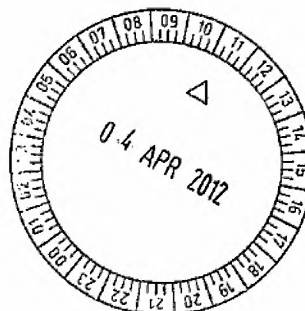





Premier of Western Australia

Our Ref: 24-113059/AJ



Hon Brian Ellis MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council of Western Australia
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000


Dear ~~Mr~~ Ellis

I refer to your letter of 13 March 2012 regarding Petition No 107 – Proposed Coal Mine at Osmington and the Standing Committee's request for information on the Government's actions to protect Margaret River.

The Margaret River region is an internationally recognised destination for tourism and wine production. The protection of the unique character and environmental values of the region is of utmost importance to the State Government. This position was made clear by the State Government's recent rejection of Vasse Coal Management Pty Ltd's proposed mine at Osmington, which was a decision made on environmental grounds.

I have been advised by the Shire of Augusta – Margaret River and the City of Busselton that they do not support the preparation of special legislation, similar to the Swan Valley Planning Act, to protect the Capes region from future mining. I agree with the local governments that such legislation may constrain other suitable development in the region and it is unlikely to add to the robust approvals framework already in place.

I can however, advise that the Minister for Planning has directed the Department of Planning to review the key planning documents for the South West region to provide clearer direction on mining proposals and protection of environmental and tourism values. A review of the South West Framework has already commenced and a review of the statutory policy covering the Capes region, State Planning Policy 6.1 Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge, will commence shortly.

This policy review will ensure the most stringent planning framework possible is in place to protect the Capes region from all forms of high-impact mining. Stakeholder and public consultation will take place at a later date as part of the review.

I trust this clarifies the State Government's position on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Barnett', written in a cursive style.

Colin Barnett MLA
PREMIER

29 MAR 2012

PUBLIC