



## Petition

Registration No:	3
Title:	Save Darwin Harbour – 3 points
Presented on:	11 September 2008
Presented by:	Mr Wood
Referred to:	Chief Minister (Henderson)
Date referred:	11 September 2008
Response due:	27 November 2008
Response received:	24 November 2008
Response presented:	25 November 2008

### Petition

## PETITION TO SAVE DARWIN HARBOUR

To the Speaker and members of the NT Legislative Assembly

We the undersigned citizens of the Northern Territory do respectively request:

- 1. Darwin Harbour be declared a National/Conservation Park** to protect the harbour's precious environment;
- 2. No further development occur on the Middle Arm Peninsula** (including Blaydin Point) until a total and independent assessment of the cumulative effects of such developments is completed'
- 3. A risk assessment of the gas and petro-chemical developments to the people** of Darwin and surrounding districts be undertaken as a matter of urgency;

And your petitioners as in duty bound will every pray

## Response

### **Petition No. 2 and 3**

#### **Petition 2**

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory:

We the undersigned citizens of the Northern Territory do respectfully request:

1. Darwin Harbour be declared a National/Conservation Park to protect the harbour's precious environment;
2. No further development occur on the Middle Arm Peninsula (including Blaydin Point) until a total and independent assessment of the cumulative effects of such developments is completed;
3. A risk assessment of the gas and petro-chemical developments to the people of Darwin and surrounding districts be undertaken as a matter of urgency;
4. The other options for the siting of the gas and petro-chemical developments, e.g. Gunn Point Industrial Precinct, the Koolpinyah area, be thoroughly investigated with full community participation

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray

#### **Petition 3**

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory:

This petition contains points 1-3 only from Petition 2 above.

#### **Response** (Pursuant to Standing Order 100A)

This petition is directed at the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure and seeks to have the presented matters addressed.

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#### **1. Darwin Harbour National / Conservation Park**

There are currently no proposals to establish a National / Conservation Park (or a Marine Park or Marine Protected Area) in Darwin Harbour.

This Government, through the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport, is preparing a draft NT Marine Protected Areas Strategy which will provide the technical, planning and consultative framework for establishing a representative network of Marine Protected Areas in the Northern Territory. The draft Strategy is being developed in consultation with a wide range of government, non-government, industry and community stakeholders.

## **2. No further development until completion of independent assessment of cumulative effects**

Industrial development is an important part of the NT economy. Planning for the future development of the Greater Darwin area, is being progressed by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. Proposals set out in the Darwin Regional Land Use Structure Plan of 1990 are currently being studied and evaluated. The economic, social and environmental sustainability of development, including climate change issues, will form an integral part of the study.

The Government is also undertaking environmental investigations in preparation for industrial development at Middle Arm. In order to fully understand the management of potential impacts on the peninsula as it is progressively developed, a gap analysis is currently underway to determine what further environmental studies need to be conducted.

Any proposed development is required to be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport for consideration under the *Environmental Assessment Act*. Where environmental impact assessment is required for proposals, a rigorous scientific approach is implemented, which can include the assessment of cumulative effects. There are opportunities for public input into the process of developing the guidelines for investigative works and to review and comment on Environmental Impact Statements or Public Environmental Reports.

## **3. Risk Assessment of the gas and petrochemical developments**

Risk assessment on Major Hazard Facilities, such as major gas pipelines and petro-chemical plants, is an integral part of the current NT Dangerous Goods licensing regime. Under the *Dangerous Goods Act* and the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2007*, any industry which uses or manufactures dangerous goods over a specified volume, requires risk assessments to be undertaken. The National Standard for the Control of Major Hazard Facilities specifies the volumes. This standard also requires companies to take into consideration off-site issues, including surrounding land use, pipelines, environmental sensitivity and potential for external threats.

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NT WorkSafe is committed to ensuring any authorised development progresses in a way which provides maximum benefit to the community while maintaining high standards of safety and ensuring environmental matters are taken into consideration.

#### **4. Other options – Gunn Point or Koolpinyah areas**

The strategic planning envisaged for the long term growth of the Darwin region is that urbanisation eventually surrounding Darwin Harbour is preferred to other options such as a linear city form stretching down the Stuart Highway and swinging north east toward Glyde Point or southwest along the Finniss area.

Under any growth scenario, land is required for industrial development. This requires port access and facilities that are in reasonable proximity to residential areas for the workforce and other industrial land to support industry.

In the NT Planning Scheme, the intertidal zone of mangrove fringe areas are designated as a Conservation Zone in order to try to strike a balance between the locational needs of major industry and environmental issues.