Rees Government to fast track Crown Road reforms

Minister for Lands Tony Kelly said the Department of Lands would direct additional resources to fast track its program to close and sell unnecessary ‘paper’ roads across the state.

Mr Kelly said the mini-budget initiative would lead to a win-win situation: speeding up the time it takes to convert roads to freehold land while at the same time delivering additional revenue for schools, hospitals and frontline services.

“This is about clearing up an anomaly that has existed since the late 1800s in some cases,” Mr Kelly said.

“These ‘paper’ roads were created during the original mapping process where roads were drawn onto the map – many of them in areas where it is just not possible or necessary to create a road.

“In many instances, it would be impracticable to build the roads as they may run up a cliff, across a dam, or through paddocks where they would serve no purpose as a through road.”

Mr Kelly said the cost of administering such small parcels of land is uneconomical and continued Government ownership of these ‘paper’ roads is no longer justified.

“The Department of Lands already has a program of converting these ‘paper’ roads to freehold land so they can be purchased by neighbouring landholders,” Mr Kelly said.

“There are about 33,000 of these ‘paper’ roads across NSW and the Department of Lands has already received approximately 10,000 applications from landholders wanting to purchase them.

“In the past, the demand for purchase of these ‘paper’ roads has outstripped the Department of Lands’ ability to process the applications.

“The Department of Lands will focus more staff and resources on the task of converting these unnecessary roads to freehold land and converting a paper anomaly into funds for important Government projects.”

Mr Kelly encouraged landholders to once again consider applying to purchase ‘paper’ roads through their local Lands office.

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