOR USE BY IAN COHEN (re lobbying for reinstatement of SEPP-15).

Minister Craig Knowles visit to Dyron on 19th July 1995
by Peter Hamilton

We learnt of Knowles visit a few hours before his 30 minute press conference held in the park in front of the Top Pub. I attended.

All press and NBN were present. See N.S. coverage enclosed herewith.

He answered at length the questions put to him by Nick Shand and Robin Osborne (Hawke's Echo) about the reinstatement of SEPP-15, namely that he would reinstate the Policy following review of same.

No indication given on how long this would take. He said he did not know as review was being carried out on a number of SEPPs.

He was not actually asked if he was prepared to reinstate the policy "as is" and review it later (as is proposed in the Pan Com submission).

I understand, from senior Departmental staff, that in the process to review all SEPPs, priority is being given to those relating to "urban consolidation".

The so called review of SEPP-15 must be happening at the Lydney level as it is not happening

in the Grafton office. Reference was made to me that ~~the~~ the review involved the Pardon Report. It is to be noted that it was the Grafton office that dealt with Pardon in the conduct of the mo survey.

The Press Secretary - Paul Levins, accompanying Knowles was helpful and informative in my connection with him. You may find him of assistance in the future.

My overall impression was that Knowles was not going out of his way to maximise media coverage.

A handful of environmentalists present (B.F.C., B.E.C.O.N. etc). Bob Canning plus 5 Aborigines also present. Bob pressing the "racist" line, I presume in respect to W.O.S.

Knowles advised that Cabinet would be meeting in Monroville on 25th July. His Secretary said that this would probably be a fly in and out, on the same day, and that such regional meetings often coincided with public policy statements being made on matter(s) affecting the region.

(ie 19-20 July)

Knowles indicated that he would be visiting an m.c. on this visit but on my discussion with his Secretary about the impracticability of this at such short notice, he agreed that it should be left until a later time.

Knowles said that he planned to make another visit to this area after the conclusion of the next sitting of Parliament.

End.

29/6/95

Jan Burham Re SEPP.

Jan- Jurelle have been pushing SEPP
reinstatement, before review
with sunset cl. "as was." (Di will try to
make contact)

Entert. of consultation, if any -
doubt.

Placing & CHM just moved into & old
files lost / deleted by hand.

"Temp building" provisions coming



quit. no home

FAX.

Di/ Tzed Tnearedsa

✓ Maxwell

✓ Jack E.

✓ Democrats

✗ Not Jonelle (is will give her)
(is she her type?)

quit. FAX.

✓ Cohen

✓ Graham

✓ Cal J

✓ Kevin C. (posted)

✓ Denir/Ralph

✓ Bill Kidd. (x notice board)

✓ Maxwell

✓ Clough

✓ Alan Hill

~~RA's~~ ~~from~~

22/4/95

Derby 065-617364

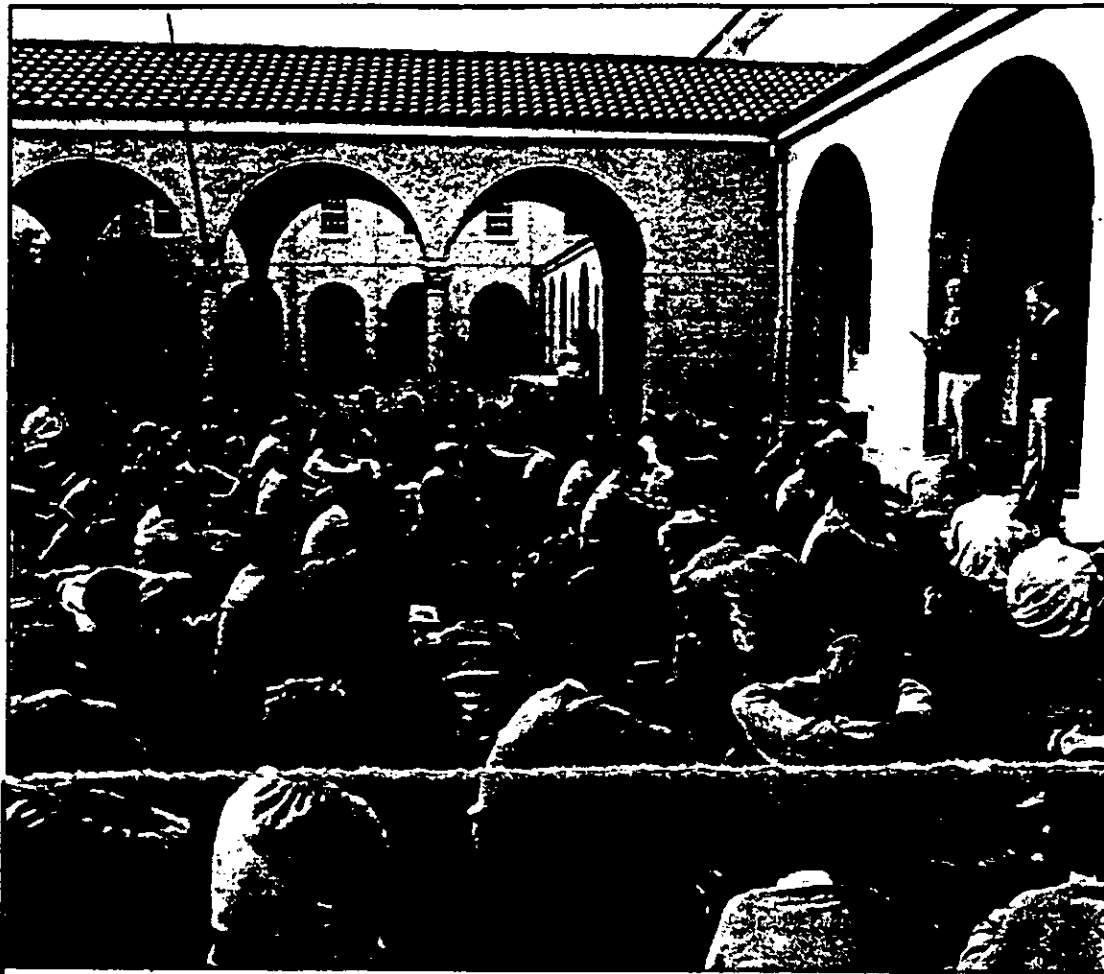
for Jonathan) he wants to submit no
→ A Kempsey area.

