

SMITHSON PLANNING

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E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

FROM : Neil Smithson **TO :** Hon. Julia Gillard MP – Prime Minister Australia
AT : smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au **AT :** Julia.Gillard.MP@aph.gov.au

-----Original Message-----

From: info@pm.gov.au [mailto:info@pm.gov.au]
Sent: Friday, 15 October 2010 10:40 AM
To: smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au
Subject: Email to the Prime Minister [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thank you for your message to the Prime Minister at www.pm.gov.au .

Below is a copy for your records.

Responses prepared to your message will generally be emailed to you. If you have supplied a postal address, a response may be sent to you via Australia Post. In some cases, your message may be forwarded to other Federal Ministers for their consideration.

This is an automatically generated email. Please do not reply to this email as this address is not monitored. If you have any problems with this service please contact the Web Administrator through the site feedback service at http://www.pm.gov.au/Site_Feedback

Submitted on 15 October 2010

Title: Mr
First Name: Neil
Last Name: Smithson
Email Address: smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au
Street Address: 364 Middleton Road
Suburb/City: Albany
State: WA
Postcode/Zip: 6330
Country: Australia
Subject: Rainbow 2000 Project
Comment:

I refer to my email today to the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP - Minister for Infrastructure and Transport.

I think you should have a read, and consult with Cabinet.

I offer to brief Federal Cabinet on this major proposal for Regional Development in Australia.

I look forward to your reply.

Regards

Neil Smithson

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From: Smithson [mailto:smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au]
Sent: Friday, 15 October 2010 10:24 AM
To: A.Albanese.MP@aph.gov.au
Cc: Julia.Gillard.MP@aph.gov.au; Wayne.Swan.MP@aph.gov.au; Tony.Abbott.MP@aph.gov.au; Julie.Bishop.MP@aph.gov.au; W.Truss.MP@aph.gov.au; Senator.Joyce@aph.gov.au; Senator.Bob.Brown@aph.gov.au; Senator.Fielding@aph.gov.au; Senator.Xenophon@aph.gov.au; info@aimnsw.com.au; Michael.Deegan@infrastructure.gov.au; dorte.ekelund@infrastructure.gov.au
Subject: FW: Albany & the Great Southern - Strategic Regional Planning

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Minister for Infrastructure & Transport
Leader of the House
Commonwealth of Australia

Good morning Minister

After several years of communication between myself and Infrastructure Australia, I finally receive a letter from IA telling me about an AIM Course – Thinking strategically about infrastructure.

The second page of the attached brochure is titled "Show you mean business".

Following is my recent communication with :

- ❖ The Senators for Western Australia, whom are all cognizant of the facts surrounding our proposal more commonly referred to as the 'Rainbow 2000[©] Project'
- ❖ LandCorp WA – the Western Australian land development authority
- ❖ The Western Australian Ombudsman.

I can refer you to past letters from the :

- ❖ Hon. Simon Crean MP, Hon. Martin Ferguson MP, Hon. Stephen Smith MP, Senator the Hon. Chris Evans, Hon. Gary Gray MP, Hon. Peter Garrett MP, Hon. Alan Griffin MP, etc
- ❖ Hon. Tony Abbott MP, Hon. Julie Bishop MP, Hon. Greg Hunt MP, Senator the Hon. David Johnston, Senator the Hon. Mathias Cormann, etc
- ❖ Hon. Warren Truss MP, Senator the Hon. Barnaby Joyce
- ❖ Senator the Hon. Bob Brown
- ❖ Hon. John Howard MP, Hon. John Anderson MP, Hon. Mark Latham MP, Senator the Hon. Ruth Webber
- ❖ Office of the Governor-General
- ❖ Offices of the Premiers / Chief Ministers of the Australian States & Territories.

There have been several House, Senate & Joint Standing Committee submissions over the past 13 years.

I believe 'the ball is now firmly in your court' along with your cabinet colleagues for Trade, Foreign Affairs, Resources, Energy, Regional Development, Local Government, Defence, Veterans' Affairs, Agriculture, Forestry, Environment, Population, Heritage, Education, Health, Housing, Indigenous Affairs, Employment, etc.

The question still remains after 13 years –

Would the Government choose to sacrifice Australia's heritage – the Anzac legend & western bicentennial – for the sake of international export contracts to the Middle East, Japan and China?

While I am only testing the hypothesis – you are actually proving that planning is the antithesis of politics.

The Rainbow 2000[©] Project is without peer as a case study in Australian Regional Development.

Again – I offer to brief federal Cabinet.

