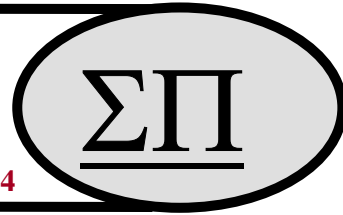


# SMITHSON PLANNING

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## State Parliament of Western Australia

*Legislative Assembly Sitting – Albany 2.00pm 24 March 2004 – Question without notice*

Mister Speaker, my question without notice is directed to the Minister for Planning & Infrastructure.

Mister Speaker, it is noteworthy by exception that the Albany Waterfront Project failed to attract any attention yesterday from either the Government or the Opposition – this considering it was one of only a few major commitments by the Member for Albany and the State Government arising from the State Election in 2001 to which \$12.8 million dollars has been committed, but yet to produce a result.

Mister Speaker, the House may be aware that the Hon. Minister for Environment did several years ago approve the transport of 300,000 tonnes of woodchips via road freight to the port as a part of one proponent's proposal for plantation timber production in the region, and did so with an informal level of assessment under the Environmental Protection legislation (an action unprecedented in the industry I believe), thus denying the local community the opportunity to participate in that debate.

Moreover, the Hon. Minister for the Environment has again, most recently, considered an expansion in that proponent's proposed export activity to 1,000,000 tonnes per annum still by road freight, and again with an informal level of assessment still denying the community participation in the evaluation process – I note that export activity by that proponent has not actually commenced yet.

I am advised that the transport of 1,000,000 tonnes per annum of woodchips via road freight to the port will result in one prime mover with either a single or double trailer every minute along the Albany foreshore during operating transport hours, and that volume is only a portion of the total tonnage associated with that industry group and the Port of Albany.

My question Mister Speaker to the Hon. Minister for Planning & Infrastructure as the Minister responsible for both the Albany Waterfront Project and the Port of Albany is how will she resolve the apparent conflict between port access and foreshore development – is this matter a cause of concern to the community, and has it contributed to project delays preventing implementation.

Mister Speaker, I have never known a regional City administration to procrastinate in spending the State's money – especially on a project worth \$12 plus million dollars and several hundred jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector.

Mister Speaker, will the Hon. Minister for Planning & Infrastructure be supporting the Albany Waterfront Project at the expense of safe and continued access to the Port of Albany for heavy freight, or is the State Government abandoning the waterfront project to protect the Port of Albany, and ultimately sanction the construction of another Kwinana Freeway along this beautiful city's waterfront in this the Year of the Built Environment.

Mister Speaker, will the Government and perhaps more poignantly the opposition confirm their bi-partisan support for the Albany Waterfront Project.

## BACKGROUND NOTES

### 1. EXPORT TONNAGE – DOUBLES & 5 FOLD INCREASE IN VOLUME

The Port of Albany currently transfers about 3.2 million tonnes of commodities. There has been substantial investment in the Plantation Timber industry over the last 6 years, and with harvesting commencing in 2003, is now ramping up to an additional 3.0 million t/a of woodchip exports anticipated in 2007-08 (woodchips is a 3:1 volume ratio relative to grain).

- ❖ Recent average total tonnage – 3.2 million
- ❖ Grain – 2.2 million but building to 5.5 million through technology
- ❖ Woodchips – starting at 200,000t but building to 3.0 Mt p.a.
- ❖ Mineral Sands, Silica Sands, Fuel Bunkering, Processed Foods
- ❖ Container handling (refrigerated and general)
- ❖ Bulk commodity exports (bauxite, lignite, haematite, coal)
- ❖ Marine industry construction and services (mechanised and tall ship)
- ❖ Military naval base for visiting ships, operations and vessel / crew service
- ❖ Commercial Sea Transit Passenger Liners
- ❖ Bulk import commodities (eg. Acid, Fertilisers & Fuels).

### 2. THE CENTRAL PROBLEM

There has been no shortage of discussion regarding the transport problems facing the Port of Albany relative to the CBD, the city foreshore, tourism / commercial / residential development, and the marina / small boat harbour proposal.

At the City of Albany Mayoral candidates' presentations on 7 April 2003 to the Albany Residents' & Ratepayers' Association, all candidates committed to the marina project and effective community participation in the planning process.

One Mayoral candidate supported and two opposed WA MLC Dr Christine Sharp's appeal for a formal level of assessment by the WA Environmental Protection Authority into woodchip transport, and the cumulative impact of Port development.