~~political debts A & M.O.S~~

~~had no Kempsey~~

~~would be entered MQ~~

Sydney Boys High: Energetic, innovative and enterprising



Sydney Boys High: Set to become a commercial high-flyer.

A leading selective school has launched into fully promoting the outside use of its facilities.

Asset rich, Sydney Boys High has employed a financial manager to take control of its "commercial awakening". The move is expected to pull in more than \$100,000 per annum within 12 months.

Sydney Boys is leasing facilities to the business sector and to community groups for a maximum financial return.

It is also making money by hiring its buildings to film crews shooting movies and to advertising agencies for television commercials.

Mr Cam Lyon, an "old boy" and former real estate investment consultant, was appointed as the manager of the Sydney High

School Foundation Incorporated - the school's corporate arm.

As a GPS (Great Public School) member, the school's resources have been stretched to cope with demands for extra-curricular activities and it has always vigorously sought ways to raise extra funds to offset this expenditure.

Its facilities were previously managed by the School Council but, because of the complexities, it transferred responsibility over to the Foundation.

Successful

The school had for many years hired out its facilities on an ad hoc basis but Mr Lyon was responsible for setting the wheels of enterprise in motion.

During the Royal Easter Show he raised more than \$17,000 by

promoting car parking on the school grounds in Moore Park.

Sydney Boys is the first public school in Australia to undertake such an innovative, commercial venture.

School Principal Bob Outterside fully supports the push to make the school a viable business operation.

Before appointing Mr Lyon, Mr Outterside was responsible for hiring out the school's facilities.

He said public schools lie idle for too long each day and, in times when money was tight, principals, teachers and parents should do all they could to raise funds.

Mr Outterside said, in the near future, the Department of School Education could consider

A letter to the Director

Dear Colleague,

Last week a school principal phoned a head office staff member and said: "I have a vacancy in my school executive but I don't want any of the people who are losing their jobs at Head Office to fill the position."

I would like the same principal (whose identity is not known to me) to phone me and make the same comment. If he did I would tell him these things:

- "Like all staff currently at head office, the person he rang insensitively cannot be sure of his own position. He is one of

people who may be looking for another position in schools.

- All members of the Teaching Service are colleagues whether they are working in schools or regions or head office.

- All efficient public sector employees, including members of the Teaching Service, whose positions are deleted through no fault of their own, are entitled to preference in consideration for vacant positions for which they are qualified.

- Teaching Service staff whose positions are deleted from head office are entitled to, and will be given, exactly the same assistance to gain an appropriate position as school-based staff who are nominated transfers.

- Many head office staff were chosen for their position through open competition with other members of the Teaching Service. They have been recognised as outstanding and highly-committed teachers and leaders in their field.

25/6/95

Cohen

Has not yet had a meeting with
Knowles re PEP-15. But did
raise it as I in the house at
wk June. Agreement with Gosh
for answers R & I within 35 days
(Unknown to Jan of this means
calendar days of sitting day)
He has/does seek Knowles in other
contexts
Next sitting is in Sept.

