

Office of the Secretary

16/05837

Samuel Griffith
Principal Council Officer
Standing Committee on State Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Griffith

The Department has been asked to provide a response to the NSW Aboriginal Land Council's submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Regional Planning Processes.

The Department actively engages with the NSW Aboriginal Land Council on a regular basis and the Government is working in a number of policy areas that are relevant to the broad themes raised by the NSW Aboriginal Land Council. These include:

- Regional Plans which are being developed to include directions and actions that commit the NSW Government to undertaking a strategic assessment of land held by Local Aboriginal Land Councils to see how they can best be planned, managed and developed for the benefit of local Aboriginal communities. This commitment will require close collaboration with the LALCs and local councils so that priority sites for further investigations of their economic opportunities can be identified.
- The NSW Government, through the Office of Environment and Heritage, is committed to reforming the regulations for Aboriginal cultural heritage. This includes preparing stand-alone legislation that delivers a more effective and efficient process for heritage protection and development approvals. The reforms aim to create a system that enables Aboriginal cultural heritage to be considered upfront in land-use planning and development processes. This will promote better cultural heritage outcomes, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of consultation with Aboriginal people and provide greater certainty to industry.
- A business case is being developed to identify the funding necessary for service and infrastructure upgrades in 59 Aboriginal communities that are owned by Local Aboriginal Land Councils. This project is being undertaken in close consultation with NSW Aboriginal Land Council representatives.
- The Department is collaborating with Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the development of a "Planning for non-Planners" training course. This will help build

the capacity of Local Aboriginal Land Councils and communities to participate in planning for their communities including by identifying opportunities for the economic development of land.

- The Department is also exploring ways to improve the cultural competency within State and local government planning authorities to improve engagement and service delivery of planning processes and outcomes for Aboriginal communities.

Should you have any enquiries in relation to this response, I have arranged for Mr Stephen Murray, Acting Executive Director Regions, at the Department to be available to assist. Mr Murray can be contacted on .

Yours sincerely

Carolyn McNally
Secretary 6.5.16