



Department of  
**Primary Industries and  
Regional Development**

**Your reference:** Mitchell St,  
Meckering

**Our reference:** LUP 2001

**Enquiries:** Grant Stainer

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Date: 25 October 2024

Dear Mr Hobley,

**Request for Comment - Development Application - Lot 199 on Deposited Plan  
222786 Mitchell Street, Meckering**

Thank you for inviting the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to comment on the above proposal.

DPIRD objects to the proposal as the proposed stocking rate exceeds the maximum sustainable stocking rate. DPIRD offers the following comments.

[Livestock stocking rates](#) are standardised using Dry Sheep Equivalents (DSE), where a 50 kg wether is the accepted standard. In the context of rural small holdings, stocking rates refer to the numbers of livestock that can be consistently kept on an area of pasture all year round with minor additional feed and without causing environmental degradation such as wind or water erosion, tree decline, or increasing nutrients in waterways or groundwater.

The total proposed stocking rate is **64.8 DSE**, as outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Proposed stocking rate

Animal type	Number of animals	DSE per animal	Total
Horses	3	10	30
Cattle	3	10	30
Chickens	24	0.2	4.8
		<b>Total</b>	<b>64.8</b>

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The [mapped soil landscape unit](#) for the property is the Greenhills York Subsystem (256GhYO), which has a [land capability assessment code](#) of B1 and therefore a maximum sustainable dry stocking rate of 6 DSE/ha.

Only areas of open pasture can be counted when assessing the area available for livestock. Areas covered by infrastructure (e.g. houses, sheds, tracks, roads, debris etc) and native vegetation cannot be included in the available area. Bare areas of ground are by default zero DSE/ha and cannot be stocked or included in the calculation of available area.

The proposed paddock area is 0.97 ha, of which 78% is available open pasture area, resulting in 0.76 ha of available open pasture.

0.76 ha multiplied by 6 DSE/ha equals a maximum sustainable dry stocking rate of 4.56 DSE for the property.

**As the proposed stocking rate of 64.8 DSE exceeds the maximum sustainable dry stocking rate of 4.56 DSE, the proposal cannot be supported.**

There must be a minimum of 50% groundcover maintained evenly across the property at all times of the year to prevent land degradation through soil erosion, with a target of at least 70% groundcover.

Any clearing requires a relevant permit from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER). Damage to vegetation caused by livestock is considered to be clearing. This includes direct damage and damage caused by compaction of the surrounding soil which affects the roots of the trees. Native vegetation must be fenced off to protect the vegetation from the livestock. DPIRD does not support clearing of native vegetation on small rural holdings.

Western Australia has a mandatory livestock ownership, identification, and movement system, known as the National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS). This requires owners of animals, including horses and cattle, to register even if these animals are kept as pets. DPIRD's Brands Office then allocates a property identification code (PIC) to owners, to indicate who owns the animals and where they are kept. This is important for managing any outbreaks of emergency animal diseases such as foot and mouth disease. More information [about the NLIS can be found online on the DPIRD website](#).

For more information, please contact Grant Stainer on 90813 113 or [grantley.stainer@dpiird.wa.gov.au](mailto:grantley.stainer@dpiird.wa.gov.au)

Yours sincerely,



Tim Overheu  
**Acting Director, Agriculture Resource Management Assessment  
Sustainability and Biosecurity**