

KLC name preferred Kimberley hub sites

By STEVEN HOUNSOME

THE Kimberley Land Council has identified four sites for a possible Browse Basin LNG processing hub, including two spots just 50kms from Broome, but Save the Kimberley has said the list simply meets government and industry demands.

Gourdon Bay and James Price Point were included in the KLC shortlist, announced last week, along with North Head near Beagle Bay and the Anjo peninsula, about 40kms from Kalumburu.

KLC chairman Wayne Bergmann said the sites were preferred by regional native title claimants over other options put forward by the Northern Development Taskforce.

"We're not giving a yes or no to those (four) areas, but they're the last areas traditional owners are prepared to look at," he said.

Mr Bergmann conceded some locals might be concerned about the proximity of two of the sites to Broome, but said the broader community view was not the KLC's domain.

He said a change of government was the biggest risk to the process. "(When) there's a new government there's no promise there won't be uncoordinated development," he said.

He warned the Liberals and Nationals, who did not back the Carpenter Government's move to give Aboriginals a veto over selection, not to axe the KLC role.

He said Browse had the potential to be bigger than the North-West Shelf project and was capable of generating \$3 billion to \$6 billion a year in revenue over the next 40 to 100 years.

It was vital that traditional owners reaped

some of the benefits of development, Mr Bergmann said, calling for a benefits package.

"It's only conceptual at this stage, it would be crystal-ball gazing to go public about the details," he said.

"(But) paying compensation and community benefits is a small percentage of the potential revenue, if it does happen it could change the face of Aboriginal wellbeing in the Kimberley."

The KLC is hoping to deliver a preferred location by late October, providing it has received thorough information from government and industry.

Save The Kimberley's Mark Jones said, while he opposed any coastal development, the North Head site stacked up the best environmentally.

Mr Jones said James Price Point was too close to Broome and, given industry had recently visited North Head, it was the most likely to go ahead. But he also criticised the KLC's independence.

"STK have always been concerned that the KLC are funded by government and industry and are therefore compromised with a decision," he said.

Kimberley MLA Carol Martin said she was pleased with the process of hub site selection and does not believe community members should be concerned about development close to Broome.

"You can move it a couple of kilometres offshore to keep the coastline looking reasonable," she said.

Resource companies Woodside and Shell both expressed support for the selection process but would not nominate a preference for any one of the four KLC sites.