



Hon Ben Wyatt MLA
Treasurer; Minister for Finance; Energy; Aboriginal Affairs

Your Ref: Petition No 74
Our Ref: 69-10637

Hon Matthew Swinbourn MLC
Chair
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
4 Harvest Terrace
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Mr Swinbourn

Thank you for your letter of 19 September 2018 seeking comments on the terms of Petition No 74 regarding the protection of rock art in Murujuga (including the Burrup Peninsula and Dampier Archipelago) and the submissions from the principal petitioner and tabling Member.

The State Government recognises Murujuga as a unique ecological and archaeological area containing one of the largest collections of Aboriginal engraved rock art in the world. The rock art is of immense cultural and spiritual significance to Aboriginal people and of national and international heritage value.

In August this year, the Hon Mark McGowan, Premier, the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and representatives from the traditional language groups signed a joint letter to the Federal Minister for the Environment to commence the World Heritage nomination process. The process involves the State Government submitting a nomination to the Commonwealth Government, with extensive consultation and identification of the potential World Heritage values of the area.

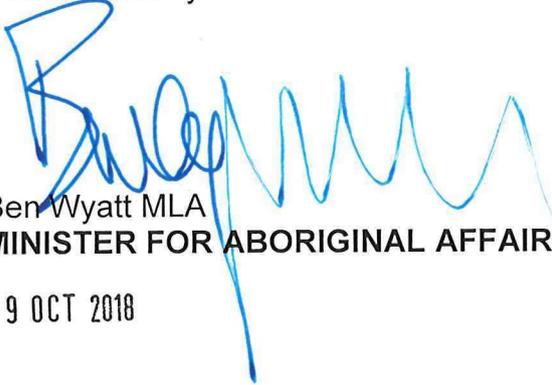
A successful World Heritage nomination will require a collaborative approach and extensive consultation with the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and the traditional owners. Support from the local community, industry and other stakeholders will be a key component of the nomination process. Through the nomination, the Government will work to highlight the unique cultural, spiritual and archaeological values of the area so Murujuga can be recognised globally.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions is establishing an interagency taskforce and a heritage committee from relevant State Government agencies, the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation, expert advisors and independent consultants to assist in the preparation of the World Heritage listing nomination. The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is represented on this taskforce.

Industrial development and the impact of industrial pollution on rock art at Murujuga fall outside of my portfolio responsibilities. If you are yet to do so, I recommend you seek information from the Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, and the Minister for Environment.

It should be noted that the State Government has established the Murujuga Rock Art Stakeholder Reference Group to oversee finalisation and implementation of the Burrup Rock Art Strategy. The reference group includes representatives from Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation, key State and Federal government departments, Pilbara Ports Authority, Pilbara Development Commission, City of Karratha, Centre for Rock Art Research and Management and industry. The strategy will provide a long-term framework to monitor, analyse and address any changes to the rock art from emissions.

Yours sincerely



Ben Wyatt MLA
MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

19 OCT 2018