Release of Strategic Industrial Land

POSITION STATEMENT

KEY MESSAGES

Lag time between demand for industrial land and its availability constrains investment during times of economic upswing.

Streamlining approvals for land release and the prior deconstraint of key industrial estates enables the region to position itself as investment-ready for new proponents.

COMMITMENTS SOUGHT

That a commitment be made to:

• Formally approve the development of Lumsden Point as a general freight cargo facility to service Port Hedland and the broader Pilbara region;

• Make provision in the State budget’s forward estimates for the necessary funding to fully develop the Lumsden Point general freight cargo facility based on cost modelling to be completed by the Pilbara Development Commission;

• Work with the five local governments of the Pilbara to identify and progress new parcels of strategic land for deconstraint and release; and

• Appoint the Department of State Development as a lead agency for strategic land release associated with key industrial estates, tasked with coordinating all requisite State Government approvals and resolving matters of land tenure.
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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over the course of several years there has been discussion and planning for a maritime common user facility at Lumsden Point. Part of long-term investment in the Pilbara’s capacity to service the growing offshore LNG projects such as Wheatstone, Gorgon and Browse, it will also provide the infrastructure to support the resources, defence, housing and construction sectors of a diversified Pilbara economy.

The Port Hedland Port Authority has also made the case that the facility would also be crucial in the provision of a ‘multi-purpose, multi-user general cargo terminal to accommodate trade growth’. The Minister for the Environment released an approval statement in May of 2014, however the final decision has been pending formal approval for some time.

The Pilbara has benefitted greatly from the Royalties for Regions fund that invests funds back into regional Western Australia from the proceeds of the mining and resources boom. However, there is still significant lag between identified need for infrastructure to improve future growth and the ability to have strategically important land deconstrained and ready for investment in a timely manner.

In recognition of its existing contribution to the State and Federal economies, the region requests a nominated State agency to act in a lead agency capacity for strategic land release associated with key industrial estates, tasked with coordinating all requisite State Government approvals and resolving matters of land tenure. An agency such as the Department of State Development, if charged with this remit, would de-risk the investment decisions of new project proponents and assist the Pilbara Development Commission in the delivery of its regional blueprint.

IN BRIEF

✔ Key industrial estates take too long to bring to market and land release is not sufficiently responsive to economic/investment conditions.

✔ A dedicated lead agency tasked with delivering land suitable for key industrial estates in a timely fashion would escalate the pace of development across the Pilbara.

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