



Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation

Our ref: WR20/26803/CTS18326/20
Your ref: AS90016

1WS
1 William Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15168 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7530
Email statedevelopment@ministerial.qld.gov.au

09 SEP 2020

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 13 August 2020 regarding petition 3271-20: Toondah Harbour Priority Development Area (PDA): Commission of Inquiry.

I acknowledge the concerns raised by the petitioners, and the requests for the establishment of an independent Commission of Inquiry. In light of the information provided under the headings below, I advise that such a Commission of Inquiry is not being considered.

Declaration of the Toondah Harbour PDA

PDA's are parcels of land within Queensland identified for development to deliver economic and community benefits. A range of factors are considered when deciding if a PDA is declared, including the:

- main purpose of the *Economic Development Act 2012* (ED Act), being to facilitate economic development, and development for community purposes, in the State
- economic and community benefit to the State that may be gained by the proposed development, and
- impact the *Planning Act 2016* may have on the delivery of the proposed development if the declaration was not made.

In early 2013 the Redland City Council (the council) requested the Newman Government, through the Minister for Economic Development Queensland (MEDQ) consider Toondah Harbour be declared a PDA under the ED Act to create an impetus for investment generation in Redland City.

After consideration of this request and the factors set out above, the MEDQ recommended to the Governor in Council to make a PDA declaration by regulation. The Toondah Harbour PDA was declared by regulation on 21 June 2013.

The planning for the PDA seeks to: improve the usability of the transport hub; boost tourism and attract visitors; create new business opportunities and jobs, while supporting existing businesses; provide the local community with better services and facilities; and drive economic development in the area.

The Toondah Harbour PDA Development Scheme (the scheme) refers to the State Planning Policy and associated mapping, which includes Matters of State Environmental Significance.

Development must address how it will seek to avoid, minimise and mitigate impacts to sensitive areas. Detailed environmental assessments will be undertaken as part of the development assessment process under the ED Act, where relevant.

The scheme also includes criteria relating to sustainability which future development applications must respond to, including a guideline on Environment and Natural Resources Sustainability.

In July 2018, the delegate for the Federal Minister for the Environment decided under the EPBC Act that Walker Group's proposed master plan for the project was a 'controlled action' due to potential impacts on 'matters of national environmental significance' and an EIS was required. The EIS is required to address the potential impacts of the project on: dredging and reclamation activities; wetlands protected under the International Ramsar Convention; listed threatened species and ecological communities; and migratory species.

Walker Group is now preparing the draft EIS and it is currently anticipated that they will submit the draft Toondah Harbour EIS to the Federal Government by the end of 2020. The draft EIS will be made publicly available for review and comment. Following review of public submissions and assessment of the EIS, the Federal Minister for the Environment will decide whether to provide approval under the EPBC Act for the project and, if so, what conditions to attach.

Initial planning work, studies and community engagement

Planning work and community engagement was undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 of the ED Act in order to draft, review and approve a final development scheme.

Council, all relevant state government agencies and other key stakeholders were extensively consulted during the scheme making process. Before the scheme took effect, the proposed scheme was publicly notified from 10 January to 24 February 2014, in accordance with the minimum 30-business day statutory public notification period required for the making of a PDA development scheme.

A total of 583 submissions were received. All submissions were considered, and some amendments were made to the scheme in response to the matters raised in submissions. A summary of the matters raised in the submissions and the resulting amendments made to the scheme is available in the publicly available *Toondah Harbour PDA Development Scheme Submissions Report*, dated May 2014, on EDQ's website.

After consideration of the matters raised in the public submissions, the MEDQ approved the scheme to take effect on 29 May 2014. The scheme is applicable to all development on land and water within the boundaries of the PDA.

Decisions made in relation to agreements for development

On 9 February 2016, the MEDQ, the council, Redland Investment Corporation and Walker Group entered into a Development Agreement (DA) for the redevelopment of council and State-owned land over a 20-year period. The DA is subject to Walker Group undertaking all relevant environmental assessments and acquiring all relevant approvals.

On 17 February 2016, the MEDQ, the council and Walker Toondah Harbour Pty Ltd (an entity of Walker Group) executed an Infrastructure Agreement (IA) for the Toondah Harbour PDA. The IA sets out information related to the provision of trunk infrastructure for the PDA. This publicly available document sets out that Walker Toondah Harbour Pty Ltd is to deliver in excess of \$56 million in off-settable trunk infrastructure – that is, infrastructure that will benefit the broader community and of the type that a local authority would ordinarily deliver for a community.

The DA does not provide statutory approval for the development, rather it specifically requires Walker Group to obtain all relevant approvals before any development can proceed.

As referred to earlier, the first approval being sought for the proposed development is for the controlled action under the EPBC Act.

Costs and benefits to the community

Walker Group has stated that the \$1.4 billion project will: provide \$116 million of community infrastructure; and create 1,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs during construction and 500 FTE operational jobs.

It may be of benefit to note that the petitioner may wish to raise any further concerns by writing to the Federal Minister for the Environment, the Honourable Sussan Ley MP, at PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 or via email minister.ley@environment.gov.au.

I would like to thank the petitioners for raising this matter with me and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate Jones', with a small dash at the end.

HON KATE JONES MP
Minister for State Development,
Tourism and Innovation