

BUSH FOREVER SITES — MANAGEMENT

3962. Hon Sally Talbot to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Planning
- (1) Of the 287 Bush Forever areas identified for protection and management in State Planning Policy 2.8, how many of the areas in State Government ownership have -
 - (a) bushland management plans;
 - (b) environmental management plans; or
 - (c) sustainability strategies in place?
 - (2) How many of the areas in private ownership have bushland or environmental management plans in place?
 - (3) Of the 287 Bush Forever areas, how many are classified as —
 - (a) Bush Forever reserves;
 - (b) urban, industrial or resource development;
 - (c) Government lands or public infrastructure;
 - (d) rural lands; and
 - (e) regional creek lines?
 - (4) How many of these 287 areas are not protected through the establishment of Bush Forever areas in the Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS)?
 - (5) Why are these areas not protected?
 - (6) Is it the Government's intention to have management plans and/or sustainability strategies in place for all Bush Forever areas?
 - (7) If yes to (6), what is the timetable for having these plans/strategies in place?
 - (8) What resources has the Government allocated to drawing up these plans/strategies?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

- (1) (a), (b), (c) There is not currently a definite list maintained on the number of sites with endorsed management plans, environmental management plans; or sustainability strategies. MRS Amendment 1082/33, which passed through both Houses of Parliament without disallowance, and State Planning Policy 2.8: Bushland Policy for the Perth Metropolitan Region, provide for the development of management plans by those agencies that have Bush Forever areas within their management responsibility.
- (2) Bush Forever areas under private ownership may have an environmental management plan that may have been endorsed by the local government, however there are no requirements for private owners of Bush Forever areas to prepare a management plan.
- (3) The classification categories for the Bush Forever areas are,
 - (a) Bush Forever reserves — 229
 - (b) Urban, industrial or resource development — 73
 - (c) Government lands or public infrastructure — 116
 - (d) Rural lands — 81
 - (e) Regional creeklines — 27

It should be noted, however, that a number of Bush Forever areas have multiple implementation categories, as many sites have multiple owners and different MRS zonings. As such, one Bush Forever area could have three or more different implementation categories.

- (4) Two sites are not protected through the establishment of Bush Forever areas — Bush Forever sites 217 and 275.
- (5) Bush Forever site 217 was ground-truthed in 2005 and the majority of this site contained bushland representative of the Darling Scarp vegetation complex, which occurs outside the Swan Coastal Plain. As the site did not fulfil the criteria for inclusion in Bush Forever, it was excluded from the MRS Amendment.

Bush Forever site 275—Stakehill Swamp—was reserved as Parks and Recreation under its own MRS Amendment. Once the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) acquires all the privately owned land, there will be a further Amendment to create this site as Bush Forever.

- (6) The Government's preference is that Management plans or agreements should be prepared for all Bush Forever areas. As part of the proposed MRS Text amendment for Bush Forever, it is anticipated that a management plan and written agreement between each public authority and the WAPC could be prepared for all Bush Forever areas. The Department of Planning will progress this element once the MRS Text amendment is completed. However, there is no requirement for private land owners to prepare and implement an environmental management plan, unless as a condition of development/subdivision approval.
- (7) The MRS Text amendment to enable management plans for Government owned sites needs to go through the MRS amendment process. The Department of Planning is currently awaiting State Solicitor's Office advice as to whether it will be a minor or major amendment, and this influences the timeline.
- (8) In addition to the processes outlined, the WAPC and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) are currently preparing a proposal to facilitate the transfer of Bush Forever areas to the Conservation Commission. As part of the proposal, the WAPC anticipates a 'one-off' funding grant to DEC on the same basis as the transfer of the regional parks in the 1990s.