Friday, 22 December 2017

NEW LAND & ENVIRONMENT COURT COMMISSIONERS

NSW Attorney General Mark Speakman today announced the appointment of a new Senior Commissioner and four Commissioners of the Land and Environment Court (LEC).

Mr Speakman said Susan Dixon will become a Senior Commissioner, replacing Rosemary Martin who is leaving the position for family reasons. Peter Walsh will become a full-time Commissioner, while Susan Morris, Professor Edward Blakely and John Douglas have been appointed as Acting Commissioners.

“Land and Environment Court Commissioners serve for a period of seven years and play a vital role in determining merit review appeals either via adjudication or conciliation,” Mr Speakman said.

Ms Dixon has been a full-time Commissioner for the past eight years and will serve as Senior Commissioner until 2023. The former solicitor, who has 23 years’ legal experience, has previously served as a Senior Member of the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal and was the Registrar of the LEC.

“Ms Dixon has worked extensively in planning, environmental, local government and resource law and has a strong understanding of the Senior Commissioner role having worked at the LEC in various roles for 13 years,” Mr Speakman said.

Mrs Morris served as a full-time LEC Commissioner from 2010-2017 and is returning in an acting capacity. She was a council town planner from 1979-2010, occupying a range of senior roles including Director of Development and Planning and Environment at Camden Council.

Dr Walsh is a planner who owns a multi-award winning consulting practice providing services to government agencies, education institutions and the private sector on issues relating to urban and regional planning and public policy. His is a long-term teacher and visiting fellow at the University of Technology Sydney.

Mr Douglas has been an arborist for 33 years and has been head teacher at TAFE NSW at Ryde since 2009. As part of this role, he has worked closely with SafeWork NSW to foster and improve industrial safety in the arboricultural industry.

Professor Blakely has an extensive urban planning and policy background having taught at a range of high profile education institutions including Sydney University, New York School University and University of California at Berkley. He is currently a District Commissioner for the Greater Sydney Commission.

Mr Speakman thanked Ms Martin for her valuable contributions to the LEC. The LEC was established in 1980 and is the first specialist environmental superior court in the world.