Yours faithfully
SMITHSON PLANNING

Neil R. Smithson

Neil R. Smithson

Managing Director
PIA^{CPP}, EIANZ, NELA, LGPA, AAPC, NTWA, FDI, CSC 2003

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Smithson Planning - Consultants in National Investment Growth Pathing
Australian Business Number : 46 782 764 220

CC :

The Hon. Julia Gillard MP
The Hon. Wayne Swan MP
The Hon. Tony Abbott MP
The Hon. Julie Bishop MP
The Hon. Warren Truss MP
Senator the Hon. Barnaby Joyce
Senator the Hon. Bob Brown
Senator the Hon. Steve Fielding
Senator the Hon. Nick Xenophon
Mr Michael Deegan – Infrastructure Australia
Ms Dorte Ekelund – Infrastructure Australia

From: Smithson [mailto:smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au]

Sent: Wednesday, 13 October 2010 9:50 AM

To: Senator.Adams@aph.gov.au; Senator.Back@aph.gov.au; Senator.Bishop@aph.gov.au; Senator.Cash@aph.gov.au;
Senator.Cormann@aph.gov.au; Senator.Eggleston@aph.gov.au; Senator.Evans@aph.gov.au; Senator.Johnston@aph.gov.au;
Senator.Ludlam@aph.gov.au; Senator.Pratt@aph.gov.au; Senator.Siewert@aph.gov.au; Senator.Sterle@aph.gov.au

Subject: Albany & the Great Southern - Strategic Regional Planning

Senator the Hon. Judith Adams – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Dr Chris Back – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Mark Bishop – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Mathias Cormann – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Alan Eggleston – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Chris Evans – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. David Johnston – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Scott Ludlam – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Louise Pratt – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Rachel Siewert – Member for Western Australia
Senator the Hon. Glenn Sterle – Member for Western Australia

Commonwealth of Australia

Good morning Senators

Most of you may have read today's West Australian and the articles pertaining to Agribusiness MIS Forestry.

Please find following and attached my recent discussions with LandCorp and the WA Ombudsman.

I am reassured that waterfront development in Albany will be possible prior to 2014, but clearly the development parameters do not meet investment expectations at this time.

While LandCorp have confirmed that they have not constructed the slurry pipeline for Grange Resources, they have confirmed that the WA Planning Commission has created an easement for that purpose.

After 13 years, my professional comments following are still relevant.

Would the Government choose to sacrifice Australia's heritage – the Anzac legend & western bicentennial – for the sake of international export contracts to the Middle East, Japan and China?

I continue to advocate the dismissal of the City of Albany by the Minister for Local Government, and a Royal Commission under the auspices of Her Excellency the Governor-General of Australia.

The appointment of a Regional Australia portfolio in both Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet is encouraging, and I would be pleased to brief both on the Rainbow 2000[©] Project.

From: Smithson [mailto:smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au]
Sent: Monday, 11 October 2010 8:57 AM
To: Ross.Holt@Landcorp.com.au; Frank.Marra@LandCorp.com.au
Cc: Landcorp@landcorp.com.au
Subject: FW: Albany & the Great Southern - Strategic Regional Planning

Mr Ross Holt
Chief Executive Officer
LandCorp

Att : Mr Frank Marra, Acting CEO

Good morning Ross / Frank – thank you for your letter dated 5 October 2010 (received 11 October 2010).

Please find following our communications with the WA Ombudsman.

I believe the City of Albany in association with the Returned & Services League have submitted an ambitious concept to the National Anzac Centenary Celebration Commission 2014-18 that includes Smithson Planning's original proposal for the Re-enactment of the Assembly and Departure of the 1st ANZEF fleet in November 2014 – and that proposal enjoys multi-partisan support both State & Federal.

I believe that proposal will require substantial funding, State & Commonwealth (~\$100m), along with the necessary support infrastructure such as hotels, airport facilities, tourism facilities, power, water, gas, public transport, etc.

Most poignantly, I believe the State Government and the City of Albany will have to sign-off on a Regional Planning Strategy / Local Planning Scheme that resolves the issues of waterfront access for the Port Users.

Unlike some of the Councillors, Valuers and Real Estate Agents in Albany, I believe we both understand the process of Central Place Theory and Land Economy.

I look forward to working with LandCorp as Albany negotiates the Anzac 2014-18 years, and then heads on to the Bicentennial 2026-27.

