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Dear Michael

Revised Planning and Design Code – Submission on behalf of Thomas Food International

URPS acts on behalf of Thomas Foods International (TFI).

Previous Submission

In February 2020, a submission was made to the Commission in response to the draft Phase 3 Planning and Design Code (Code). The properties subject to submission include:

- Wilkin Road, Pallamana (Allotment 26 in F35677, CT:5320/903)
- 86 Wilkin Road, Murray Bridge South (Allotment 101 in F209641, CT:6146/866)
- 125 Temora Lane, Pallamana (Section 101 in H170700, CT:5928/982)
- Temora Lane, Pallamana (S19 in H170700, CT:5320/898).

Key items identified in the previous submission for consideration of the Commission included:

- Rezoning the sites from the Rural Zone to the Rural Intensive Enterprise Zone
- Insertion of the Significant Industry Interface Overlay and Limited Dwelling Overlay to apply within a 1km radius of the TFI properties, and corresponding identification of all sensitive uses proposed within the Overlay as Restricted forms of development
- Proposed rewording of Assessment Provisions contained in the Rural Intensive Enterprise Zone.

Revised P&D Code

As the Commission would be aware, in June 2020 TFI received Planning Approval for a new multi-million-dollar state-of-the-art meat processing facility at the above sites. This facility will provide in the order of 2000 jobs once operational and represents a significant investment of resources and commitment to the local Murray Bridge community.

Given the above, it is now even more important for the Revised Planning and Design Code (Code) to both appropriately zone land and protect its long-term viability via policy protection from incompatible land uses.

Zoning

The nature and scale of activities which will take place on the site confirm that the land would be more appropriately zoned **Rural Intensive Enterprise Zone**. This zone is considered a 'better fit' for the intensive animal processing, packaging and associated storage, warehousing and distribution activities which will occur.

It is our view that this zone would have been applied to the sites, should the recently approved facility have already been constructed. The omission of these sites is simply a matter of timing with the release of the draft Code occurring prior to the approval being obtained.

Significant Interface Management Overlay

There continues to be a need provide development and operational certainty to TFI; and in doing so, sure-up long-term protection of lawfully established activities undertaken by TFI. In reviewing the Code structure, the most appropriate means to do this would be via the insertion of the Significant Interface Management Overlay and the extension of this overlay a distance of 1km from the allotment boundaries of the TFI land holdings.

This Overlay would not only provide protection for TFI from intrusion from incompatible sensitive land uses, but would also provide protection to neighbouring land uses from the activities undertaken by TFI. It is our view that the absence of this Overlay is a risk which if left absent would:

- Compromise investment and development certainty to TFI
- Risk development certainty to adjoining landowners affected by the Overlay and remaining in the Rural Zone
- Result in uncertainty and ambiguity for the relevant authority.

Rural Intensive Enterprise Zone

It is observed that little amendment has been made to the proposed policy content contained within the Rural Intensive Enterprise Zone. As previously identified, policy which places limits on elements such as floor area and height fail to recognise the nature of activities occurring within modern agribusiness and should be removed.

This may be best achieved via a sub-zone that recognises the national significance of the TFI facility.

Summary

As the State will appreciate, the need to ensure that the TFI site is appropriately zoned and its operations protected is paramount. The insertion of an effective buffer around the TFI site is critical to its long-term operations. Planning policy should be drafted to avoid any risk of the encroachment of sensitive land uses (e.g. dwellings) within 1 kilometre of the TFI allotment boundaries.

Having regard to the scale of operations proposed on the TFI site, the Code's Rural Intensive Enterprise Zone (with amendments as recommended in this submission) is a more appropriate zone that reflects TFI operations. Further, there is also merit in considering an associated sub-zone that recognises the TFI facility.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss these recommended updates.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Chown', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Chown

Senior Associate

CC Nicolle Sincock, Department for Trade and Investment