Dear Premier and Mr Jeffries,

Thank you for your letter regarding the intention to progress a nomination of the Burrup Peninsula and Dampier Archipelago for World Heritage Recognition. I agree it is timely that the outstanding heritage value to the nation for which the Burrup and the Dampier Archipelago is recognised and protected for National Heritage significance is also considered for its potential Outstanding Universal Value in accordance with the World Heritage Convention.

The Australian Government (the Government) welcomes working in partnership with the Western Australian Government and Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) as a representative of traditional owners and custodians of the area on this matter. In your correspondence, there is an absent signature from the Yaburara people. In addition to the letter, I understand free, prior, and informed consent was provided verbally by the Murujuga Circle of Elders, a governance body of MAC that represents the five traditional owner and custodian groups.

The Western Australian Government is now responsible for submitting a nomination to the Australian World Heritage Tentative List. If included on the Tentative List, the Western Australian Government is responsible for developing and funding a nomination for World Heritage listing in consultation with MAC. Technical assistance is provided by the Government.

Australia is a current member on the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and will not be in a position to provide new nominations until the term is completed in 2021. Nominations for inclusion on the tentative list may be received in this period. I endorse the possible timings outlined in your correspondence.

Murujuga traditional owners and custodians must remain deeply engaged with, and have ownership over the process if a World Heritage nomination is to be successful.
The Government considers genuine consultation with traditional owners and custodians as being at the forefront of its past, current and future approach to management of the Indigenous heritage values of the Burrup Peninsula. I commend the establishment of an Interagency Taskforce and Heritage Committee to oversee implementation of the owners’ wishes. The Government seeks to participate in these forums. Please forward inquiries relating to the Government’s participation on these committees to David Williams, Assistant Secretary Heritage Branch; david.williams@environment.gov.au.

I look forward to working in partnership with traditional owners and custodians, MAC, and the Western Australian Government in internationally recognising the extraordinary cultural values of the Burrup Peninsula and Dampier Archipelago.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

MELISSA PRICE