



Our ref: R04/0066.dh Out-15720
30 January 2008

Cr Warren Welham
Mayor of Wyong
Wyong Shire Council
PO Box 20
WYONG NSW 2259

Dear Warren

PLANNING CHANGES: OUTCOMES OF LEADERS FORUM

Thank you to all mayors, councillors and staff who attended our Leaders Forum in Sydney today to discuss the NSW Government's proposed planning changes. The forum was well attended, the debate enthusiastic, and a great example of Local Government working together.

The meeting made the following resolution and asked that it be brought to the attention of all mayors as a matter of urgency:

1. That the meeting supports the actions of the Presidents and Executives of the Local Government and Shires Associations in mounting a campaign on the NSW Government's proposed planning changes, including both the issue of section 94 developer contributions and the recommendations in the Government's discussion paper, and preparing an alternative reform package as a basis for discussion with the Government, councils, stakeholders and the community.
2. The meeting calls on all NSW councils to refuse to cooperate with the NSW Government if requested to transfer section 94 funds held in trust by councils, to the Government.
3. The meeting supports in principle the proposal that the Associations seek contributions from member councils towards the costs of engaging high level lobbying and media representation to formulate and assist with the implementation of a continuing public campaign.

We reported to the meeting that the preparation of a paper had commenced, with the assistance of Mr John Mant, planning consultant, scoping an alternative reform package. We will distribute this paper to all mayors in early February for your review and comment, and hopefully your endorsement, as the basis for our campaign to ensure that any reforms made to NSW planning legislation are in the best interests of councils and our communities.

As you are aware, our campaign to date has included Local Government's open letter to the Premier, published in metropolitan and selected regional newspapers prior to Christmas, and the ongoing media campaign which marries our template media releases and messages with your local experiences. Local Government media exposure has been frequent and sustained throughout the summer, and we congratulate all councils on your successes in capturing media and public attention.

Further, we have released our preliminary response to the Government's discussion paper and aim for our alternative reform package to be similarly released shortly, with a view to generating widespread and constructive discussion across the state. You can read the speech from today's forum outlining the framework for our alternative package on our website at www.lgsa.org.au.

Many of the mayors who spoke at today's forum stressed that it is essential our campaign has the support of every mayor and council in New South Wales, and that Local Government must be united against this serious attack on good governance and our communities. We cannot agree too strongly. United support and action will be the crucial components of our campaign.

We would be pleased if you would seek a resolution of council endorsing the three points above, and advise us as soon as this has occurred.

Thank you again for your support. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Yours sincerely



Cr Genia McCaffery
President

Local Government Association of NSW



Cr Bruce Miller
President

Shires Association of NSW