

NSW Trade & Investment
PO Box 2185,
Dangar, NSW 2309

Dear Sir/Madam,

I/we wish to object to the State government's proposed future direction for Crown Land management as stated in the Crown Lands Management Review Report and White Paper. The proposed simplified and streamlined approach will not ensure that the important environmental and social values of Crown Land are identified and preserved for future generations. The proposal removes provision for the environmental assessment of Crown Land and the principle of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) will no longer underpin landuse in the fragile landscapes of western NSW. The sustainable management of Crown Land is replaced by an undefined notion of flexible landuse based on economic priorities. This is a backward step in natural resource management. Crown Land transferred to Council as part of a cost-shifting process between State government and Councils will be at risk of future alienation under Council control.

Objection is based on the fact that:

1. No adequate community consultation has occurred in the preparation of the White Paper and unusually there was no Green Paper. Nor was the Review Report publicly exhibited.
2. There is great community confusion and concern at government review of other related pieces of legislation, most notably planning and local government. The sensible and considered interrelation of these three Acts (Planning, Local Government and Crown Land) is critical in the sustainable management of crown Land.
3. The remote western lands of NSW, which comprise 40% of NSW are very fragile and require ESD to underpin management to ensure further degradation does not occur, especially as the State undergoes the as yet unknown full impacts of a changing climate.

The community expects that in a review of the Crown Land Act that the many values of Crown Land will be protected for future generations. It is anticipated that the State government will:

- prioritise the protection of the natural, social and cultural heritage values of the Crown Land Estate across the State via a mandated assessment process,
- ensure transparency and accountability in Crown Land management,
- integrate in a meaningful way all State government legislation affecting Crown Land,
- ensure clear mechanisms for the community to critique Ministerial decisions regarding Crown Land.

None of the above is clearly identified in the White Paper. The important provisions in the current legislation to undertake environmental assessment of Crown Land prior to any alienation and to underpin management of Western NSW by ESD must be retained within any new legislation. Without these inclusions the new streamlined Act sets an inadequate and backward direction for the sustainable management of Crown Land into the future.

Yours sincerely,

NAME:

ADDRESS:

DATE: