



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 13th September 2019

The Right to Farm: Fertile Farmland at Risk of Acquisition

Stuart Grimley MP has publicly voiced his support for an alternative site to be explored for the acquisition of a train stabling facility in Wauran Ponds.

The Larcombe family's Reservoir Road property in Moriac will be 'split into two', to make way for a train stabling and maintenance facility.

The Government Land Standing Advisory Committee will file a report to hand into the Planning Minister by November 2019. Mr Grimley, in his own submission to the Committee, outlined his defence of the project - even calling for [better regional road and rail infrastructure](#) on two occasions recently in Parliament - but said the position of the facility was the problem.

According to a letter sighted by Mr Grimley from Boral Australia, the mining company had "proactively approached" Public Transport Victoria to purchase their rehabilitated mine site and vacant land for this facility. They [announced to cease mining in Wauran Ponds](#) and commence compulsory rehabilitation works in early 2018.

This alternative site owned by Boral Australia, with tree-lining protection and space for future expansion is considered a much more appropriate option by *Right to Farm*. It is also reportedly flatter land, meaning less excavation costs would be incurred.

Mr Grimley wrote a letter to Minister Richard Wynne asking him to "intervene in this matter and investigate the viability of the Boral site for the stabling yard" on 22 July 2019 and is currently awaiting reply as at 13 September 2019.

Further to this, Mr Grimley tabled a petition on behalf of the *Right to Farm* group and the Larcombe family on Tuesday 27 August 2019, which asks the Legislative Council to direct Rail Projects Victoria to "develop the Wauran Ponds train facility on the alternate site".

He has also sent in a submission on behalf of his constituents as the Member for Western Victoria, asking the Government Land Standing Advisory Committee to reconsider the Boral site as an alternative acquisition for the train stabling facility. In his submission he noted that a good outcome of this case may set a "firm principle on behalf of fertile farm landholders that [land] will be treated with importance and all acquisitions will consider other options as necessary."

Mr Grimley encourages stakeholders or those interested to make their own [submission](#) prior to Monday 16 September.

Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"I've been approached by a committed family and neighbouring farmers who expressed distress at the lack of consultation throughout this whole process, especially through the transition from Public Transport Victoria to Rail Projects Victoria.

I absolutely welcome any investment by any Government in road and rail in rural and regional communities in Western Victoria but the problem here is I don't think other options have been properly explored.

The Larcombe family and the *Right to Farm* group have been extremely understanding in this land acquisition matter, by proposing a common-sense compromise. They have not once rejected that this facility needs to be built, just where exactly it should be built.

I hope the Advisory Committee will ask the Planning Minister to investigate Boral Australia's vacant land and rehabilitated mine site, so this facility can have a positive outcome for the Larcombe's, Rail Projects Victoria and farmers across Victoria."

Stuart Grimley MP - Media Adviser: Olivia Nicholls / 0459 419 755