

**Submission
No 148**

INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Canterbury-Bankstown Council

Date received: 26 July 2016

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The Hon Paul Green MLC
Chair
General Purpose Standing Committee No 6
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Green MLC

Inquiry into Crown Land

Canterbury-Bankstown Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the General Purpose Standing Committee's Inquiry into Crown Land.

Councils across NSW have historically played a significant role in managing Crown lands and it is well recognised that Crown land delivers many social and environmental benefits to the people of the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Government Area (LGA).

Crown land forms an integral component of Council's open space network and is utilised by the community for a range of purposes particularly as sporting and recreational facilities. Without this land, the community would be less-well provided for in the per capita rate of land for public recreation purposes and in many areas could fail to achieve the 2.83 H per 1000 population recommendation of the *Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government* (NSW Gov 2010).

In Council's view and in response to this Inquiry, we consider that legislation pertaining to the care, control and management of Crown land ought to be explicit in detailing the responsibility of Councils. In line with the former Bankstown Council's submission on the *Crown Lands Legislation – White Paper*, Canterbury-Bankstown Council provides in principle support to remove duplication and red tape by allowing councils to manage Crown land under the *Local Government Act 1993*. This would be particularly beneficial in the circumstance where parks are a combination of Council and Crown land, thereby enabling Councils to prepare comprehensive Plans of Management (POMs) to ensure consistent, integrated and effective management of the land.

Council currently implements appropriate and effective measures to maintain and enhance Crown land within the LGA. There is little evidence of Crown land preservation being adversely affected under Council's care due to existing controls such as the application of zoning requirements, Local Environment Plans, and good governance practices.

In Council's view it is reasonable to suggest that Crown land be transferred to Council where:

- Council is able to demonstrate that Crown land is part of the critical supply in its LGA and has been under Council's care and control for long periods of time; or
- Council has invested significantly financially in the maintenance and development of the site; or
- the Crown land forms a minor component of an otherwise Council owned open space.

Needless to say, effective community consultation is crucial in terms of public participation and notification on any proposals for the commercial use and disposal of Crown land at a local level. In accordance with its Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, Council utilises a number of community consultation and engagement techniques as part of any proposed changes to the use of land or key assets.

The need for a greater level of intergovernmental consultation and input regarding State Government use of Crown land within the LGA is supported by Council. Currently, Council is afforded little weight regarding the feedback it provides on behalf of the community, for Crown land development that affects the LGA and community use of that land.

Finally, Council supports opportunities for increasing Aboriginal involvement in the management of Crown land that falls within Council's LGA, provided that the Government develop a common policy framework in consultation with Councils that is applicable throughout NSW.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Council's Senior Policy Analyst, Rachel Symons, on 9707 9870.

Yours sincerely


Matthew Stewart
General Manager