

Please quote: MN44426  
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Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
Alice and George Streets  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 30 April 2003 enclosing a copy of a petition regarding the proposal for a Townsville State Development Area (TSDA) at Stuart.

Townsville has the potential to develop as a major base metals processing centre capturing the value-adding and job creating potential of the enormously rich North West Minerals Province. To ensure this development occurs in a way that maximises benefits to Townsville and the State, the Queensland Government is considering the establishment of a TSDA over the Stuart Industrial Area and the Townsville Port Eastern Access Corridor.

Stuart, an existing industrial area located south of Townsville, is the most strategic and cost-effective site suitable for the development of this industry. Stuart is also the area identified in the Townsville-Thuringowa Strategy Plan as the location for major industry development in the Townsville region.

The specific purpose of the TSDA is to facilitate the planned establishment of industry in Townsville, whilst ensuring the maintenance of a high level of community amenity and protection of the environment. In other words, this proposal will significantly benefit Townsville. The resultant high level of planning will provide certainty for investors and the community and will confer a competitive advantage in Townsville for the attraction of industry.

Public consultation on the proposal commenced on 3 February 2003 and concluded on 31 March 2003. Whilst there is strong support from Councils and industry, a community group, Clean Air for Kids, has expressed concerns about possible impacts on adjacent communities and the environment.

My Department is confident that these issues can be successfully addressed in the detailed planning for the TSDA and through the major project Environmental Impact Statement processes, which are required when individual firms establish. Projects will have to secure all relevant Local, State and Federal Government approvals and apply controls to ensure that emissions meet all statutory requirements and contemporary environmental standards. Attention will also be given to maintaining the connectivity of coastal wetlands.

Industry will not be established on land that is impacted by flooding or tide/storm surge levels and the siting of industry will take account of environmental considerations and the proximity of residential communities. The heavy industries that locate within the TSDA will have substantial buffering around and between them, so that this development is located well away and separated from residential communities and buffered from environmentally sensitive areas.

My Department will analyse all public submissions and will provide the Government with a report. All matters raised by the community will be carefully considered by the Government in making its final decision on the TSDA proposal.

I trust this information has addressed the Petitioner's concerns.

Yours sincerely

**TOM BARTON MP**  
**Minister for State Development**

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