20/6/95 David Walker T21

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: Jan Barham "Greens"

FAX No: ~~02-2302978~~ DATE: 12.5.95

~~02-2333667~~
Number of pages (excluding this sheet): ~~02-2302978~~ 22.5.95 2

SUBJECT: Reinstatement SEPP-15

COMMENTS: Jan/Jan. Here with copy of letter FAXed to Knowles today. Hopefully he will get to see this before you meet him. OK by us for you to check with his Sec. David Mutton before hand if you want to do this.
Regards, Peter

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: *Col James*

FAX No: *02-3513855*

DATE: *17.5.95*

Number of pages (excluding this sheet):

SUBJECT: *Reinstatement SEPP-15*

COMMENTS: *Anything you can do to facilitate Knowles acting on this would be appreciated. Advise of any hitch or delay would also be appreciated.*

Regards to yourself and Karine. Peter.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: *Darin/Ralph.*

FAX No: *551888*

DATE: *17-5-95*

Number of pages (excluding this sheet): *2*

SUBJECT: *Reinstatement SEPP-15*

COMMENTS: *For your information and moag
support letter to Knowles.*

Regards.

Peter.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: *Richard Jones*

FAX No: *02-2302871* DATE: *17-5-95*

Number of pages (excluding this sheet): *2*

SUBJECT: *Reinstatement SEPP-15 Multiple Occupancy*

COMMENTS: *Congratulations on your reelection.*

Reinstatement was an ALP promise in the recent election. Anything you may be able to do to facilitate Knowles acting on this without delay would be appreciated. Regards, Peter.

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: *John Maxwell*

FAX No: *218015*

DATE: *17-5-95*

Number of pages (excluding this sheet): *2*

SUBJECT: *Reinstatement SEPP-15, M.O.*

COMMENTS: *Anything you can do to facilitate Craig Knowles acting on this without delay would be appreciated.*

Kind Regards

Peter

FAX DOCUMENT FROM PETER HAMILTON

1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, 2481 (066) 858 648 (F/T)

TO: *Simon Clough*

FAX No: *886193*

DATE: *17-5-95*

Number of pages (excluding this sheet): *2*

SUBJECT: *Reinstatement SEPP-15*

COMMENTS: *Letter as sent for your information*

Please bring to the notice of Dharmarada and other mo's with which you are in contact.

Peter

4 August 1995

The Hon. Craig Knowles,
Minister for Urban Affairs, Minister for Housing,
Level 33, Governor Macquarie Tower,
1 Farrer place,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister Craig Knowles,

Re: Proposed visit to a Multiple Occupancy community.

In our letter of 16 July 1995 we extended to you an invitation to meet with members of our Council and if possible to visit a member Multiple Occupancy community.

Having in mind that Multiple Occupancies are located in rural areas and that such properties are often large and dwelling sites often scattered due to the terrain we recommend that a minimum of about four hours should be allowed to permit a comfortable inspection and time for transport.

To give you an overview of one such Multiple Occupancy I enclose herewith "The Bodhi Farm Story" Album.

I would appreciate it if you would return same to me at the below address, at your convenience.

Yours Sincerely,

.....
Peter Hamilton
Co-ordinator, Multiple Occupancy Reinstatement Collective

Address: 1/50 Paterson Street, Byron Bay, NSW 2481

Anywhere else in the world, it probably would have been a strange mix.

A Government minister holding a Press conference at a beachside picnic table surrounded by members of the local media (naturally), environmental activists, Aboriginal activists, at least one prominent developer and several people representing concerned local interest groups – all wanting a piece of his time.

But at Byron Bay, the gathering barely rated a look from the oh, so cool people lucky enough to be enjoying some brilliant early afternoon winter sunshine in Apex Park at Byron Bay's Main Beach.

Well, maybe a sideways look when the television news crew started to film and photographers started clicking away. For Mr Knowles, his trip was a "listen" and "learn" exercise. He was on the Far North Coast to inspect what a preceding Press release described as key sites in need of environmental protection.

The release quoted him as saying that the Government's new Coastal Policy signalled its intention to protect the environment of the North Coast from "unsympathetic development".

And as part of the Government's commitment to preserving the North Coast he had decided to call a halt to the "Davkin tourist development proposal."

Well, not quite true as it turned out.

The "Davkin tourist development proposal" relates to the application by the Taylor family for tourist cabins on their property at Broken Head, adjacent to Taylors Lake.

Approval already has been given by the Byron Shire Council for seven cabins and the family was seeking approval for a further



Buttonholed: Mr Knowles and Mr Vidgen in deep conversation in Apex Park

Getting lunch not easy when you're a Minister

By GARY CHIGWIDDEN

three, closer to the lake.

To allow the further three cabins, the council sought a variation to the shirewide LEP which basically would allow it to use some flexibility in deciding wetland boundaries throughout the

entire shire.

