

Mining still holds sway in land use

By **MALCOLM SUTTON**

ESTABLISHING default buffer zone responsibilities, statewide primary production priority areas and a mining code-of-practice are among key recommendations made in a parliamentary report released this month.

But right-to-farm legislation of the kind recently passed in the Legislative Council - introduced by Family First MLC Robert Brokenshire - to ban mining from prime agricultural areas has been ruled out.

The *Final Report of Select Committee on Sustainable Farming Practices* has instead recommended that PPPA's highlight an area's capacity to produce food, which would then be considered against all other possible uses.

It has also recommended a standing committee be established in parliament to give oversight on matters related to primary industries.

Committee member and Liberal MP Adrian Pederick says undertaking the PPPA

process across the entire state would enable planners to make better decisions on development because mapping has so far only been undertaken closer to Adelaide.

"The primary production zones would be graded so the value of that country's productive capacity comes into play when developments are being planned for an area," he said.

"But it doesn't mean an area will be ruled out from development."

The committee wants the

small business commissioner to develop a code-of-practice - within 12 months - to guide exploration and mining companies in their interaction with affected landholders and communities, and specify consultation procedures.

Mining would still be allowed

in prime agricultural areas but the companies would be forced to take into account the value of the land for food production.

"We must make the two industries viable together," Mr Pederick said.

The committee found that a failure of the system surrounding proposed land uses adjoining incompatible properties had caused "inconvenience" to farmers.

It recommended that procedures to manage buffer zones should be included in development plans, with the default position being that new enterprises adjacent to primary production activity be required to provide the buffer zone, if one was required.

But Tanunda farmer Peter Grocke said the word 'inconvenience' did no justice to the economic loss that poor development planning had caused farmers. He said the recommen-

dations did not go far enough to protect farming.

"Some of these recommendations are weakly worded, and we have not seen how we are going to rectify the abnormalities of poor planning, over the last decade in particular."

State agriculture Minister Gail Gago said there were no surprises in the recommenda-

tions and the government had already undertaken work in these areas.

This included mapping PPPAs in the Greater Adelaide Region and policy work to support further mapping. PIRSA had also recommended a review of the SA Planning Policy Library and the treatment of 'interface areas' through effective buffers.

Ms Gago said PIRSA had no regulatory role in mining matters but there were provisions under the NRM Act and Petroleum Act to provide protection for landholders.

KeyPoints

- Prioritised agriculture zones
- Default buffer zones recommended
- 'No go zones' ruled out

