



19 January 2009

The Hon Jay Weatherill
Minister for Environment and Conservation

Dear Minister,

Re Dedication of Crown Land for a Natural Burial Ground

We understand you are aware of our Society's efforts over the past year to secure the use of crown land near Aldinga for the establishment of a dedicated natural burial ground. During the last two months we have met and discussed the proposal with Minister Hill, Minister Holloway, Mayor Rosenberg (Onkaparinga), Mr Richard Fox (Land Management Branch) with Ms Lilia Bednarek of your office, and most recently with the Hon Bob Such who has expressed his support and interest in the Society.

All parties are, in principle, in favour of the proposal which would see collaboration between Government and the third sector to realise the establishment of a natural burial ground in line with a number of recommendations in the recent ERDC Report.

You may also be aware that Mr Fox granted consent to carry out hydro-geological testing at the site. Working in consultation with hydro-geologist, Dr Boyd Dent, testing was carried out on Thursday 11th December 2008, yielding positive results. A series of deep inspection pits was excavated, establishing that there is ample soil depth for burials and no local ground water issues. Dr Dent described the results as 'a positive indication of the suitability of the site for the proposed purpose'.

We are informed by Mr Fox that despite the land's being acquired several years ago, its care, control and management have not been dedicated as yet. In discussions with Mr Fox, he pointed out that the care and control of Crown Land is most often dedicated to local councils or the like, but that it is not without precedent for land to be dedicated to a suitable non-government party, provided certain criteria can be met.

Mr Fox has advised that to be considered favourably in this light, the Minister would need certain assurances of the Society's legal status, its ability to hold land, as well as assurances of the long term viability of the organisation and therefore the project. Accordingly, we advise that the Society is a division of a registered charity with both tax exemption and DGR status. It is legally able to hold land in its own right and its constitution assures that in the unlikely event that the Society was disbanded, that any assets or holdings would be transferred to (an)other non-profit organisation(s) with similar purposes.

Accordingly, we hereby request that you act to dedicate the land described as Allotment 53, DP No. 54498, CR Vol. 5843 Folio 361 to the Natural Earth Burial Society for the above purposes.

68 Battams Road, Marden SA 5070
www.naturalearthburial.com
info@naturalearthburial.com
0401 206 342

Your granting of this request would set a unique precedent. The use of open public space for natural burials, the concurrent re-vegetation and creation of both native habitat and living memorial is a vision for the future that we believe will, in time, be replicated across Australia. The Rann government has a reputation for leading the country with regard to environmental initiatives, and support of this project would represent yet another significant achievement.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Vanda Rounsefell
President

Mr Kevin Hartley
Committee Member

Prof Roger Short (Melb Uni)
Patron