

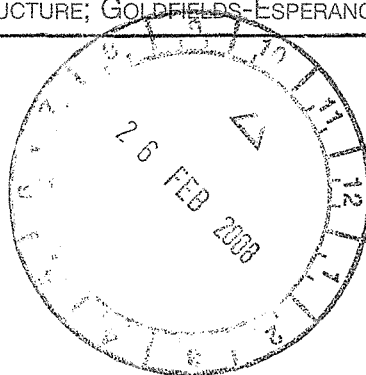


MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT; RACING AND GAMING; MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS AND CITIZENSHIP; GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES; MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE; GOLDFIELDS-ESPERANCE; YOUTH

Our ref: 01-019681



Hon Sheila Mills MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000



Dear Ms Mills

RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

I refer to a recommendation contained in your *Report No. 10: Overview of Petitions Report* that the Minister for Local Government develop a model tree policy.

I have recommended to my colleague, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, that officers from the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Swan River Catchment Authority and the Department of Local Government and Regional Development jointly examine how a model tree policy would fit within current legislation, policies and programs. I have further recommended that this examination be done in conjunction with the Western Australian Local Government Association.

The effectiveness of a model tree policy will depend on the extent to which it is adopted by local governments. As you will be aware, local governments have a high degree of independence in both the making of their decisions and in their implementation. The *Local Government Act 1995* provides local governments with general competence powers for the good governance of their districts. Accordingly, they may adopt whatever local laws and policies they so desire so long as they are not in conflict with any other statute.

An important aspect of the examination of the recommendation would be the identification of existing State and local government programs and mechanisms that might facilitate or provide for the preservation of mature trees in urban areas. The process would then be to examine how, if any, modification or adaptation of these programs and mechanisms could be undertaken to better facilitate the retention of mature trees, both in developed urban settings and in areas under development such as new subdivisions.

I will advise you further once this matter has been examined in more detail.

Yours sincerely



Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich MLC
Minister for Local Government; Racing and Gaming;
Multicultural Interests and Citizenship; Government Enterprises;
Minister Assisting the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure;
Goldfields-Esperance; Youth

22 FEB 2008