



Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,  
Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

Your Ref: A578523  
Our Ref: CTS 13726/20

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12 August 2020

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 16 July 2020 regarding Parliamentary Petition No. 3264-20 requesting the House to assess the environmental value of Bimblebox Nature Refuge and to grant it 'state-protected status' in recognition of Waratah Coal's mining interest in the area.

Queensland's Coordinator-General approved Waratah Coal's Galilee Coal Project (the Project) in 2013 following an assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the proposal under its coordinated project status. Through this process, the environmental values present on Bimblebox Nature Refuge were taken into consideration by the Coordinator-General which resulted in the approval requiring the proponent to provide a land-based offset. The offset is required to be of at least the size of Bimblebox Nature Refuge and of at least equivalent conservation value that is suitable for declaration as a nature refuge under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. This requirement was included in the draft environmental authority (EA) that was issued for the Project under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* in 2015.

Under Queensland law, any active mining interests would need to first be resolved in order to deem the property eligible for consideration as a higher class of protected area.

I can advise that public notification of the Project's draft EA and mining tenure recently closed. Objections to the Project that were received by the Department of Environment and Science and the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy have now been referred to the Land Court. Any recommendations made by the Land Court following the in-progress objections hearing would be required to be considered by the delegate for the Environmental Protection Act before making a final decision on granting the EA.

I trust that this information has been of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

Leeanne Enoch MP  
**Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,  
Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts**