

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL, PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

INQUIRY INTO SOCIAL, PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Supplementary questions: Gunnedah Shire Council

Answers are to be returned to the Committee secretariat by Thursday 19 June 2014

1. In relation to councils working with community housing providers
 - a) **Are there any legal constraints in relation to local government providing land for the development of housing on land owned by council either community or operational land?**

Council is not aware of any legal constraints in regard to provision of land for housing developments, provided such land is managed in accordance with the provision of the Local Government act 1993.

It seems that community land could be utilised if a Management Plan over the land is in place that permitted use of the land for a public housing purpose. This would require Council to consult with the community in the preparation of the Management Plan and in any leasing arrangement.

The capability of a funding partner having a registered interest in the land would not be possible in respect of community land.

This situation would not occur in respect of operational land where Council could sell an interest to a funding partner. This was the process that occurred with the capital funding provided by the NSW Land & Housing Corporation in respect of the Community Housing Program that operated in the 1990s. In those instances the property became jointly owned by Council and the Corporation.

- b) **if there were incentives for council to provide land for the development of social or affordable housing what would be attractive to local government to do so or what would be the disincentive.**

The attraction to Local Government primarily relates to supporting the disadvantaged in its community and providing support at a local level.

This would be subject to all costs being met, including overheads from the rental generated by the property.

The principle disincentive for Local Government would be where it was required to outlay significant capital to acquire land or where it was required to undertake such initiatives without support of another investment partner, be that from government or the private sector..

In order to make programs such as this work, it requires a number of parties to work together. In the Gunnedah Coal Basin situation this will require local government, industry (coalmining companies) and/or the NSW Government to provide support.

2. Would the council support a contribution from all S94 contributions toward addressing social and affordable housing and homelessness?

Council would support a proportion of contributions from Section 94 or Section 94A being required to be directed towards affordable housing, subject to a commitment from the NSW Government to introduce a Community Housing Program with state provided building capital.