



The Hon Dr Anthony Lynham MP
Minister for State Development and
Minister for Natural Resources and Mines

Your ref 5517T52 & 5517T51
Our refs MO/2783, CTS 02315/17

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12 MAR 2017

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr George and Alice Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 20 February 2017, forwarding for response e-petition 2643-16 and paper petition 2701-17 (the petitions) as tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 14 February 2017.

I can advise that there currently are no coal mining leases in the Goomburra area. There is one Exploration Permit for Coal (EPC) 1506, held by APEC Coal Pty Ltd, which was granted on 13 May 2009 and was due to expire on 12 May 2017. An application to renew the permit was received on 10 February 2017 and is currently being assessed by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*.

A second EPC (EPC1539) was surrendered on 7 September 2016 and therefore cannot be renewed.

An exploration permit does not allow the holder to undertake mining. It is granted only for the purpose of determining whether a mineral resource exists on the land and its potential depth, quantity and quality.

EPC1506 contains land identified as a Priority Agricultural Area (PAA) (100 per cent of permit area) and Strategic Cropping Area (SCA) (64 per cent of permit area). These areas are identified as areas of regional interest under the *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* (RPI Act), which acknowledges the important agricultural values in the Goomburra Valley.

The RPI Act's aim is to manage both the impact of resource activities on areas of regional interest and address coexistence. Significant impacts such as coal mines would require a regional interest development approval to proceed, which must consider potential impacts on the likes of PAAs and SCAs.

The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has issued an Environmental Authority (EA) (EPSX00972313) for mining exploration activities on EPC1506. The conditions for the EA are the standard conditions contained within the 'Code of environmental compliance for exploration and mineral development projects'. This EA would remain in place should the EPC1506 be renewed.

Should the EA holder wish to undertake mining activities on the site, a site-specific EA would need to be applied for that considers potential impacts of the mining activity on the existing environmental values. The assessment process includes the opportunity for public submissions, with the applicant required to address all public submissions to progress the application.

I would be pleased if you would arrange the tabling of this response under Standing Order 125(3). Any enquiries regarding this response can be referred to Mr Paul Woodland, Chief of Staff, on telephone 3719 7360.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Lynham', written over the words 'Yours sincerely'.

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Minister for Natural Resources and Mines