

Note: transcribed hand written letter:

Officer in charge of
'Contaminated Site Act 2003'
Review

These points are for your consideration.

Sean Hickey. 24/02/2014

To: Contaminated.sites@der.wa.gov.au
The Government of W.A
(Dept. , of Environmental Regulation)

RE: 'Have your say on the review of the Contaminated Sites Act 2003

My comment.

- I am concerned with the issue of C/sites being made available for commercial gain, especially when previously zoned "recreation".
- Here, in Geraldton there exists a good example of the act being manipulated for commercial gain.
Although GCC has plans to transfer gains from projected sales at this site to develop another land development deal, with, all the "bells and whistles" the locality and those close by will loose a proposed recreation site.
It is somewhat ridiculous for the immediate locals to have another proposed site many kilometers away – even if Geraldton is on the way to be in population 50/80,000 by 2030.
- The problem for regulators is to incorporate requirement in their acts and regulations that take off the huge monetary gain that Councils wish to make out of rezoning of recreation space and in this case – a contaminated site.
The problem local government has today is that it's business is largely economic, over and above meeting social needs! This has become a problem of our modern time.
On one hand we value health and social well being but on the other we take away (councils do) the very land that will make it possible or more desirable – in this case to provide money for yet another development. Geraldton by the way has well over 2000 blocks of land and more in the making.
- Manipulation of land zoning by using the 'act" can also be the undoing of a council and its community and there are some fears that Geraldton is far from removed from problems aligned with this venture.
- The fact that, as I understand it, the issues that may arise from ownership of a previous contaminated site are totally with the new purchaser, should any health related issues arise.
Geraldton is a big locality. Why do we need to enter these sort of possibilities of contaminated site/safety issues, the onus transferred to private people?
Is it that the Regulation allow, the best case scenario to avoid potential litigation.

Is it better for government to have “off loaded” the land, zoned recreation, on the basis that as it becomes residential and gains an EPA clearance and thus becomes the responsibility of private land holders?

I would have thought better governance would be to avoid this possibility altogether and make good the “space as public open space” and keep an eye on it.

I consider that regulators have a corporate responsibility to people not just the entity of the business side of council. Government sometimes has an inability to see it is all connected and primarily about the well being of people.

This is a social issue not merely an economic issue.

SH . Thankyou.