



## Media Release

February 14, 2012

### Call on Council to defer Woodside decision

Environs Kimberley is calling on the Shire to defer a decision on a new Woodside planning application at James Price Point at this Thursday night's Council meeting.

The application by Woodside is for approval of the illegal work they carried out in 2011 as well as proposed new works.

"Woodside is asking for the work they carried out last year illegally, without planning consent, to be approved by a new body called a Development Assessment Panel (DAP), but there's so much confusion and uncertainty about the proposal that the matter has been put to a full Council meeting this Thursday," Environs Kimberley Director Martin Pritchard said.

"This whole process is failing to provide the community with a fair go. The Shire staff recommendation was not on the website last Friday, which means we have one and a half days to comment on a document that has hundreds of pages in it. To add to that it's been rushed in as a late item for Thursday night's Council meeting," said Mr Pritchard.

"We have serious concerns that, because this application is being rushed through, changes could be made to the Shire's recommendation to the Development Assessment Panel at Thursday night's Council meeting, which the public will not have access to. How can we make meaningful comments when we haven't even seen the recommendations from the Shire?" asked Mr Pritchard.

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### Background info re process

1. December 22, 2011 – Woodside applies for planning approval to the new State Government Development Assessment Panel instead of the Shire. (Likely they preferred the DAP because they're worried that the Shire is now 'hostile')
2. Shire Officers have 50 days to prepare a report to the DAP
3. DAP has 10 days to make a decision after this 50 days. If they don't then the application is deemed to be refused
4. The DAP meeting is Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> February 12.30pm and is an open public meeting

5. The item was not originally going to Shire Councillors but has been rushed in as a late item for the Council meeting on Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup> 5pm.
6. Shire staff in an unusual move have asked the Councillors to endorse the staff report because it has to be recommended by the 'authorized authority' and staff are saying that only the Councillors have this authority:

*"As the report is to be provided by the 'responsible authority' this seems to involve Council in formulating a recommendation as without delegation an officer of the Shire is not considered to be the 'responsible authority". Item 12.1 Shire Agenda, February 16, 2012*

7. Council could modify the staff recommendation on Thursday night which means that the public would not have had an opportunity to put this in their submissions to the DAP meeting the next day