

Submission

No 005

**CONSULTATION ON THE MODERN
MANAGEMENT OF COMMONS**

Name: Colin Rath & Carolyn Gregory

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Sender: Colin Rath & Carolyn Gregory

Dear Mr Clarke,

RE: Current proposal for Commons

I am writing to you in response to the Department of Industry- Lands fact sheet, titled- COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF NSW CROWN LAND MANAGEMENT - Recognising and protecting the values of commons.

I submit the following to you as I do not agree that the current proposal is the right approach.

It is not appropriate to seek to have the St Albans Common brought under the umbrella of the Crown Lands Management Act. That issue was comprehensively decided by the NSW Legislative Council on 8/9 November 2016. Nothing has changed which would in any way warrant or justify a re-visitation of that issue.

The proposed legislative framework effectively abolishes the concept of a Common and with it 200 years of NSW history. There is no justification for this. It is not appropriate to abolish the functions of the Common Roll, the Commoner, nor their right to elect the Trustees who manage the Common and substitute Land Managers appointed by the Minister. This amounts to seizing control of a community asset paid for by the Commoners since its inception.

It is not appropriate to vest sole authority in the Minister to appoint persons to manage the St Albans Common Trust. The potential for the control of the management of the St Albans Common to be wrested from the community and placed in the hands of those whose interests may not be aligned with the community is very real and should not be underestimated or treated lightly.

The future management of the St Albans Common, consistent with the overall objectives of the Fact Sheet, is best achieved by keeping the overarching legislative framework provided by the Commons Management Act 1989.

The St Albans Common is a well-run Common of significant historical, social, environmental, cultural and heritage significance. It is unique in its continuous operation and independent funding by the Commoners since 1824 and so to adopt a "one size fits all" approach is not relevant.

Selective amendments to the Commons Management Act will ensure best practice administration of Commons such as the St Albans Common without abandoning nearly 200 years of historical, social, environmental, heritage and cultural significance.

Yours Sincerely,
Colin Rath & Carolyn Gregory

St Albans Commoner