

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL – STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

(Pro-Forma for Minor Development)

1. PROPERTY DETAILS

- **Lot Number:** Lot 2
- **DP/SP:** DP 869780
- **Street Number:** 344
- **Street Name:** Castlereagh Highway
- **Suburb/Locality:** Spring Flat
- **Postcode:** 2850

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- **Proposed Development:** Function Centre with Ancillary Camping
- **Detailed Description:**

The proposed development seeks consent for the use of a portion of the site as a Function Centre, hosting up to 110 guests for events such as wellness retreats, family gatherings, and private functions. Ancillary camping is included, allowing overnight accommodation in glamping-style tents for up to two consecutive nights per event. The development includes:

 - Main marquee (10 m x 15 m)
 - Catering marquee (8 m x 9 m)
 - 42 small glamping tents (4 m diameter) or similar
 - 8 large glamping tents (6 m diameter) or similar
 - 15 portable toilets
 - 4 portable showers connecting to current approved septic system
 - Drinking water stations and fire extinguishers

Events will be limited to three per year. All infrastructure is temporary and removed after events. No vegetation will be removed. There will be no amplified music after 10pm. Guests will arrive and depart by private coach/bus.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- **Total Site Area:** 110 acres
- **Function centre/Camping area:** 120m x 100m square, located next to the farm stay cottages on the property.
- **Site Description:** Gently sloping grazing land with no sensitive biodiversity or vegetation within the development footprint. Existing use is agricultural with sheep and cattle farming, as well as three approved (2 constructed) farm stay cottages (DA0169/2021). The development area is set back 750m from the Castlereagh Highway, behind a hill and screened by mature trees.
- **Surrounding Land Use:** Predominantly rural lifestyle and grazing properties. Other function centres exist nearby, including Burrundulla Wines and Yurali House. The nearest dwelling is 380m to the east. The development will not impact adjoining properties.

4. PRESENT AND PREVIOUS USES

- **Current Use:** Sheep and cattle farm with existing farm stay accommodation (approved).
- **Previous Uses:** Agricultural use.
- **Contamination:** No known contamination activities have occurred.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

- **Flooding:** No
- **Bushfire:** No
- **Groundwater vulnerability:** Yes – low impact; development away from drainage
- **Sensitive biodiversity:** No
- **Saline soils:** No – none within 240m of site
- **Threatened species or habitat:** No
- **Vegetation removal:** No

6. UTILITIES AND SERVICES

- **Stormwater:** Absorbed on-site; temporary structures will not alter flow
- **Electricity:** Supplied via existing connection or portable generators
- **Water Supply:** Drinking water via existing tank system,
- **Firefighting Water Supply:** 33,000L dedicated fire tank installed

- **Sewage Management:** Serviced portable toilets

7. OPERATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT DETAILS

- **Business Activity:** Event hosting for up to maximum 3 events per year with no more than 110 guests per event. It is proposed the site will be used for family gatherings, reunions, birthdays etc. The proposal is to have a main marquee for guests to mingle and a service marquee to support. The proposal is to have up to 50 glamping (or similar) tents on site so guests can stay overnight for a farm experience. Maximum stay will be two nights and these will be only Friday and Saturday only.
- **Total Staff:** 5
- **Max Staff On Duty:** 5
- **Max Clients per Day:** 110
- **Max Clients at One Time:** 110
- **Operating Hours:** Daylight to 11:00 PM (Friday–Sunday events only)
- **Fire Safety:** Fire extinguishers, 33,000L dedicated firefighting tank on site, clear evacuation signage
- **Vehicular Access:** Existing sealed access from Castlereagh Highway, upgraded when farm stay accommodation was installed;
- **Vehicle Types:** It is proposed Guests will only arrive by Private buses/coaches (2-3 per event only), and staff will arrive by service vehicles
- **Parking:** 5 staff bays; 3 bus bays in designated gravel area
- **Loading/Unloading:** Performed by service vehicles before and after events
- **Machinery:** None onsite
- **Materials/Waste:** General and event-related waste only; managed by licensed contractors
- **Hazardous Materials:** None proposed

8. MID-WESTERN REGIONAL LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2012 (MWRLEP)

- **Zoning:** RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots
- **Proposal Definition:** Function Centre with Ancillary Camping (child definition: Function Centre)
- **Permissibility:** Yes, with consent

- **Zone Objectives Compliance:**

The proposed use of the land for a Function Centre with ancillary camping is consistent with the objectives of the RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots zone under the Mid-Western Regional Local Environmental Plan 2012. The objectives of the RU4 zone and the proposal's response to each are outlined below:

1. **To enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible land uses.**

→ The proposed use maintains the primary agricultural activity on the site, with the function centre occupying only a small, contained portion of the 110-acre property. The proposal complements the existing sheep and cattle grazing operations and does not require the removal of any productive land. The development is seasonal and low-frequency (maximum 3 events per year), allowing continued agricultural use throughout the year.

