

MARGARET RIVER, LAND SWAP

163. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the minister representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage:

- (1) Is the minister aware of a Department of Conservation and Land Management proposal to swap land with a developer for an airpark and chalet development near the Margaret River Airport?
- (2) Is any of the land that is being considered in the swap state forest or other government land; and if not, who owns or controls the land?
- (3) Will the minister advise whether the matter is now before the Conservation Commission of Western Australia for a decision?
- (4) What process will be followed before the land swap can occur?
- (5) Is the minister aware of strong opposition from nearby landowners to the proposed land swap and chalet development?
- (6) Was a CALM employee involved or present when an offer of \$100 000 was made to a landowner near the airport for 10 acres of land as part of the proposed land swap?
- (7) Is it usual or appropriate for CALM employees to be involved in this sort of financial negotiation?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

The Minister for the Environment and Heritage has provided the following response -

- (1) Yes, the minister is aware that a land-holder has formally approached CALM and the Conservation Commission of Western Australia to gain approval for a proposed land exchange as part of a proposal to establish an aircraft taxiway on an area of state forest adjacent to the Margaret River Airport. As the proposal would require an excision from state forest, the vesting body for the land, the Conservation Commission of Western Australia, will need to consider and provide advice to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage on any excision from the state forest. Any development that the land-holder proposes to carry out on his property will need to be referred to the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River for planning approval.
- (2) Yes, the proposed land exchange involves an excision from state forest, which is vested in the Conservation Commission of Western Australia and managed by CALM.
- (3) The Conservation Commission has approved the land exchange in principle, subject to some further investigations that remain to be completed.
- (4) If the proposed excision is to go ahead, it will have to be presented for consideration to the Governor in Executive Council, after which the proposal will need to be tabled in both Houses of Parliament. A resolution that the excision be carried out would be required from both Houses before an order of the Governor could put the excision into effect.
- (5) The Minister for the Environment and Heritage is aware of the opposition from local land-holders to the proposed land exchange and development.
- (6) No.
- (7) Departmental employees may be involved in preliminary land purchase discussions to consider issues and possibilities on nature conservation outcomes. Should a proposal from the department progress to the negotiation stage, a clear and approved departmental process is followed through to conclusion.