

**Submission
No 14**

LAND RELEASE AND HOUSING SUPPLY IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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5 September 2017

The Chair
Committee on Environment and Planning
Parliament House, Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Contact: Martin Johnson
Our Ref: DOC2017/061156
Your Ref: -

Dear Sir/Madam

Parliamentary inquiry into land release and housing supply in New South Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in response to the Parliamentary inquiry into land release and housing supply in NSW. The following comments are provided as a staff submission for consideration in the inquiry.

Greenfield and infill development

Greenfield development is commonly used to increase housing supply. A number of aspects of greenfield development need to be addressed if this style of development is to play a role in addressing housing affordability and land supply.

Greenfield developments tend to be of a low density and reinforce the need for car based travel to employment, shops and daily services. This in turn can increase the cost of living. Rather than simply addressing housing affordability the concept of 'affordable living' should be considered by the enquiry. Affordable living involves consideration of all costs associated with living including housing, transport, recreation and utilities.

To assist in improving the cost of living, residential development should be aligned with infrastructure provision and growth encouraged in areas with existing services. The cost of infrastructure is passed onto the community either through development contributions, rates or taxpayer dollars. This in turn has a direct impact on the cost of housing and land supply. The low-density characteristics of greenfield development can increase the cost of infrastructure provision as there is less capacity to share the cost. For this reason, a key component of the cost effective delivery of infrastructure and services, and therefore reducing the cost of housing supply, is increasing the density of residential development. To increase the density of residential development infill development should be encouraged in suitable locations.

The funding commitment on developers to provide the necessary infrastructure has an impact on the delivery and costs of land and housing. Alternative funding agreements such as cost sharing should be investigated.

Metropolitan and regional areas

The unique characteristics of metropolitan and regional areas should be considered in the enquiry. Metropolitan and regional areas may require different solutions to address housing affordability and land supply. It would be beneficial for the enquiry to focus on both metropolitan and regional areas. Additionally, the contribution that regional areas can offer in providing employment, additional housing and a lifestyle benefit should also be considered.

Efficient planning processes

Consideration should be given to addressing site constraints at the strategic level or the rezoning stage to reduce and/or simplify the number of matters needing to be addressed as part of the Development Application for each individual dwelling. This would need to be carefully implemented to ensure that adequate and comprehensive information is provided at the rezoning and subdivision stage. Issues such as biodiversity, flooding, bushfire and services (water and sewer) need to be locked in, as far as is practicable, at the rezoning stage. Once these matters are resolved to the satisfaction of the consent authority, the commitment should be maintained by government and the developers and should facilitate a smooth and conflict free development assessment stage – and also assist in greater take up of exempt and complying development where possible.

I trust these comments will be considered in the inquiry and we appreciate the opportunity to provide input.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Council's Strategic Land Use Planning Manager, Martin Johnson on telephone [REDACTED] or via email [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

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Gareth Curtis
Director Planning and Environment