



18th July 2022

Minister Roger Jaensch
80B Wilson Street
Burnie, Tasmania 7320

RECEIVED
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BY:

Dear Minister Jaensch,

ABORIGINAL LAND REFORM CONSULTATION

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Consultation Paper on an improved model for returning land to Tasmania's Aboriginal People.

Council is pleased to respond to the following sections:

2 – Revisions to ALCT elections

Council supports the intent to remove the objection process, acknowledging the widespread belief that it has been divisive.

Council believes that it is incumbent upon the State to ensure all Tasmanian Aboriginal groups can participate and if they choose to do so, that they are able to be elected fairly and transparently to the ALCT.

3 – Simplification of Land Transfer Process

While Council understands the wish to avoid the necessity of amending the Act every time a significant land return occurs, this Council wishes to ensure that in simplifying the process the State does not inadvertently create perverse consequences. The process must therefore encompass strong legislative provisions that enable continued reasonable public access to land that was previously accessible to the whole community.

Council considers that a viable alternative to hand backs may be to increase and potentially modify the Tasmanian State Reserve system because it operates under the principle of managing land for everyone. Consideration should be given to adapting the current system to provide an increased role for Aboriginal stakeholders.

4 – A Land Management Role for Local or Regional Aboriginal Community Organisations

While this Council has a long-standing resolution opposing land hand backs, it is willing to support the approach taken by the Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC) which is to advocate for co-management arrangements. Council considers that co-management is likely



CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL

to be an effective means for local groups to access the support, specialist advice and potentially funding, that they may not be otherwise able to readily source.

Council supports the concept that there is scope to differentiate land that is of local significance from that which may have wider interest.

As per our response to Section 3 above, Council is concerned that a 'general provision for reasonable public access' may not be sufficiently robust to ensure that the wider community continues to have access to land which was previously freely available.

6 – Governance Issues

Land hand backs must be accompanied by provisions that ensure the land is well managed. Management plans must not only be prepared and published, but they must also be monitored, otherwise how else will the ALCT be held accountable for its practices? There are local examples where land hand back has resulted in the total exclusion of the wider community, yet the land is neglected, overgrown and rarely visited by Aboriginal people. This could be addressed in part by ensuring that local Aboriginal groups have primary responsibility for local land management in partnership with agencies where possible. Council considers the involvement of agencies such as the Environmental Protection Authority, Tasmania Parks & Wildlife Service or other appropriate body, to be key to effective management and will support local groups and the ALCT to develop professional, effective and responsible reporting mechanisms.

Yours sincerely

Daryl Quilliam
MAYOR