From: Smithson [mailto:smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au]
Sent: Sunday, 10 October 2010 12:41 PM
To: Frances.Cramphorn@ombudsman.wa.gov.au
Cc: Chris.Field@ombudsman.wa.gov.au; Rebecca.Poole@ombudsman.wa.gov.au; mail@ombudsman.wa.gov.au
Subject: RE: Albany & the Great Southern - Strategic Regional Planning

Mr Chris Field
WA Ombudsman

Attention : Ms Frances Cramphorn

For your further information :

www.smithsonplanning.com.au

- ❖ Mayor Milton Evans is the Chairman of the Albany Branch of the Bendigo Community Bank, with significant funds exposed to Agribusiness MIS Forestry
- ❖ Former Cr John Walker (City of Albany) and Deputy Mayor (Town of Albany) was the Chairman of Timber 2020
- ❖ Former Cr Bob Emery (City of Albany) was also the CEO of the Albany Port Authority and a Director of the Albany Plantation Export Company
- ❖ Former Town of Albany CEO Murray Jorgenson was appointed Chairman of the WA Forest Products Commission.

One might also examine the Shires of Plantagenet, Denmark and Cranbrook, and the Great Southern Zone of WALGA.

I would suggest that several participants in Local Government failed to declare their pecuniary interest in matters pertaining to strategic local or regional planning process.

It may also prove interesting to investigate relationships emerging from the Grange Resources project.

I haven't read it myself (although I did supply the consultant with relevant information), but I think the reaction of the City of Albany to the State's Best Practice Review speaks volumes to the continuing problem.

The words 'untouchable' and 'unaccountable' seem appropriate to Slaven's cartoon in the Albany Advertiser of Thursday 07 October 2010.

More sue as Great Southern mess deepens
By NICHOL DODD
 Bendigo and Adelaide Bank's attempts to deter further class actions over its funding links to Great Southern appears to have backfired, with investors filing a second class action against the bank in the Federal Court. Sydney firm DC Legal's lawsuit argues loans taken out by growers to finance their investments in Great Southern's managed investment schemes are unenforceable because the group failed to disclose material facts about the viability of its projects. About 200 of the almost 2000 participants in the latest class action have outstanding loans with the bank. The suit, however, already repaid their debts or have loans that are secured with other financiers such as Great Southern-linked Jovita Asset Management. They want the return of the money they have repaid and want the rest of their loans written off. Those who did not have loans with Bendigo are among Great Southern's former John Young and former directors Cassius, Eshelby and Paul Barlin for the return of their cash. Bendigo revealed in its annual accounts that the number of Great Southern grower loans rose from 90 days overdue had exploded from \$15.5 million at June 30 last year to more than \$181.8 million. In total portfolio of outstanding loans stood at \$40 million. But the bank, which has already lodged claims in court against nine borrowers and last month wrote to hundreds more threatening bankruptcy if they refused to repay, has dismissed of the latest legal challenge as "hopelessly inadequate". "To the extent we can make sense of it at all, it covers the same ground as a separate class action filed in the Victorian Supreme Court by another law firm," Bendigo managing director Mike Hurst said, in reference to action under way by Melbourne firm Macpherson and Kelly. Bendigo has applied to have that case, which also argues loans made to investors are unenforceable, thrown out of court. About 200 clients have signed up to the Macpherson and Kelly action, 100 of whom have loans with Bendigo. Great Southern was placed in receivership in May last year.

Second action: there's more on Bendigo.

Report confirms timber benefits
By KEN MATTS
 MISCONCEPTIONS about the introduction of timber plantations in the Great Southern have been dispelled by an Australian Government report. The Bureau of Rural Sciences' Socioeconomic Impacts of Plantation Forestry report released last week highlighted the positive contributions the sector has made to the Great Southern. The report confirmed significant financial stimulation and contribution to employment growth. However, deteriorating rural roads and a lack of housing for the growing workforce were highlighted as areas of concern. Timber 2020 chairman John Walker said the report was confirmation of what supporters of the timber plantation industry always believed. "The data provided will help to monitor the industry and pave the way for new industries in the future," he said. "I used to be very unsure. Today I'm getting the benefits from my farm and I can see Albany in the future will get the benefits as well." Report author, Bureau of Rural Sciences researcher Jacki Schirmer, said plantations had helped to stabilise the financial future of the three areas studied — Albany, Cranbrook and Plantagenet. "There is no evidence the plantation expansion causes a higher decline in the rural population," she said. "In fact, the three local government areas experienced less of a rural decline than the rest of the Great Southern." "Mr Barker is growing when most rural towns of its size are declining." Ms Schirmer said the Great Southern was selected for the report because of the rapid expansion of the plantation industry which started in 1988. By 2001, the three areas had 127,000 hectares in the plantations. The members employed ranged from 20 people in 1991 to 500 in 2004, with the greatest increase in 2001 when harvesting started. She said growth was expected to continue, especially with the introduction of classroom processing such as Bendigo's biomass power plant and a new 1.5m-cm-diameter harvester plant. "Considerably more employment can be expected to be generated in coming years as the plantations in the region reach maturity and are harvested and processed," said Ms Schirmer. The report was launched in Albany last Friday by the Great Southern Development Commission. Ms Schirmer spent two years carrying out research as part of the study. GRDC deputy CEO Maynard Rye said the report justified the support it had received from the State Government. "In 2005/06 the industry spent \$50 million on plantation development and two-thirds was directly spent in the Great Southern," he said. "The money generated was \$75 million, which was of direct benefit to the region." Mr Rye said the outcome would be greater than expected, as the figures did not take into account the start of harvesting by two other plantation managers, and the proposed Beacons and Ligonie businesses. Plantagenet Shire president Kevin Forbes said he did not know where many farmers would be now if it were not for plantations.

