

North Head shapes as Barnett's pick for gas hub

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Premier Colin Barnett today said North Head, on the Dampier Peninsula, was his preferred site to develop a natural gas precinct in the Kimberley.

Mr Barnett released a short list of four potential sites, including North Head, Gourdon Bay south of Broome, James Price Point (also on the Dampier Peninsula) and Anjo Peninsula. Mr Barnett said the four sites best meet the development criteria.

The recommended sites, identified by the Northern Development Taskforce's site evaluation report, are now subject to a 28 day public consultation process.

"No site has absolutely been ruled out but of these sites my preference is the North Head site," Mr Barnett said.

"It seems to be the best in terms of the criteria examined.

"It's the most attractive of the lot - it's certainly a site that can be developed."

Mr Barnett said a LNG site was important for the growth and prosperity of WA but did not plan to follow the Carpenter Government's promise of a 'veto' to the Aboriginal community of the area in developing the precinct.

"That will not apply," he said.

"No group in the community will be given a legal right above the rest of the community.

"There will be some negotiation or if necessary the government will resume the site using the public works act."

However, Mr Barnett confirmed the sites would be subject to native title and being Aboriginal reserve, compensation to the community would be due.

The Premier said while he did not want to pre-empt the outcome of the public comment period, he expected a site would be chosen by Christmas with construction underway during his term of government.

The public comment period is open until November 11.

PERTH
LISA CALAUTTI