

## **To Whom It May Concern**

We are a young family with 2 young children who purchased a property in Hermidale district in October 1993. The farm of 11,000 acres had only 18% developed at the time and we purchased it with the full intention of developing it further so that we could make a reasonable living on it and build an asset for our children's future and at the time we did not need development consent.

Our freehold property is in the central division of NSW. We bought it on the good will and faith of the government that we could safely develop it in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.

In August 1995 SEPP 46 came in which banned all clearing of land in NSW. This meant that we had to submit an application to the DWLC for a land development permit and they approved a further 7%. This cost us considerable time and money in lost production and after a lengthy period.

The Native Vegetation Act then came in which was also very restrictive and prohibitive. We were then forced into a situation where we could not put an application in without a flora and fauna study which would be costly. Even if our country was found not to have endangered species and remnant communities, it still did not mean that the DWLC would approve an application.

The North Lachlan Bogan Regional Vegetation Committee was set up a few years ago to develop a regional plan for our area and at this stage it's at a standstill. We have been following these meetings with interest and are totally disillusioned with the government departments and outside interest groups who refuse to consider our point of view and have said that they do not want us to develop any further land at all.

They don't seem to care that we have lost income and equity which has caused us hardship and seem to think it's okay to stay here with big debts and manage the land for their own interests.

They say that it's for the whole country's benefit but individuals like us and our families are expected to wear ALL the cost. These Vegetation Management Committees have not got the ability to approve compensation. The government should have a moral and ethical obligation to remunerate the individual for his expenses and losses, past and future.

The state government ministers promised us fair and equitable solutions to our concerns and 6 YEARS LATER we are still waiting!

Our ability to be sustainable is compromised by the restrictions on development and is forcing us into bad management practices ie unviable crop and stock rotation, soil deterioration, encroachment of feral animals and wildlife, woody weeds and regrowth which cause soil degradation and loss of vital grasses and groundcover. We need to be allowed to maintain, remove or control these encroaching problems ourselves. This could be done through local Landcare groups. We have access to resources through these groups which enable us to manage and care for our land in the best possible way.

We have government departments and environmental groups who have put forward at these NVMC's that high percentages of our properties should be fenced off and locked up at our expense which we see is theft of our land without compensation.

We think that management from inside the region through it's Landcare groups and using local government departments for advice and information is the best way to go. At the moment we have NOWHERE to go. The DWLC will not approve any more development permits, the Vegetation Management Committees are at a standstill and it seems we have no options left. Our property is on the market, we have had to take outside work as well as sharefarm to keep going but who is going to buy a property that is underdeveloped and an unviable proposition?

If people understand what is happening to us, we hope that they will be able to put themselves in our shoes and see how unreasonable and unjust the situation is. We are here to work with the environment and it's needs and feel that we are quite capable of doing this.

Kevin & Sue Campbell