And it is this variation that the minister said he had refused – thus putting the kybosh on the three cabins.

He suggested that the council should approach the Government on a site-specific basis on the issue of wetlands boundaries.

Then there was, what the Press release called, the North Ocean Shores "site."

This, the Minister is recorded in the release as saying, will be purchased by the Government and turned into a national park.

All of which was news to Chum Vidgen, the bloke who actually owns the "site".

Alerted to the contents of the Press release, Chum, who is based in Brisbane, turned up at the Beach Hotel (the scheduled site of a Press conference at 1.50 pm) at lunch-time on Wednesday to front the minister and find out what was going on.

He had heard nothing from anyone in the Government and naturally was anxious to find out what it was all about.

Basically, not too much.

The "site" purchase referred to in the Press release related to the already well-publicised Government plan to purchase 325 ha of Mr Vidgen's land – and nothing further.

But after inspecting the site with representatives of the conservation group, CONOS, Mr Knowles said he would be talking to the Environment Minister, Pam Allan about extending the Interim Protection Order that she placed over 500ha of Mr Vidgen's land.

Shortly after which the minister pleaded with the media and assembled onlookers to be excused so he could take a lunch and call of nature break – probably not in that order.

However, he had to hold on a little bit longer on the walk across the park to the Beach Hotel, as Mr Vidgen and other concerned citizens finally got to have a piece of his time. I didn't stick around to hear the results of those talks, but I trust Mr Knowles finally had some lunch – and made it to the men's room without disgracing himself.

Residents to have say on wards

Residents will get their chance to have a say on the introduction of wards with the Byron Shire Council voting last week to hold a referendum on the issue in conjunction with the September 9 local government elections.

And what residents will be asked is whether or not they favour the reduction in the number of councillors from 10 to 9, including the mayor and the division of the shire into four wards – one of three options put forward by the council's solicitors, Henningham and Ellis-Jones.

The other two options were:

- Do you favour the division of the Byron local government area into three wards?
- Do you favour the increase in the number of councillors from 10 to 13, including the mayor, and the division of the Byron local government area into four wards?

Under a four-ward system, voters would have

to elect two councillors for each ward with the mayor being elected on a shirewide basis. Additionally, the voting system would change from the proportional system to the optional preferential system.

An information package on the referendum question is to be prepared by consultants Purdon Associates Pty Ltd which will be posted to everyone in the shire on the electoral roll.

Cr Gwyn James said he strongly supported a referendum on wards "because it will clear the air once and for all".

Cr James said he favoured four wards and wasn't fussy whether each ward was represented by two or three councillors.

However, Cr Rhonda Ellis, said she was not concerned with which option was put to the people, because she believed voters would see that none of them were in their interests.

Meeting supports festival plan

A community-based Byron Bay Whale Festival seems almost certain to go ahead next year in July after a public meeting last Thursday unanimously endorsed the idea.

More than 30 people representing a wide cross-section of the community attended the meeting, organised by the chairman of the Byron Shire Arts Council, Michael Malloy. Mr Malloy described the support as "overwhelming" and the town had "finally found an issue we can agree on".

He said efforts now would be concentrated on

seeking funding and sponsorship for the festival, including an application for funding under the Federal Government's Creative Nation program.

Further discussions would be held with the Cape Byron Headland Reserve Trust to ensure a close relationship between the festival and the Whale watch weekend, he said.

Talks also would be held with the major community groups in the town with the aim of identifying events for the festival.

Mr Malloy again reiterated that the festival was not aimed at tourists.

YOUR HEALTH

With homoeopath LESLEY MEREDITH, Tel 855 491

Adolescence is often a fraught time for both parents and teens. At a homoeopathic conference recently this topic was being discussed in light of which remedies had proven to be helpful.

The guest speaker made the observation that our culture has turned adolescence into a social disease.

He went on to say that this was a result of our western ideals of nuclear family, education, home ownership, delayed family etc. etc.

He reminded us that for most of us there was only one thing on our mind as we became increasingly driven by our hormones and this had not changed today despite society values shifting towards things that inevitably delay to some extent sexuality and procreation.

With this in mind, I wrote today's column about two common problems that arise at this time.

Depression: This is a common problem and often relates to times of pressure from exams, job seeking, lack of job opportunities, drug taking or a failed relationship.

The depression can be mild or can be suicidal. Signs to be aware of are withdrawal from family and friends, spending lots of time alone, irritability, insomnia, loss of appetite, anathu



Frontier Festival has Billinudgel swinging

Billinudgel staged its eighth annual Frontier Festival on Saturday – and once again it was a big success. A major attraction was the World Poker Championship, which was won by Ted Carroll of New Brighton. Another highlight was the entertainment provided by the 18-piece swing band, Swing Pacifica, pictured above.