



Aboriginal Housing Company Limited  
Level 1, 104 Lawson Street REDFERN NSW 2016  
PO BOX 374 STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2012  
ABN : 28 001 154 481 ACN : 001 154 481

## **Media statement by Alisi Tutuila, Chairperson, Board of Directors, Aboriginal Housing Company Limited**

### **Pemulwuy Project update – Legal action regarding the Block**

**17 June 2015**

The Pemulwuy Project is an exciting project that will benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Redfern and the broader community. The project has been the subject of public consultation throughout the development approval process.

This is a project on Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) land. The fact is commercial buildings and much needed student housing planned as stage one will create the income stream which will enable the funding of affordable housing for Aboriginal people. It will make the development financially self-sustaining, allowing us to break the cycle of dependence on government handouts.

We respect the right of people to protest. However, we have been consistently clear that we must have access to the site to commence the Pemulwuy Project. This is a vitally important community project, which will include 62 affordable homes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as space for community and business facilities.

In February 2015, the AHC issued a trespass notice to members of the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy (RATE) trespassing on the Block, land owned by the AHC. Legal action is a last resort for AHC after efforts, including a meeting between representatives of RATE and AHC, failed to resolve our differences.

So today we have filed an application with the NSW Supreme Court, to remove members of RATE from AHC land.

The acrimony and uncertainty surrounding this project serves no-one's interests. At all times we have been, and remain, open to constructive dialogue with RATE, but we are determined to commence work on the Pemulwuy Project.

I look forward to seeing Pemulwuy breathe new life into the Block. With its emphasis on cultural values, spirituality and employment, I believe it will support a strong and healthy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Redfern.

**Media enquiries:** Ingrid Svendsen, Grounded Communications, 0409 007 530

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Ph (02) 9319 1824

Fx (02) 9319 0475

[www.ahc.org.au](http://www.ahc.org.au)