

Warning over Burrup move

By Liz Tickner and Peter Trott

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SHIFTING industrial development planned for the Burrup Peninsula to Maitland, near Karratha, would mean the loss of projects, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry has warned.

The warning, in a letter to Premier Geoff Gallop, came as 600 protesters almost unanimously rejected Burrup as a location for industrial development.

Chamber chief executive Lyndon Rowe said many of the proponents of the \$6 billion wave of industrial projects were likely to pull out if land at Burrup was not made available.

"The proponents of the projects earmarked for the Burrup Peninsula have in good faith undertaken a considerable amount of feasibility and design work," he said. "CCI understands that for some companies the cost and time of repeating this work at Maitland could lead to the abandonment of these projects.

"The Maitland option would extend the project time line to the point where the window for opportunity for a particular project's development could be lost.

"Western Australia cannot afford the perception that it is difficult to do business in the Pilbara."

Mr Rowe said a survey of the resource and energy sector in 1999 found Maitland was unpopular as a heavy industrial site.

Maitland - which is 16km inland - was ranked sixth, with Kwinana in first place and Burrup second.

Mr Rowe said that if development were to occur at Maitland, the Government would be faced with the prospect of having to provide a land bridge connecting the site to port infrastructure.

"This would cost several hundred million dollars, before even considering other infrastructure needs such as power and water," he said.

Greens (WA) MLC Robin Chapple said that the Burrup site had been rejected by almost all the 600 protesters at a rally at Hearson's Cove, Burrup.

Apart from State Development Minister Clive Brown and Burrup MLA Fred Riebeling, everyone at the protest said the project should go ahead at Maitland, he said.

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