

Question On Notice No. 5915 asked in the **Legislative Council** on **19 February 2008** by **Hon Giz Watson**

Question Directed to the: **Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for State Development**
Minister responding: **Hon E.S. Ripper**
Parliament: **37** Session: **1**

Question

With regard to the Federal Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts announcement on 5 February 2008 in his opening address by video to the workshop on Kimberley Coast Natural Values, that the Federal and State Governments will carry out a strategic assessment to identify a site for a single common-user LNG hub for the Browse Basin. The already completed cultural and environmental values contained within the National Heritage listing of the area of the Dampier Archipelago, I ask -

(1) Is the Minister or her Department aware that the State Government representative Mr Limerick, who currently chairs the Western Australian Government's Northern Development Task Force, had committed in 1994 to carry out an assessment of the Dampier region as a result of his Department's legal intervention in stopping the Dampier Archipelago being assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority? (See <http://www.dampierrockart.net/Media/1994-07-0%20Pilbara%20Industrial%20Development-Limerick-Media.pdf>).

(2) Is the Minister or her Department aware that no strategic or environmental assessment of industrial development on the Dampier Archipelago was ever subsequently carried out by the Western Australian Environmental Protection Authority?

(3) Does the Minister for State Development therefore consider it's time for a rational, a considered and holistic approach to planning in the Pilbara region as outlined for the Kimberley?

(4) Does the Minister believe that piecemeal development, with multiple ports and processing plants along the Pilbara coast is in the national interest?

(5) If yes to (3) and (4), when will the Minister seek such a strategic assessment in conjunction with the Federal Minister?

(6) If no to (3) and (4), why not?

(7) In the State and Federal Government's search for a suitable single common-user LNG hub for the Browse Basin gas, will the Minister rule out the use of the Dampier Archipelago as a location for a development option outside the Kimberley region?

Answered on 19 March 2008

1. The announcement referred to does not seem to make such a commitment for the Dampier area, so the premise of the Hon Member's question may be incorrect. I have been advised that the former Department of Resources Development and the EPA agreed in 1994 that the EPA was legally unable to assess the draft land use and management plan for the Burrup. This was subsequently confirmed when Mr Robin Chapple's writ of *mandamus* against the EPA failed in court. Subsequently, the EPA submitted s16 advice on the plan in December 1995. The writ prevented prompt finalisation of the plan, which was adopted by the Government in September 1996 and received a National Award from the Royal Australian Planning Institute. The EPA provided s16 advice on the Maitland Estate in May 1997. The essential elements of the Burrup plan and the Maitland Estate were incorporated into the Karratha Area Development Strategy by the former Ministry for Planning, which after public comment was endorsed by the Western Australian Planning Commission and Cabinet and released in its final form in 1998. The Shire of Roebourne's Town Planning Scheme number 8 reflected the forgoing and was gazetted in August 2000. Since then, several project proposals have received environmental approval.
2. Environmental assessments have been carried out by the EPA on the Burrup.

3. The Minister for State Development has adopted and publicly announced that a strategic sustainable approach that takes account of heritage, environmental, conservation and indigenous values will inform development in Western Australia.
4. The scale and geographic spread of the resources industry in the Pilbara, on which rests so much of the nation's social and economic prosperity, made it necessary to develop several ports and industrial areas.
5. A strategic environmental assessment is not applicable in the circumstance. Under the Commonwealth EPBC Act the Dampier Archipelago and Burrup Peninsula have already been placed on the National Heritage List.
6. See 3 & 4.
7. It would not be responsible to rule out some part of the designated industrial land on the Burrup as a site option for processing Browse Basin gas. As for the vast majority of the Dampier Archipelago, the Hon Member would be aware that it is to be conserved under State and Commonwealth legislation.
8. The Minister for State Development is awaiting advice from the Northern Development Taskforce on a suitable site or sites for a common user hub in the Kimberley. As the Honourable Member is aware substantial areas of the Dampier Archipelago are now covered by the National Heritage Listing announced by the then Commonwealth Minister for the Environment in July 2007.