

Have respect for and get to know your rural neighbour, that's the message we are trying to get across to rural Wollondilly residents. This fact sheet aims to foster an understanding between neighbours in a rural environment to mitigate the likelihood of land use conflict occurring, and to point out where both farmers and new rural residential residents can contribute.



As a new rural residential dweller

- When purchasing your rural property, take into consideration the surrounding agricultural land use and how this may affect your decision and ability to live in the environment.
- Be aware that domestic pets can cause a nuisance by straying and attacking livestock and native fauna, or by transmitting and contracting diseases.
- Ensure that all domestic pets are contained within the boundaries of your property and that fencing is adequate to contain them.
- Be aware of what living in a rural environment means in terms of the activities associated with the production of agricultural commodities and how that may influence your ability to live in such an environment.
- Have regard to the fact that rural landscapes are subject to change with the seasons and when new forms of agriculture are pursued by the Shire's farmers.
- Understand how to maintain your property in terms of weeds, boundary fencing, bushfire hazards, vegetation cover and the location of watercourses and drainage pasterns.
- Get to know the key agricultural industries operating in your area.

- Work cooperatively on maintenance of rural land.
- Do not ride motorbikes or horses on private property without first seeking permission from the owners.



As a local farmer

- Proactively approach new neighbours to discuss issues of relevance where both parties can work together.
- Share your working knowledge and understanding of the Wollondilly Shire with new residents.
- Work cooperatively on maintenance of rural land. For example a combined approach to the spraying of noxious and environmental weeds over several properties will achieve a good outcome in terms of controlling and reducing the spread of weeds in the Shire.
- Reiterate the importance of the ongoing management of rural land encompassing weed control, and maintenance of rural fences.
- Be aware that farming activities can impact on the amenity of neighbouring allotments and consider how practices may be altered to minimise the potential impact.

Cooperation and communication

Cooperation and communication between landholders in rural environments is an effective means of sharing information and developing an understanding of other values and lifestyle choice. This understanding can assist in alleviating instances and the ramifications of land use conflict. When issues arise in the future they are resolved mutually through communication without the need for intervention by outside parties.



Case Study 1: With the increased number of new rural residents moving into a particular locality within the Shire, Council began to receive complaints regarding the use of a crown road for a stock route between neighbouring properties. The crown road had been used for a stock route for over 100 years and allowed neighbours to share common cattle yards.

The complaints eventuated in the crown road being permanently fenced off with the cost of materials incurred by the farmers. Paddocks with restricted access points, no provision for stock watering, and no cattle yards were the impacts to farmers from complaints made to Council from new residents moving into the area.

Had the complainants approached the farmers concerned a mutually agreeable solution could have been reached that avoided the restricted use of crown land for the purposes of a stock route.

Case Study 2: A long term beef farmer George learns that the neighbouring allotment has been approved for subdivision creating a number of adjacent small acreage rural residential allotments. The farmer accepts the Council's decision but at the back of his mind holds reservations regarding having an increased number of neighbours in close proximity to his established grazing establishment and whether the new residents will be as diligent in managing noxious weeds as his long term neighbour had been.

The development proceeds, lots created and eventually a number of new residential dwellings are built on the neighbouring allotments. One day

whilst working on fixing the boundary fence, Elaine, a new neighbour comes down to offer a hand and takes the opportunity to learn some basic fencing tips from George.

Whilst working on the fence Elaine points a small clump of blackberry growing in her property and asks George what it is. George explains that it is blackberry, a noxious weed, which if not controlled can rapidly spread and invade pastures and offers to come and spray emerging plants on Elaine's property.

When spraying the blackberries, Jerry, another new resident asks George if he could spray emerging blackberry plants on his property. They come to an agreement and soon enough word spreads through the new development and George undertakes spraying on all of the new allotments created adjacent to his property.

George is pleased that his new neighbours show concern and are willing to assist in the management of noxious weeds. Not only has George helped to educate new residents on management of weeds he has bridged the gap and made acquaintances with his new neighbours.