

**Submission
No 17**

**INQUIRY INTO STATE RECORDS ACT 1998 AND THE
POLICY PAPER ON ITS REVIEW**

Organisation: City of Newcastle

Date Received: 8 April 2020

Submission by City of Newcastle

3.1 Policy outcome: Stories that shape the social, historical and cultural identity of NSW are widely shared and understood

(1 and 2) City of Newcastle (CN) understands the objective of increased cooperation between the State Records Authority of NSW and Sydney Living Museums and has no objection to their proposed amalgamation.

3.2 Policy outcome: Records of enduring value to the citizens of NSW are managed, preserved and made accessible

(3) It is City of Newcastle (CN) policy to retain records of enduring value in the community in which they were created. To house this material CN has a dedicated archive that is largely compliant with RM Standard No.13 – *Standard on the physical storage of State records*. In addition, CN has an established Local Studies Library with an extensive local historical collection, which itself is recognised as a Regional Repository under the act.

CN prefers to continue to retain the current arrangement rather than transfer to the Authority the physical custody and control of its State Archives.

3.3 Policy outcome: Citizens have timely access to records documenting the activities and decisions that shape NSW and the lives of its citizens

(4) City of Newcastle (CN) has no objection to records in the open access period (currently older than 30 years) being classified by default as 'open' unless CN conducts a risk assessment that an individual record remains closed to public access.

(5) CN agrees that the open access period be reduced from 30 years to 20 years in line with other jurisdictions.

3.4 Policy outcome: NSW public offices create, keep and protect records as evidence of their activities and decisions

(6) City of Newcastle (CN) supports the intent and purpose of the State Records Act and conducts internal and external audits of our own compliance. CN fully supports the proposal for the Authority to direct agencies to investigate their own recordkeeping practices and to report back to the authority.