

Submission

No 012

**CONSULTATION ON THE MODERN
MANAGEMENT OF COMMONS**

Name: Ian Curtis

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Subject: Submission - Commons

My name is Ian Curtis and I reside at [deleted]

I am not a Commoner of any Common but I unreservedly support their continued existence under the Commons Management Act as detailed in the Submission of the St Albans Common Trustees to the Department of Industry – Lands in relation to the NSW Government’s updated proposal for Commons. I am aware that I will be identified in the summary of submissions list.

As a Non-Commoner I appreciate and benefit from the community, cultural, heritage and environmental values embodied in the continued existence of any Common Trust with a Roll of Commoners and an elected Board of Trustees.

Specifically, I reiterate my opposition to any proposal that would result in the repeal of the Commons Management Act and the designation of any Common as Crown Land under the Crown Land Management Act. To do so would eradicate the Common Roll and the function of the Commoner and, over time, the right to elect those Trustees who manage those Common Trusts. I understand that this function will be transferred to Land Managers under Ministerial appointment which is unacceptable to me. The legislative proposals are in direct conflict with the excision of Commons from the Crown Lands Management Act, which only occurred in November 2016 to much acclaim from all parliamentary parties. In my view the proposed changes are tantamount to theft.

Although there is some merit in the suggestion of the Trustees of the St Albans Common Trust that the Commons Management Act be retained, with a limited application to “eligible” Commons as listed in a new Schedule, I give greater support to the act being retained for all Commons, even those that are not functioning as well as they might. Instead of trying to take control of such assets, I call on the Department and the broader NSW government to work with the communities and re-establish good management practices. Commons are not crown land, that fact is a fundamental part of their role. They are not for all of the public and are set aside for the immediately connected community. If the commoners don’t want to actively manage the lands or share them with the wider public then so be it. Except to the extent that the department is responsible for any land management, whether it be private or crown land, it is not department’s role to manage any situation with a common.

Ian Curtis