Most recently, the WA Environmental Protection Authority has again recommended to the Minister an Informal level of assessment for the expansion of woodchip export via road freight (yet to commence) from 300,000 t/a to 1,000,000 t/a.

In 1997, the Port of Albany published a development plan that showed three parallel rail lines servicing access along the foreshore. That action would require partial demolition of either the 'Old Gaol' or 'Residency Museum', both of which are listed on the register of the National Estate. It would also require reconstruction of the Melville Point road / rail bridge, and interim alternative port access during construction.

The WA EPA level of assessment was referred to the Federal Minister for the Environment under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection & Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999. The Dept Environment & Heritage have declined to recommend to the Minister to act on the matter due to a lack of legal jurisdiction.

There are currently no Australian Heritage Nationally Environmentally Significant (NES) sites, despite the 'Old Gaol' and 'Residency Museum' constituting the oldest European Heritage precinct in Western Australia, and both having been registered for twenty-plus years under the Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975.

With Albany Anzac 2014 looming closer and the Albany 2026 Bicentenary of European settlement only twenty years away, contrast the City of Perth where grand plans are developing to re-establish links between the City and the Waterfront in this the Year of the Built Environment (clearly, Perth is preparing for the next twenty-years).

At the Albany Councillors presentations on 9 April 2003, a question particularly to the two candidates for the Frederickstown Ward but also to each of the other councillor candidates was will you support construction of a second or third railway line and the realignment of Princess Royal Drive to provide the level of long-term access required for the Port of Albany to remain where it is ? The councillor response was a deafening silence, and the two Frederickstown Ward candidates indicated emphatically no.

### 3. PORT ACCESS

A port access solution comprising two rail lines and a four-lane grade separated controlled access road is the minimum acceptable risk management standard to any industrial port in Australia. Based on this expectation, there are several specific constraint points between travel modes that will require short or long-term traffic management solutions, but in the mean time pose a risk management threat.

If the State Government continue to support Road Transport B-Trains and Triples and introduce Quads, it should be self-evident that given the nature of some of the volatile products, there is substantial potential for a even a minor accident to give rise to a major transport incident with attendant need for emergency management.

### 4. ANZAC / BICENTENNIAL

*What is the single most significant event in Australian political and military history that has and continues to define our national character .....*

*Presents an image to the world of the Australian spirit generally, but more particularly on the battlefield of strength and courage in the face of adversity .....*

*That is celebrated annually by more than 10 million Australians in over a thousand locations world-wide, but most particularly for Albanians is remembered at Mt.Clarence, Mt.Adelaide & the foreshore .....*

*And lastly, started right here in Albany on King George Sound and Princess Royal Harbour nearly 100 years ago (2014-18), directly in front of the Rotary Lookout on Marine Drive ?*

*It is of course Anzac – arguably the most culturally significant event in Australia’s brief 200 years of history post European settlement.*

### 5. SUMMATION

We can ask the State & Federal Governments to spend millions of dollars to make a bad location workable, but why should they – Albany is the original hard rock and a wall.

If the Port / Foreshore development issue is to be resolved, it must be at the direction of the community of Albany & the Great Southern via referendum such that no State government of either political persuasion can simply ignore the mandate.

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The current score 18-0 in favour of the City over the Port - Relocated Ports in Australia :

- |                    |                      |                        |                         |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| ❖ Bunbury          | ❖ Fremantle          | ❖ <del>Geraldton</del> | ❖ Dampier               |
| ❖ Port Hedland     | ❖ Darwin             | ❖ Cairns               | ❖ Innisfail (Mourilyan) |
| ❖ Ingham (Lucinda) | ❖ Rockhampton (Alma) | ❖ Gladstone (Curtis)   | ❖ Brisbane              |
| ❖ Port Macquarie   | ❖ Newcastle          | ❖ Port Botany          | ❖ Port Kembla           |
| ❖ Geelong          | ❖ Melbourne          | ❖ Port Adelaide        |                         |

**Copies provided to :**

**Hon. Bernie Masters**  
**Member for Vasse (Independent)**

**Hon. Philip Pental**  
**Member for South Perth (Independent)**

**Hon. Liz Constable**  
**Member for Churchlands (Independent)**

**Hon. Colin Barnett**  
**Leader of the Opposition (Liberal)**  
**Member for Cottesloe**