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Rural DPA Submissions,
C/- Judith Urquhart, Senior Planner
District Council of Mount Barker
ruraldpa@dcmbarke.sa.gov.au

Dear Judith

Livestock SA congratulates the District Council of Mount Barker on the proposed Rural (Primary Production Protection) Development Plan Amendment. We are especially pleased to see the inclusion of “the right to farm” as a basic principle of the Amendment. This inclusion is strongly supported.

Livestock SA also strongly supports the improved flexibility offered in the Amendment with regard to planning approval. With changes in farming systems and the adoption of new technologies, the Development Plan must be flexible enough to enable the incorporation of these changes as a right (as long as they comply with the Ordinance).

The clear identification of who is responsible for buffer zones is welcomed. It means that any proposition that embodies changes in farming activities and requires a buffer zone places the responsibilities on the proponent to provide such a buffer. Not only will this reduce the likelihood of legal disputes occurring but it will also assist in ensuring good working relationships between current or future neighbours.

There are two areas that are of concern; the first relates to farm infrastructure construction and the second to the practice of containment feeding.

Whilst it is beneficial to have facilities (farm buildings and other farming infrastructure such as cattle and sheep yards, shearing sheds, dairy sheds and hay sheds) blending with the rural backdrop it may not always be practical. In many cases changing the location of facilities is not practicable; for example replacing an outdated herringbone shed with a rotary shed, replacing an old shearing shed with one incorporating a raised board, or replacing an old set of yards with a covered set. In these cases the changes are linked to other infrastructure on the property such as loading facilities, laneways, fence lines, water supplies and power lines. If changes in the site location are to be required by the Council because the planned infrastructure was considered to be a blot on the landscape, it may result in the changes being abandoned.

During drought or following a bushfire a practice known as containment feeding is increasingly becoming common. Here livestock are contained to an area of the farm and handfed grain, hay and other feed. The rationale for containment feeding is sound; firstly following bushfire and drought the risk of soil degradation is high and the objective is to remove livestock from most of the farm. From an animal point of view this practice allows the nutritional needs of all livestock to be allowed for and met. From a management point of view this is more efficient having livestock close at hand rather than having to feed out onto denuded and fragile soils. We appreciate there may need to be some changes to regulations relating to feedlots to allow containment feeding to be undertaken and we ask that containment feeding be listed as a complying activity in the Amendment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Geoff Power', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Geoff Power
President Livestock SA