2. **To encourage and promote diversity and employment opportunities in relation to primary industry enterprises, particularly those that require smaller lots or are more intensive in nature.**

→ The proposal contributes to the economic sustainability of the property by diversifying income streams beyond traditional agriculture. It also supports rural employment through short-term staff engagement during events (event coordinators, caterers, cleaning and transport services), and creates indirect employment opportunities in Mudgee and the surrounding region.

3. **To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.**

→ The site is surrounded by rural land used for grazing and lifestyle purposes. The location of the event area has been carefully selected to minimise potential amenity impacts: it is located over 380 metres from the nearest dwelling, screened by mature vegetation and natural topography, and located behind a rise from the Castlereagh Highway. Noise controls (e.g., no amplified music after 10 pm), restricted operating hours, and limited frequency ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.

4. **To ensure that development is compatible with the character of the area and is of a scale and design that maintains the rural setting.**

→ All infrastructure proposed is temporary and reversible. Glamping tents and marquees will be erected shortly before events and removed shortly after. The natural character of the site will be preserved, with no clearing, cut or fill, or construction of permanent buildings. The use of natural colours and materials, together with the backdrop of trees and hill, ensures that the rural character is maintained.

5. **To encourage tourism-related uses that support the agricultural and environmental values of the area.**

→ The proposal is a clear example of tourism that aligns with and supports the region's rural and agricultural values. Guests will experience a rural setting, with opportunities to learn about farm life and regional food and wine, contributing to the broader Mudgee tourism economy. The use is complementary to the Mid-Western Region's strategic objective to grow its visitor economy through rural experiences.

- **Relevant Clauses Addressed:**

- Clause 2.3: Permissibility
- Clause 4.3: Height (not applicable – temporary structures)
- Clause 6.3: Flood planning – not applicable

9. MID-WESTERN REGIONAL DCP 2013 (MWRDCP)

- **Relevant Parts:**

- Part 4: Specific Types of Development
- Part 5: Development Standards
- Part 6: Development in Rural Areas

- **Compliance Summary:**

- Camping layout complies with separation and density standards
- Amenity maintained through noise controls and buffer distances
- Visual impact mitigated through topography and vegetation
- Access and services provided consistent with DCP

The proposed development has been carefully designed to comply with the relevant provisions of the Mid-Western Regional Development Control Plan 2013. The key compliance considerations are as follows:

Part 4 – Specific Types of Development

- While the DCP does not specifically list function centres with ancillary camping under rural tourism, the proposed use aligns with the intent of low-impact, short-stay rural tourist developments.
- The camping element of the proposal is classified as **primitive camping**, which is permissible with development consent in the RU4 zone. Facilities provided

(portable toilets, showers, and potable water) meet the relevant public health and safety requirements.

Part 5 – Development Standards

- **Amenity:** The proposed layout ensures that the function area and glamping tents are located more than 380 m from the nearest residence. Events are capped at three per year, with limited hours (daylight to 11 pm) and noise curfews in place, reducing any potential nuisance. See separate document for Acoustic Management Plan
- **Visual Impact:** The development is set back 750 m from the Castlereagh Highway and screened by a natural hill and established vegetation. All structures are temporary and use natural colours, blending with the environment. No permanent buildings or structures are proposed.
- **Traffic and Access:** This is not traffic generating development. Access is via an existing sealed entry off the Castlereagh Highway, with no need for new roads or crossovers. Guests will arrive via private coaches, minimising vehicle traffic. A traffic and parking plan will designate bus and staff parking areas that are well set back from sensitive areas. With the use of 3 buses to transport guests and the infrequency of these and hosting events, there are no major impacts to local roads or Castlereagh Highway expected.
- **Waste and Servicing:** All waste from events will be collected and removed by a licensed contractor. Portable toilets and showers will be cleaned and maintained by professional providers. Potable water will be provided from existing on-site tanks. Fire safety is addressed through the provision of extinguishers and a 33,000 L dedicated fire tank.

Part 6 – Development in Rural Areas

- **Rural Character:** The proposal has been designed to respect the rural nature of the locality. The proposed land use is temporary, non-invasive, and compatible with surrounding land uses (including other nearby function venues).
- **Land Use Compatibility:** The event area is located away from ridgelines and sensitive environmental areas. No vegetation will be removed, and the event footprint avoids known saline soils and biodiversity constraints. Agricultural activity will continue unaffected on the remainder of the site.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** The use of temporary, removable infrastructure ensures that the land remains in its natural state between events. Minimal disturbance, no vegetation clearing, and self-contained services support sustainability principles.

- **Tourism and Economic Development:** The proposal enhances rural tourism opportunities in the LGA and supports the goals of the Mudgee Region Tourism Strategy. The use will contribute to the local economy through employment, supplier contracts, and visitor expenditure in the region.

10. JUSTIFICATION FOR VARIATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- Not applicable – development complies with relevant DCP controls

Declaration

This Statement of Environmental Effects has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Mid-Western Regional Council's Development Control Plan.

Prepared by: Michael Azar

Date: 24 June 2025

Location map – nearest neighbours from event area



Closest neighbour to North (across Castlereagh Highway) = 1192m