

MEDIA RELEASE

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DIFFERENT RULES FOR KING ISLAND

Murchison MLC, Ruth Forrest has highlighted the issue that there appears to be two sets of rules regarding disputes of decisions made by the Resource Planning and Development Commission (RPDC) when it comes to State and Local Government.

“The recent decision by the RPDC to approve an amendment to the King Island Planning scheme, that would see intensive tree farming and plantation forestry prohibited on King Island, highlights this issue” Ms Forrest stated.

Within one month of this decision, the King Island Council was informed that the RPDC had received legal advice that their decision was inconsistent with the *State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land 2000*. This advice to King Island Council was received on Friday 25th August afternoon with a response requested by the following Monday morning at 9am.

“For any other decision made by the RPDC the only right of appeal or dispute is through the Supreme Court. It would appear that a Government department can bypass the Supreme Court appeal process and direct the RPDC to take steps to ‘remove this inconsistency’ with the stroke of a pen or tap of the keys, whereas any other person, developer or organisation would have to appeal such a decision via the Supreme Court, a costly and time consuming process” Ms Forrest stated.

‘If the approved appeal process can be bypassed in this way, this indicates that there is one rule for Government and another for everyone else” Ms Forrest suggested.

“Whilst the RPDC remains the independent umpire in decisions related to planning and development at a State and Local level, the need for consistency of approach and process should be just that – consistent, with the same rights of appeal, dispute, clarification or otherwise for all interested or effected parties” Ms Forrest stated.

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