



## Minister to receive coal mining petition

Council will provide a copy of the petition to Ban Coal Mining in the Mirboo North Region to the Minister for Energy and Resources, Lily D'Ambrosio, and exploration licence applicant, Mantle Mining, following a recommendation from the last Council meeting.

In advising the Minister that it has a firm view against coal exploration and coal mining in the Mirboo North region, Council will also request that it be kept up to date on activities associated with the exploration licence.

Council received the petition at its meeting of 16 December 2015 with 1,970 signatures requesting that Council, together with Baw Baw Shire and Latrobe City Council, "refuse to allow exploration or mining for coal in an area which is agricultural and has high tourism potential".

The State Government issued four exploration licences to Mantle Mining Ltd in Gippsland in 2015 for the purpose of searching for brown and black coal resources with low impact exploration techniques to better determine the extent and depth of black coal at the margins of the Latrobe Valley area.

The land covered by the licences, due to expire between 2018 and 2020, includes areas within South Gippsland.

Mantle Mining previously released a statement to the Australian Stock Exchange announcing that it intends to determine the extent of deeper black coal resources under the Latrobe Valley with a view to establish underground mining of metallurgical and higher grade thermal coal.

The State Government is the regulatory authority with responsibility for considering, granting or refusing mining licences of any nature. Council has an important advocacy role to play in representing the community's views and aspirations. Council believes the issuing of mining exploration licences near towns and potentially over high value tourism and agricultural land creates understandable community concern.

Prior to proceeding with any mining activity in the tenements near Mirboo North, the holder of these exploration licenses would be required to adhere with considerable regulatory, community consultation, geological and environmental and processes.

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