The Minister for Lands and Planning, Kon Vatskalis, has disputed claims by the Northern Land Council that there’s been a lack of consultation with traditional owners about proposed land clearing in the Daly River region.

"I’m a bit disappointed the NLC would come out with such claims, especially after the efforts we have made to consult traditional owners and the public about this issue," Mr Vatskalis said.

"My department and I have had numerous discussions and briefings to engage all interested stakeholders in the region and elsewhere about proposed land clearing.

"Earlier this year, the department hosted meetings in the Douglas Daly farms and the community of Nauiyu Nambiyu to inform traditional owners, pastoralists and landowners on new clearing controls and their impact in the Daly region.

"Despite claims by some groups, I’ve said repeatedly there are no secret agricultural development plans for the Daly and I repeat this now.

"This Government has gone to great lengths to ensure the large scale land clearing that took place under the previous CLP Government does not continue, with strict new guidelines put in place to ensure all land holders must request permission before clearing native vegetation on their properties.

"Land holders did not need permission prior to this legislation coming in last year, and huge tracks of land were cleared, often fence line to fence line.

"Under the new legislation, every application is subject to stringent environmental checks to ensure adequate water and wildlife corridors are in place prior to any clearing.

"All proposals are public documents and open to public comment.

"This information has been made readily available not only to the Northern Land Council, but the general public, and we will continue to consult on this issue to better inform all Territorians.

"This is a very complex subject and there is a lot of misunderstanding, but one thing is certain – we want to ensure we don’t repeat the mistakes that have occurred in southern Australia, which is why we are enforcing such strict land clearing rules and regulations.

"This Government is determined to get all land planning in the Daly River region right, and we will continue to consult with traditional owners and all other interested parties."