City snubs State report
 Mayor Milton's paradise lost and found

LETTERS

Albany A Message from the Mayor

Albany

GRDC worth compromised

From: Smithson [mailto:smithson@smithsonplanning.com.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 6 October 2010 4:13 PM
To: Frances.Cramphorn@ombudsman.wa.gov.au
Cc: Chris.Field@ombudsman.wa.gov.au; Rebecca.Poole@ombudsman.wa.gov.au; mail@ombudsman.wa.gov.au
Subject: Albany & the Great Southern - Strategic Regional Planning

Mr Chris Field
WA Ombudsman

Attention : Ms Frances Cramphorn

Good afternoon Frances, and thank you for your email dated 1 October 2010.

I have reviewed your letter (and the attached information sheet) a couple of times now, and offer the following comments.

I reiterate that I have no complaint against Grange Resources and the Southdown Magnetite Project (if and when it takes place) – MRRT / RSPT, power supply and actual easements yet to be determined.

It was the State Government's choice along with Grange Resources to promote and facilitate port development for this \$1.7bn major project in the location proposed, with the dumping of dredge spoil in King George Sound (although I believe that is a waste of good dredge spoil).

In respect to the advice of the Hon. Simon O'Brien MLC – Minister for Transport, Main Roads WA and Grange Resources, they are of the opinion that the slurry pipeline along the Albany waterfront will not :

1. Constrain access to the Port of Albany for the remainder of the port users (road & rail freight)
2. Interfere in an unacceptable manner with the future operations of the Albany Entertainment Centre
3. Restrict the development and operation of tourism facilities associated with the LandCorp Albany Waterfront Hotel / Marina sites
4. Restrict the development and operation of tourism facilities associated with the Albany Woolstores Site
5. Restrict the international celebrations associated with Albany Anzac 2014-18; and
6. Restrict the future celebrations associated with Albany Bicentennial 2026-27.

It would be interesting to see if State Cabinet shares that viewpoint – but the Hon. Colin Barnett MLA, Premier of Western Australia, while initially accepting the opportunity, has subsequently and consistently declined to be briefed (even though he was made aware of the corruption allegations surrounding the City of Albany in 2005).

I do not concur with the Minister for Transport, and the evidence reflects that assessment – but the State Government of Western Australia has accepted that responsibility, and the inherent risk management outcomes.

There is no single agency of Government to complain about here – what we are discussing is a 'whole-of-governance' systemic failure (local, regional, state and federal) over 13 years with multiple political perspectives that emanates from a decision of the amalgamated City of Albany under the appointed Commissioners – specifically His Excellency Dr Ken Michael AC, the Governor of Western Australia.

In regard to the decision affecting my (our) personal capacity, I have attached my letter dated 31 January 2009 to the Hon. Kevin Rudd MP – former Prime Minister of Australia.

There were earlier versions of that letter to the Hon. John Howard MP – former Prime Minister of Australia, and I have yet to formally write to the Hon. Julia Gillard MP (as the current Prime Minister), although both she and the Hon. Tony Abbott MP – Leader of the Opposition, received copies of our earlier offers.

It is not everyday that you come across a City of Albany that has accrued \$21m in debt; two former CEOs instigate legal proceedings against their former Council; serving Councillors instigate legal action against their Council while remaining on Council with other Councillors calling publicly for their

resignation; the local Member of Parliament calls for an enquiry into the Council via a grievance speech; and the Minister for Local Government (and Heritage) declines to investigate appropriately, while accusing the Council of lacking vision and extolling the virtues of Local Government reform.

I can understand why the WA Ombudsman wants to conclude this investigation – long term strategic planning is problematic – but is it the antithesis of politics?

Would the Government choose to sacrifice Australia's heritage – the Anzac legend & western bicentennial – for the sake of international export contracts to the Middle East, Japan and China?

I look forward to reading your determination.

Yours faithfully
SMITHSON PLANNING

Neil R. Smithson

Neil R. Smithson

Managing Director
PIA^{CPP}, EIANZ, NELA, LGPA, AAPC, NTWA, FDI, CSC 2003

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