



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Industry

AGRICULTURE AND WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Answers due by: 29 November 2021

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AGRICULTURE AND WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES

Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the Opposition)

Hurlstone Agricultural High School

1. Given its submission on the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy, has the Department of Primary Industries reviewed the report titled “Hurlstone Agricultural High School Environmental Assessment May 2021” that was completed by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment?
 - (a) If so, when?
 - (b) If not, why not?

ANSWER

DPI has reviewed elements of the Hurlstone Agricultural High School Environmental Assessment.

- (a) DPI reviewed and provided feedback on a table of the proposed Key Mitigation Measures in May 2021.
2. Was the Department of Primary Industries involved in determining the scope of the environmental assessment at Hurlstone Agricultural High School?
 - (a) If so, what involvement did the Department have?
 - (b) If not, did the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment inform the Department an environmental assessment was being carried out at Hurlstone Agricultural High School?
 - i. If so, when was the Department informed?
 - ii. If so, was the Department given the chance to assist in determining the scope of the environmental assessment?

ANSWER

No, DPI was not involved in determining the scope of the environmental assessment.

- (a) N/A
- (b) DPI was informed that studies into the proposed development were being undertaken but was not informed of the scope.
 - (i) DPI was informed that additional studies were being undertaken in early May 2021.
 - (ii) No.
3. In what way does the “Hurlstone Agricultural High School Environmental Assessment May 2021” address the concerns raised by the Department in its submission on the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy:
 - (a) Land use conflicts between new residential development and agricultural activities at Hurlstone;
 - (b) Noise;
 - (c) Odour;

- (d) Inadequate buffer zones between dairies and sensitive land uses (residential);
- (e) Lack of alternative measures to mitigate potential land use conflict;
- (f) Relocation of public recreation areas;
- (g) The close proximity of the piggery to Roy Watts Road which is the main access road for the school;
- (h) The co-location of pigs and poultry and potential biosecurity issues arising from this arrangement; and
- (i) The operational use of the facilities and the management of animal waste products to avoid contamination and biosecurity risks.

ANSWER

DPI has not comprehensively reviewed the Environmental Assessment. Therefore, DPI cannot provide commentary on these questions.

4. Does the Department endorse the “recommended mitigation measures” outlined in the report in relation to the design of the Farm Hub at Hurlstone?
 - (a) If not, why not?

ANSWER

A summary of the key mitigation measures found in the Environmental Assessment was provided to DPI on 7 May. DPI raised concerns with some of these measures proposed, recognising that the Department did not have access to the further information available to DPIE which may have resolved these concerns.

(a) No. When reviewed without context DPI retained concerns around the need for separation of odour and dust assessments, the biosecurity risks associated with the location of pigs and poultry in close proximity, reliance on operational activities to mitigate impacts, and the need for a comprehensive Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment. As per above, some of these issues may have been resolved with consideration of the contextual information in the Environmental Assessment Report.

5. Is the Department satisfied the “recommended mitigation measures” will be effective in addressing concerns raised in its submission on the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy?
 - (a) If not, what extra mitigation measures does the Department consider necessary to address concerns raised in its submission on the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy?

ANSWER

DPI has not reassessed the mitigation measures considering the full information available in the Environmental Assessment report.

(a) This has not been assessed at this stage. As the development application for the Farm Hub upgrade progresses DPI will consider further mitigation options and raise them at the appropriate times with DPIE Planning.

6. Is the Department being consulted by School Infrastructure NSW or the Department of *Agriculture and Western New South Wales*

Education as the development application process for the Farm Hub upgrade at Hurlstone progresses?

- (a) If so, what advice has the Department given in relation to the design of the Farm Hub?

ANSWER

DPI met with School Infrastructure NSW on 26 November 2020 and on 8 March 2021 to discuss the Farm Hub design and DPI's concerns.

(a) DPI requested the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Farm Hub development consider the following matters:

- Design and Layout with regard to Animal Welfare Standards and best management practice
- Biosecurity including a risk assessment, management plan, fatality and emergency management
- Waste management including nutrient loads
- Land use conflict; and
- Any need for food authority licensing.

Wild Deer Management in the Illawarra

7. In relation to the decision by the Government to double the pest eradication fund in NSW as part of the 2020/21 budget;
- (a) Was there an increase in the funding for the Illawarra Wild Deer Management Program as a result of this decision in:
- i. The 2020/21 financial year?
 - ii. The 2021/22 financial year?
- (b) How much money has the Government contributed to the Illawarra Wild Deer Management program in the 2021/22 financial year?
- (c) Has there been any increase in feral deer culling programs in the Illawarra as a result of the increase in pest eradication fund in NSW?
- (d) Will the Minister commit to funding additional trial feral deer culling programs in the Illawarra in the 2021/22 financial year?

ANSWER

- a)
- i) Yes, Local Land Services received an additional \$80k from DPI
 - ii) Yes, Local Land Services received an additional \$84k from DPI
- b) \$257,415 has been contributed to Local Land Services for the Illawarra Wild Deer Management program in the 2021/22 financial year
- c) The Local Land Services program has doubled.
- d) Funding will be considered as part of the budget process.

8. In response to advocacy by Wollongong City Council and major landholders claiming the Illawarra Wild Deer Management Program urgently requires a doubling of annual funding to stem the increasing population numbers of feral deer in the Illawarra:

- (a) Will the Government commit to matching the current funding provided by partner

organisations, and allocate a further \$200,000 to the Program to fund culling and collaborative research projects in the Illawarra?

ANSWER

**Funding will be considered as part of the budget process.
AGRICULTURE**

Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

Eggs

9. During the hearing you advised that NSW had provided feedback in response to the draft Standards and Guidelines for Poultry. Please provide a copy of this feedback.

ANSWER

Copy of the feedback attached separately.

10. In 2016 the Hilltops free range egg farm was issued a licence by the NSW Food Authority. It is my understanding that the local Hilltops council was not aware of the existence of this egg farm within its LGA until it received a formal complaint from Animal Liberation relating to serious animal welfare, biosecurity and environmental concerns. Since that time, the egg farm has been issued with dozens of corrective action notices noted as 'defects', some of which involve serious implications regarding public health, biosecurity, animal welfare and environmental considerations.

How was a licence for a large-scale animal agri-business issued without ensuring the local government council authority is advised to ensure necessary adherence to planning requirements?

ANSWER

The NSW Food Authority provides information to businesses seeking to start a food business that other authorities (e.g. the Australian Tax Office and Local Council) may need to be informed of their activity. The onus is on the business to ensure they meet all their regulatory requirements.

Animal Welfare Reforms

11. Will the Department be publishing the results of the online survey that accompanied the Animal Welfare Reform discussion paper?

ANSWER

The Department is currently preparing a consultation outcomes report, which will include a summary of the results of the online survey.

12. Proposal 13 of the discussion paper asked for comments on enforcement arrangements of animal welfare laws. How many of the survey responses which responded directly to this question supported establishing an independent enforcement body such as an Independent Office of

Animal Protection, and how many explicitly did not support the establishment of an independent enforcement body?

ANSWER

86 individual survey respondents supported an independent office of animal protection (IOAP); 94 individual survey respondents explicitly opposed an IOAP or supported retaining or making no changes to current arrangements.

In addition to the individual respondents, 191 form responses supported establishing an IOAP.