

Our Ref: R6/23

1 March 2024

Chief Executive Officer
Mareeba Shire Council
65 Rankin Street
Mareeba, QLD, 4880

Attention: Planning Department

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST
DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION SEEKING A DEVELOPMENT PERMIT
RECONFIGURE A LOT – BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT
SITUATED AT 538 CHEWKO ROAD, MAREEBA
FORMALLY DESCRIBED AS LOT 44 & 47 ON SP217444**

We wish to respond to Council's information request received on the 1 November 2023 in accordance with section 12 of the Development Assessment Rules.

1. Provide an assessment of the proposed development against the Agricultural land overlay code. Specifically, Performance Outcome PO6.

Note: Council officers believe the boundary realignment, as proposed, would result in the ultimate loss of productive capacity of approximately 1.6 hectares of mapped Class A agricultural land. This land would be transferred from a viable 65.13 hectare allotment (Lot 44) and transferred to an unviable rural lifestyle lot (Lot 47). In order to comply with PO6, Council officers are of the opinion that the smaller lifestyle lot (Lot 47) would need to remain at a size of 2 hectares.

Comment:

As discussed in the meeting held on the 17th November 2023, we are of the opinion that given the limitations that exist on site in terms of soil types and access to water, that this immediate area is most likely in fact not Class A agricultural land. As such, shifting 1.6ha (2.4%) on an already 65.13ha lot will not impact whatsoever on the viability of farming that property. It's seeming quite evident from the aerial mapping of the area, that this immediate area appears to fail to support commercially viable grazing or farming activities, which completely contradicts the assumptions made under the Agricultural Land Overlay Code. Accordingly, it would appear that it's not a coincidence as to why this farm and surrounding farms are not farmed.

To provide sound reasoning and justification to support these statements, we commissioned Dr. Michael Gilbert from Landline Consulting to conduct an assessment on-site and provide a report on those findings. A copy of Dr. Michael Gilbert's assessment is provided as an attachment to this document.

To conclude, we have received instruction from our client who has advised that they wish to proceed as proposed to include the 1.6ha pocket into the existing 2ha allotment to avoid being surrounded by rural land and potential farming or grazing activities. By doing so this ensures and potential impacts from dust and spray drift particularly from the south east trade winds, is removed completely.

That concludes our response to the information request. Should there be any questions or queries in relation to the development application presented, please contact our office immediately. We also ask if possible that all correspondence be sent to our office electronically via email.

Yours faithfully,



Ramon Samanes

Director, U&i Town Plan

Bachelor of Applied Science, Majoring in Environmental and Urban Planning

29 February 2024

Chief Executive Officer
Mareeba Shire Council
65 Rankin Street
Mareeba, QLD, 4880

Attention: Planning Department

Proposed Reconfiguration of Lot – Boundary Realignment, 538 Chewko Road, Mareeba. Application No. RAL/23/0014

Real Property Description: Lot 44 & 47 on SP217444

On 28 February 2024 I was asked to inspect a proposed boundary realignment on Chewko Road, Mareeba, owned by Nat Menniti and his brother. In approximately 2008, they subdivided a 2-hectare block from the main property of 65.13 ha, leaving a residual 63.13 ha main property (shown in Map 1).

The proposal is to realign the boundary of the 2-ha lot and expand it to 3.6ha by removing a 'awkward' area that is difficult to manage in a farming situation. On 28 February 2024 I inspected the property, and particularly the proposed realignment area, which is used for cattle grazing, though it is a paddock of weeds. The area receives sub-surface flow from the nearby Turkey Hill. Surface soils are sandy red with clay at shallow depth and the surrounding vegetation is a mix of *Corymbia* species, *Melaleuca* and *Pandanus*, reflecting poor soil internal drainage. Images shown the country associated with the proposed realignment.


Parts of the main property grow Lychee with irrigation from a dam and a bore, though imagery shows considerable variation in the productivity of the lychee area immediately to the north of the house, possibly due to shallow soils. The properties are located on the foot-slopes of Turkey Hill and the soils will inevitably be shallow and of variable depth. Based on these various site characteristics, I consider

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that this is the reason why sections of Lots 44 & 47 and surrounding allotments within the area were not farmed.

I consider that the 1.6 ha area that would be excised from the main property by the realignment will not have a material impact on the overall productivity of Lot 44. The excised area would potentially carry one adult-equivalent steer, though less given the poor productivity of the current pasture. The area potentially could be used for cropping in the future though it is in a tight area where farming operations would generate impacts from dust and spray drift onto existing lot 47.

A CV is attached.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Gilbert', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dr Mike Gilbert

Landline Consulting

Proposed Subdivision - Boundary Realignment

538 Chewko Road, Mareeba (LOT 44 & 47 ON SP217444) Plan#1.0, dated 16.10.23, prepared by U...

17°15'3"S 145°22'44"E

17°15'3"S 145°23'6"E



17°2'13"S 145°22'44"E

17°2'13"S 145°23'6"E

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Legend located on next page



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0 100 metres
Scale: 1:3396

Printed at: A4

Print date: 16/10/2023

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 **Queensland Government**
Department of Resources

Map 1. Plan of Lots 44 & 47 on SP217444 located at 538 Chewko Road, Mareeba. Highlighted area is proposed for realignment.



Image 1. Image of Lot 47 and the proposed realignment boundary.



Image 2. Image of Lot 47 and the proposed realignment boundary, close to barn.



Image 3. Image of Lot 47 at corner peg with Lot 44.

LANDLINE CONSULTING - CAPABILITIES

Landline Consulting is a consultancy specializing in environmental, natural resource and agricultural areas associated with mining, but has research and extension experience with pastures and crops in Australia.

We are based on the Atherton Tablelands in north Queensland and our experienced staff have lived and worked in the region for the past 40 years, with an intimate knowledge of the benefits and use of fertilizers for pastures and crops in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Southeast Asia.

The Project Manager is Dr Mike Gilbert, Principal Environmental Scientist with Australian and international experience as an environmental and agricultural consultant, as Principal Regional Environmental Officer with the Department of Mines and Energy, North Queensland, and 25 years' experience in Queensland region with the Department of Primary Industries and CSIRO. He has authored or co-authored some 80 scientific publications associated with soil fertility and plant nutrition and has practical experience in providing pasture and crop nutrition advice to farmers, agricultural and mining companies in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Oman.

Mike has undertaken agricultural land suitability assessments for farming properties in the Mt Surprise area and the Sunshine Coast and for mining companies as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.

Mike has a B. Applied Science (UQ Gatton), M. Agric Science (UQ) and PhD in Soil Science & Plant Nutrition (UWA).

Neil Bryde is a senior scientist with 20 years' experience in assessing land suitability, and monitoring fauna, soils and vegetation with the Department of Primary Industries and Dept of Natural Resources in Queensland (22 years). He has a B. Applied Science (JCU).

Kevin Shaw is a senior consultant with 40 years' experience in the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and for 10 years collaborated with Mike Gilbert in conducting fertility trials throughout in north Queensland. He has a wealth of experience in extension activities with primary producers. Kevan has a Diploma in Agriculture from the Queensland Agricultural College, Gatton.

CONTACT DETAILS: Dr Mike Gilbert, LANDLINE CONSULTING office, RN14 Marnane Road (PO Box 523) Tolga QLD 4882, Australia. Mobile: 0407 955 496. Email: mgilbert@landlineconsulting.com