

Industry takes its slice of Curtis Is

22nd May 2008



Deputy Premier Paul Lucas maps out where the State Government plans to extend the SDA on Curtis Island.

NOT many would consider an island hideaway a playground for heavy industry.

But when it comes to Curtis Island the State Government is inclined to think differently.

Yesterday Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning Paul Lucas identified Curtis Island as a suitable location for potential large-scale Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) processing facilities.

The scheme would add another 6,420 hectares to the Gladstone State Development Area's (SDA) existing 22,000 hectares.

The proposal follows the State Government's plan to extend the SDA to take advantage of Queensland's vast coal seam gas reserve.

"The Bligh Government is committed to planning for the future of this potential LNG industry, that could inject billions of dollars into Queensland's economy," Mr Lucas said.

Following the Curtis Island land proposal, Mr Lucas announced the declaration of a 90 kilometre infrastructure corridor from Stanwell to Gladstone.

The Corridor will run from Stanwell and connect up to the existing Gladstone SDA at The Narrows Road, Mt Larcom.

"These two projects are smart planning for Queensland's future, designed to maintain growth in this booming region," he said.

The newly designated area runs across the southern tip of Curtis Island, right through to the eastern side below Graham Creek, bordering the community of South End.

The new SDA also takes in Kangaroo Island which is situated between the mainland and the western side of Curtis Island.

The north-eastern end is Curtis Island National Park. A variety of vegetation types grow in the park from heath, grassland, stunted paperbark woodland and open eucalypt forest to extensive patches of dry rainforest.

Situated on the island also lays an historic lighthouse located at Cape Capricorn.

Mr Lucas assured those who attended yesterday's announcement, only one family had property on the designated land and they would not be affected. But others begged to differ.

Mr Lucas guaranteed the community any such industry would have to undergo strict environmental assessments to gain approval in the future.

"With five major companies already lining up for gas projects, Queensland has the chance to become a major exporter thanks to untapped coal seam reserves in the Surat and Bowen Basin," Mr Lucas said.

"These five major companies would add up to over \$17 billion worth of planned capital investments and about 3000 construction jobs," he said.

"Those projects have potential long-term economic benefits of more than \$15 billion and about 600 permanent jobs.

"However we must weight those advantages against environmental concerns and future domestic energy requirements, and processing needs."

The State Government has assured that potential LNG projects or other industries would be surrounded by a buffer zone and management areas.

The Coordinator-General will seek public submissions from May 26 to June 20 on the possible extension of the existing Gladstone SDA to Kangaroo Island and the Southern area of Curtis Island below Graham Creek.