

NILGEN RESERVE, ROAD ALIGNMENT

166. Hon Jim Scott to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the proposed road through the Nilgen Reserve near Lancelin?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that alternative road options are available to the route chosen by MRWA?
- (3) If yes, what steps has the Minister taken to re-assess those route options?
- (4) Has the Minister been approached by residents in the area with an alternative road alignment which will not impact on the ecological values of the nature reserve?
- (5) If yes, what steps has the Minister taken to have the alignment re-assessed as an alignment option for the area?
- (6) Has MRWA identified Carpet Pythons being present in the Nilgen Reserve?
- (7) Is the Minister aware that Carpet Pythons are classified as a threatened reptile under the Action Plan for Australian Reptiles, Species Recovery Outlines of Environment Australia?
- (8) Does the Minister, or MRWA, intend to refer the project under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*?
- (9) If no, why not?

Hon G.T. GIFFARD replied:

- (1) Yes. The preferred alignment for the Lancelin to Cervantes Coastal Road traverses 3.5 kilometres of the southern portion of the Nilgen Nature Reserve. A further 3.5 kilometres of the road alignment is situated just inside the eastern boundary of the nature reserve adjacent to the Ocean Farm Rural Estate and other freehold properties.
- (2)-(3) Five alignment options were investigated for the southern portion of the proposed coastal road. These were assessed against a list of social, economic and environmental criteria to evaluate the performance and impacts of each option. The multi-criteria assessment identified the option that traversed the Nilgen Nature Reserve as the preferred option.

The environmental assessment for the Lancelin to Cervantes Coastal Road has been set, by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), at Public Environmental Review (PER) level. The PER has been submitted and is currently undergoing assessment. The final alignment for the new coastal road will be determined with due consideration of all environmental, social and economic factors.
- (4)-(5) Some residents have expressed concerns with respect to the impact that the proposed coastal road may have on the environmental integrity of the Nilgen Nature Reserve and have suggested an alternative alignment. This alternative alignment was similar to one of the five alignment options assessed in the multi-criteria assessment and considered in the overall route selection process. The suggested alignment however did not rate as highly as the preferred alignment.

The final alignment for the new coastal road will be determined with due consideration of all environmental, social and economic factors as is currently happening through the EPA's environmental impact assessment process.
- (6) During the environmental and planning study for the proposed Lancelin to Cervantes Coastal Road terrestrial fauna surveys were undertaken in both autumn and spring seasons. The surveys involved fauna sampling using comprehensive systematic and opportunistic trapping methodology, and the captured fauna species were recorded, identified and released. The survey recorded a sub species of Carpet Python identified as *Morelia spilota imbricata*.
- (7) Under Environment Australia's action Plan for Australian Reptiles, the *Morelia spilota imbricata*'s survival status is listed as vulnerable.
- (8)-(9) The environmental study for the Lancelin to Cervantes Coastal Road has not identified any issues which would trigger a requirement for referral of this project to Environment Australia.

The Carpet Python *Morelia spilota imbricata*'s survival status is only listed as vulnerable in WA legislation and Environment Australia's conservation action plans. It is not listed in any category of the schedule of 'Listed threatened species and communities' attached to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity (EPBC) Act 1999 as of the 16/08/01 EA published website. A species must be listed in one of the 5 most serious categories of that schedule to trigger referral to Environment Australia.