

GREATER BUNBURY REGION SCHEME - DISALLOWANCE THREAT

643. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

I refer to the opposition's threat to disallow the greater Bunbury region scheme. Is this another Liberal Party flip-flop?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question and the work that he did on this project. It is extraordinary that the four local authorities in the south west that are covered by the greater Bunbury region scheme recognise the very great benefit of the scheme in what is one of the fastest growing areas in Australia. It involves four separate town planning schemes. It has the capacity that a statutory regional scheme has to deliver good, long-term coordinated planning and it is embraced by all the local authorities.

It appears that the feisty little member for Capel will oppose it. He will fight it in the Parliament, even though the community wants it. One of his objections to the scheme is that it is not big enough. He wants to start the process all over again to include Collie and Busselton. That is complete and utter nonsense and complete stupidity. Let us get on with this scheme and get it gazetted. He also says that it is a really bad scheme because the government is taking all this land for regional open space from private land owners and will not take any government land. When this scheme was first drafted by the Liberal government and went out for public comment in 2000, it involved 1 420 hectares of privately owned land. We have reduced the amount of privately owned land that is subject now to reservation to 1 276 hectares. Now about 1 200 hectares of privately owned land is subject to reservation and over 15 000 hectares of publicly owned land is subject to the regional open space reservation. There is absolutely no merit whatsoever in their arguments.

When we were in opposition we gave bipartisan support to the Liberal government on this matter. We supported it in creating and drafting the greater Bunbury region scheme. Now that we are in government and implementing this policy, the opposition has neither the fortitude nor political commonsense to back the government.