

27th September 2024

Queensland Law Reform Commission

Lodged online at <https://www.qlrc.qld.gov.au/reviews/mining-lease-objections-processes-review/submission>

To the Queensland Law Reform Commission,

Dear Sir / |Madam.

My name is Bruce Currie, I reside with my wife and on the property Speculation, located in the desert uplands bioregion, north of the township of Jericho in central west Queensland. Where we operate a regenerative beef cattle operation.

In 2013 through until 2016 we were involved in negotiations with the mining company Hancock GVK who were proposing two coal mines, Kevin's Corner and Alpha on our eastern boundary. The negotiations were to get protection for our property's vital ground water supplies and air quality should they be impacted by the company's mining activities. We were also requiring certainty and the security in their proposed "Make Good Agreement" (MGA). As Hancock GVK would not provide us with a MGA that addressed our concerns or document their verbal commitments we were forced to take the matter to the Land Court. As most small business owners and landowners have limited financial capacity a well-functioning and just Land Court process is vital for resolving disputes especially against big corporations. We self-represented twice in the Land Court over that period of time.

As our business model is focussed on regenerative agricultural principles and sustainability I am a member of Lock the Gate and a supporter of the Environmental Defenders Organisation (EDO) as both organisations align with our values. Both Lock the Gate and the EDO along with other groups and organisations provided much needed support to us though our time in the Land Court.

People self-represent in the Land Court because they have limited financial capacity.

Add to that when self-representing in the Land Court defenders / participants sacrifice a massive amount of business and personal time, which equates to lost income in an effort to get justice. Having to then pay \$2000 per day per person for a copy of the court transcript is exorbitant. This cost cannot be justified and inhibits defenders having access to information that is vital to contributing to obtaining justice. e.g. when landowners from the Acland area were in the Land Court for 100 days to get a copy of the transcript it could have cost them \$200 000.

In providing a submission to the Queensland Law Reform Commission review of the mining objections hearing process we are grateful Lock the Gate and the EDO for supporting and assisting us in documenting our issues. We have contributed to and support the submissions of both organisations.

Regards

Bruce Currie

"Speculation"

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