Urban Taskforce
AUSTRALIA

The Urban Taskforce represents Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers. We provide a forum for people involved in the development and planning of the urban environments to engage in constructive dialogue with government and the community.

25th March 2021

Professor Richard Bush
Crown Land Commissioner
Office of the NSW Crown Land Commissioner

Via email: commissioner@crownland.nsw.gov.au

Dear Professor Bush

**Evaluation of the Crown Land Management Act 2016- A Discussion Paper**

I write regarding the Evaluation of the Crown Land Management Act 2016 - A Discussion Paper (the Discussion Paper).

Crown land is an invaluable asset to the growth and productivity of the State. The Urban Taskforce welcomes the review as an opportunity to re-fresh the Crown Lands Management Act 2016 (CLM Act) in the interest of facilitating greater investor certainty and innovation in the use of Crown Land assets. The opportunity is timely in the context of the State's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Urban Taskforce responses to questions posed in the Discussion Paper and relevant to our members are detailed below.

> *Do you think approvals (including with other government agencies) have been streamlined, and has this enabled more efficient dealings on Crown land?*

No. The feedback from Urban Taskforce members is that delays and uncertainty of decision-making are on-going for approvals on Crown land.

Members are reporting that approvals can take upwards of five years. Alarmingly, some development approved, shovel ready projects are being stymied by Government indecision around the on-going management and governance arrangements relating to some Crown Land. Delays and indecision add to the cost of undertaking development in NSW. Furthermore, risk and uncertainty are the last thing NSW needs given the uncertainty already created by COVID-19.

> *Do you have any suggestions to improve the legislation or processes to make it easier to conduct business and invest on Crown land?*

Yes. The Urban Taskforce ***recommends*** the CLM Act be amended to be more explicit on the need to facilitate private sector innovation through collaboration

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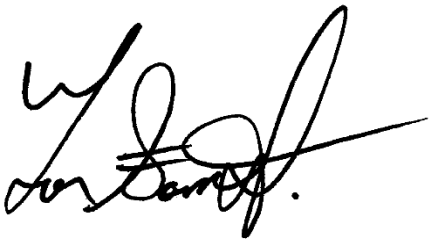
on Crown Lands. Such an amendment is required to deliver on the objective contained in the *NSW Government Crown Lands Strategic Plan*: "Enable jobs growth, commercial opportunities and sustainable economic progress in regional and rural NSW" and to achieve the broader outcome: "Facilitate investment on Crown land".

Ensuring the CLM ACT - and the way it is administered- encourages investment and will deliver long-term economic benefits to the State.

Please note that matters relating to the availability of Crown Land for cemeteries and crematoria have been specifically dealt with through a separate submission prepared by Mills Oakley.

The Urban Taskforce is available to provide further development industry feedback to ensure the CLM Act responds to investor needs and is fit for the future.

Yours sincerely



**Tom Forrest**
Chief Executive Officer