

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon. Teresa Gambaro, MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence

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HINCHCLIFFE'S POOH CORNER CALLS ARE A STUNT

Calls from Brisbane Deputy Mayor David Hinchcliffe that Defence should "gift" land at Pooh Corner are nothing more than a media stunt, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence, the Hon Teresa Gambaro said today.

Ms Gambaro said the 138ha site and the nearby 107ha Sananada Barracks were placed on the market on March 2 this year with tenders now closing on 16 May 2005.

"For Cr Hinchcliffe to come out with this demand now is nothing more than a media stunt," Ms Gambaro said.

"The land is being sold in line with the Commonwealth Property Disposal Policy. By selling this land the Australian Government is then able to reinvest the revenue in health, education, roads and infrastructure and other services."

Ms Gambaro said the Department of Defence was obligated under Commonwealth legislation to ensure its properties' ecological values are appropriately identified and protected as part of any disposal process.

"We have never hidden the ecological significance of areas of the site and have provided an ecological assessment, commissioned by Defence, this information to all potential purchasers."

"In fact, Defence's consultant estimates that only approximately 16 hectares could be developed. However, if the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines determines that no development on the site would be permitted, Defence would not challenge this position," Ms Gambaro said.

She said future site development would require any future owner to demonstrate how the ecological values of the site would be preserved and would also require an impact assessment process under the Queensland *Integrated Planning Act 1997 / BCC City Plan 2000*.

"Prior to any part of the land being developed an application will have to be lodged with the Brisbane City Council and the public given adequate opportunity to respond through the public exhibition process.

"Defence has been transparent with investigations and considerations concerning Pooh Corner and potential purchasers have been encouraged to make their own enquiries with the proper planning authority, namely, the Brisbane City Council."

"As Parliamentary Secretary, the Brisbane City Council can write to me with any proposal they have and I will consider it in the context of the other tenders," Ms Gambaro said.

With regard to the comments by Councillor Hinchcliffe re Enoggera and Greenbank, these properties are still required for defence capability purposes.

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