

UNALLOCATED CROWN LAND LOCATION 1997

5562. Hon Paul Llewellyn to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for the Environment

With reference to the recent signing by the Minister of the 'State/Local Government Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership Agreement', and unallocated Crown Land Location 1997 on the southern boundary of the township of Frankland, I ask -

- (1) Can the Minister confirm that Location 1997 -
 - (a) has been recognized by his Department as home to 87 species of native orchids;
 - (b) the States largest colony of Cossack Orchids numbering approximately 2 500 plants with the next largest known colony only numbering 143 plants; and
 - (c) has 21 more species of orchid than the whole of the Porongurup Ranges?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) Does the Minister believe that providing habitat for such a range of rare and endangered orchids makes this location of high conservation value?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) Can the Minister confirm that the Shire of Cranbrook has divested itself of the management of the abovementioned location?
- (6) If no to (5), what is the situation regarding the Shire of Cranbrook's legal relationship with the land?
- (7) Can the Minister confirm that his Department has expressed unwillingness to Gazette the land as a Reserve because -
 - (a) the Department rarely declares and manages Reserves close to townships; and
 - (b) any other reason?
- (8) Given point 5b of 'Priority Areas' of the 'State/Local Government Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership Agreement', states the Department will work with local shires towards 'appropriately protecting high conservation value areas and native vegetation remnants', what measures does the Department propose to protect this location from current degradation being experienced through timber cutting, motorbikes, horses etc., besides the signs the Department has promised to erect and the fence the Shire has offered to erect?
- (9) Does the Department have any plans to declare location 1997 a Reserve?
- (10) If yes to (7), -
 - (a) what class of Reserve is planned for the Location;
 - (b) for what purpose will the Reserve be declared; and
 - (c) when will it be declared?
- (11) If no to (7), why not?

Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:

- (1)
 - (a) The Department of Environment and Conservation has been informed by a local orchid enthusiast that the area contains over 80 species.
 - (b) DEC records indicate that the area contains the largest known population of the Cossack Orchid. DEC records list the next largest known colony as numbering 99 plants. However, it is often difficult to undertake a precise count of orchids due to many variables including rainfall and flowering frequency.
 - (c) DEC does not maintain a database that allows comparison of the number of species of non-rare orchids for different areas.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5)-(6) The location is unallocated Crown land, therefore the Shire is not responsible for its management.

- (7) DEC is in consultation with the Shire of Cranbrook over the future management of the area. The current proposal is to reserve the land for management by DEC.
- (8) DEC is proposing to manage the land as part of the conservation reserve system and would implement actions to control illegal activities including enforcement, community consultation, signage and media coverage.
- (9) See the answer to (7).
- (10) (a)-(b) The proposed reservation status is not finalised, but it is intended that it would include the purpose of conservation of flora and fauna.
(c) This is dependent on consultation and the subsequent reservation process.
- (11) Not applicable.