



Hon. Diane Evers MLC
Member for the South West Region

Hon. Matthew Swinbourn MLC
Committee Chair
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council Parliament of Western Australia

Dear Chair,
RE: Petition No. 024 - Oppose logging in Nannup

The above petition that I tabled on 14 September 2017 petition calls on the Legislative Council to oppose the logging of Barrabup Forest, Coupe 03, on the outskirts of Nannup and take measures to declare it a formal conservation reserve.

This picturesque, healthy and highly bio-diverse jarrah and marri forest, located 5km north-west of Nannup on the town's Vasse Highway entrance way, was recognised by a 2002 Conservation Commission report as High Conservation Value forest.¹ As such it should never have made its way onto the Forest Product Commission's harvest plan, regardless of the outcome of the old growth forest assessment currently under way.

In fact, a promise made verbally and in writing by ALP members of parliament to environmental organisations in the lead-up to the March 2017 State election was to, quote: "Immediately conserve High Conservation Value forests to provide protection for some of WA's most threatened wildlife including the forest Black Cockatoos, Western Ringtail Possums, Numbats and Quokkas."² Given Barrabup Coupe 03 is a known habitat currently for Carnaby's, Baudin's and Red-tailed black cockatoos; chuditch; quokkas; woylies; and western ringtail possums, the logging of it would constitute a clear breach of this promise.

As noted in the 2002 analysis, Barrabup forest contains pioneer and Indigenous heritage. Further reason to protect Coupe 03 from logging is provided by Nannup Shire's 2015 Socio-Economic Review which emphasises the economic importance to Nannup of its forests for forest-based nature tourism opportunities.³ The Review notes Nannup attracts

¹ P55~ 'A Review of High Conservation Values in Western Australia's SouthWest Forests - A Report to the Conservation Commission of Western Australia' (Ecoscape, 2002). Downloaded 26/9/2017 at:

<http://www.conservation.wa.gov.au/media/842/final%20hcv%20report.pdf>

² Extract from an email from the then Shadow Spokesperson for Environment to WA Forest Alliance representative Jess Beckerling, 16 February 2017.

³ Downloaded 26/9/2017 at: http://www.nannup.wa.gov.au/profiles/nannup/assets/clientdata/document-centre/5_may_2015_agenda_attachments_12.8_-_12.15.pdf



around 60,000 visitors per year, enjoys relative consistent, rather than seasonally fluctuating visitation and is geographically located to encourage valuable overnight stays rather than transient day visitors. It states that “visitation is dominated by holiday/leisure tourists, particularly outdoor pursuits such as sightseeing/looking around, bushwalking, visiting national parks/state parks and fishing.” The Review also emphasises the potential to further increase the tourist dollar in Nannup by promoting its forest walks, wildflower attractions, in addition to the Bibbulmen and Munda Bididi hiking and cycling trails that pass through Shire.

Clearly, given its heritage, beauty and exceptional flora and fauna, proximity to the town and prominence along the main tourist gateway, there is a strong case for preserving Barrabup Coupe 03 as a tourism attraction. As for local residents, look no further than the 3,000 signatures on the tabled petition, the recent well-attended rally and the energy behind this campaign to recognise their affinity for the forest and its social value.⁴

A criticism of the campaign to save Barrabup is that logging the coupe is necessary for the viability of the Nannup mill, and Shire’s economy as a whole.⁵ These claims do not bear scrutiny: Nannup Timber Processing Pty Ltd’s recent partial suspension of operations follows years of the company struggling due to reduced market demand for jarrah items and declining saw log quality, a previous partial closure in 2013-14 and a failed legal challenge in 2014 to secure more money from the WA Government through the mill’s 2003 Financial Assistance Agreement.⁶ As the Shire’s Socio-Economic Review and Workforce Plan 2017-2027 confirm, the 60 employees reported to work at the mill prior to recent lay-off represents at most 10 per cent of people in paid employment in the Shire (not 20 or 50 per cent as has been claimed), and agriculture, not forestry or milling, is the main employer.⁷

⁴ This rally was widely reported in the SW and Statewide media, including <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/protesters-fight-to-save-oldgrowth-forest-marked-for-logging-20170913-gygpi5.html>

⁵ E.g., Hon. Steve Thomas MLC 23/8/2017:

[http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/31ae17c0a47ce7c848258187002dfca4/\\$FILE/C40+S1+20170823+p3165b-3166a.pdf](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/31ae17c0a47ce7c848258187002dfca4/$FILE/C40+S1+20170823+p3165b-3166a.pdf); Hon. Adele Farina MLA 23/8/2017:

[http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/d441fb9830ae7b9448258187002dfced/\\$FILE/C40+S1+20170823+p3168b-3168b.pdf](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/d441fb9830ae7b9448258187002dfced/$FILE/C40+S1+20170823+p3168b-3168b.pdf); & Shire President Tony Dean in <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/nannup-timber-mill-workers-out-of-a-job-after-major-restructure-20170824-gy37md.html>.

⁶ Judgement downloaded 28/9/2017 at: <http://decisions.justice.wa.gov.au/supreme/supdcsn.nsf/PDFJudgments-WebVw/2014WASC0438/%24FILE/2014WASC0438.pdf>

⁷ Shire of Nannup Workforce Plan 2017-2027, downloaded 28/9/2017 at

http://www.nannup.wa.gov.au/Profiles/nannup/Assets/ClientData/WMP_2017-2027.pdf

Thankyou for your attention to this matter. I warmly invite you and fellow Committee members to take the opportunity to visit Barrabup Coupe 03, with community members, and see it for yourself.

Kind regards

Hon. Diane Evers MLC