

WA to decide on Kimberley hub by X'mas

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PERTH, AUSTRALIA: Western Australia's (WA) state government expects to identify the final site for the proposed Kimberley liquefied natural gas (LNG) hub before Christmas, media reports said citing WA's Premier, Colin Barnett.

Four sites were shortlisted by the state government and the Kimberley Land Council, which represented the traditional land owners, with Anjo Peninsula, Gourdon Bay, James Price

Point and North Head named as suitable areas. Barnett had previously named North Head as his preferred location.

He also said the government would acquire the required land by force if representatives of Aboriginal communities rejected efforts to strike a deal to establish the plant on their traditional lands.

Meanwhile, the North Head site was shot down by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), the ABC News reported.

The EPA said an LNG development at North Head would disrupt whale populations and affect the health of Aboriginal communities.

The EPA has recommended Gourdon Bay and James Price Point as the sites that would cause the least environmental damage.

"Broome's about 60 kilometres (37 miles) away and that's quite a distance away. I can't see emissions from an LNG precinct having an impact from that far away," EPA's Chairman Paul Vogel said.