



Date & time: Thursday 23rd June 12pm-2pm, Council Chamber, Civic Centre
Exec Lead : Dyer, Infrastructure and Development

Participants:

- Andrew Dukas (Water Corporation)
- Robin Cornish (Centauri)
- Ray Patterson (Department of Transport)
- Dave Pearson (Main Roads)
- Geoff Diver (Diversity consultants)
- Emma Roebuck (Department of State Development)
- David Cooper (LandCorp)
- Bill Dziombak (Pilbara Chamber of Commerce)
- Allan Sheperdson (Telstra)
- Russell Dyer (ToPH)
- Leonard Long (ToPH)
- Chlodough Smith (AECOM)
- Owen Hightower (RPS)
- Daniel Marsh (WorleyParsons – Facilitator)
- Ned Baxter (WorleyParsons- Scribe)
- Cassandra Woodruff (ToPH – Scribe)

Session Objectives & Process

The session objectives were to ground-truth the consultants' analysis of infrastructure and transport challenges, and to obtain stakeholder reaction to focus questions posed by the study team.

Two short presentations (attached) were made to overview the Growth Plan process, summarise relevant work done to date and present the context for key focus questions.

The key issues identified by the consultants were:

Infrastructure

- Water currently at capacity with short-term upgrades unlikely to support growth. Significant allocations are required by industry.
- Wastewater services are at capacity with upgraded wastewater treatment plant not operational until 2014
- Power supply nearing capacity with upgrade allowances to substations nearing limit
- Lack of domestic reticulated gas infrastructure
- Fill availability at commercially viable rates to satisfy storm surge requirements

Transport

- Growth on main roads connecting to South Hedland Town Centre





- Local traffic and port traffic conflict
- Congestion on Port Hedland Road Broome turn-off to Port Hedland (technically Wilson Street/Port Hedland Road/Great Northern Highway)
- Opportunity for intermodal and/or freight consolidation facility
- Poor public transport options; potential for Demand Responsive Transport
- Cycle network/appropriate street hierarchy and potential to increase pedestrian, cycle and car-pool mode share of traffic growth

Confirming Key Issues

The focus group was invited to identify other issues that they perceive to be relevant or quality the consultants' understanding of the nature of the issue.

There was clarification about telecommunications. NBNCo will be responsible for installation of broadband infrastructure in new subdivisions as they are constructed. Mobile data use has been growing rapidly and network capacity continues to be a challenge for Telstra.

“We've been playing catch-up for the last two years at least in Port Hedland, but there are actions put in place that hopefully bring us up to speed soon”

Water availability pressures were clarified:

“It is not BHP alone that is pushing the water allocation to its full capacity... it is the growth overall that is doing so”

The focus group raised the need for integrated planning of water and wastewater and the potential for a 'water factory' (where different grades of water are 'repurposed') was raised.

The status of particular cycleway developments was clarified.

Recognition was given to the current Airport Masterplan. The airport is not only a critical piece of infrastructure but also as a gateway to Hedland that frames visitors impressions. There was a view that Growth Plan needs to capture key operational strategies that are not found in the Airport Masterplan:

“[masterplan] is more of a land use outlay than a development strategy”

The airport terminal was seen as a key area requiring attention that could be addressed with relative ease:

“We have an airstrip the size of Hong Kong's international airport; it is very unlikely that we are going to ever need to develop this further, why don't we bring the terminal up to the same standard”

A major issue identified within the port was the growing conflict between private and industry uses of the channels.



“With the Port expanding to its planned sizes are we getting to a point where we will need stronger regulations around Port use by private boat users”

Advice on Direction

Water

The growing demand for water supply was recognised by the group as a pivotal issue in the growth of Port Hedland and that a range of strategies would be required. These may include:

Additional water supply:

- Exploration and testing water supplies such as the West-Canning basin (200km adjacent of Port Hedland)
- Industry to be supplied with non-potable water for dust suppression operations to alleviate demand on existing potable water supplies (e.g. WWPT re-use water, wet-season stormwater harvesting). Water Corporation currently conducting a feasibility study.

Water demand management:

- More onerous water use restrictions
- Requirements for ‘water smart’ products in new housing developments

“If change was implemented within the development stage of houses you would probably find that the water profile of the population would change quite dramatically”

- Retrofitting ‘water smart’ products in existing homes
- Ending perverse subsidies and making a strong link between users and utility bills; introduction (through employers) of incentives to reduce water use
- Employee education / Pilbara induction

Power

There was support for the robust investigation into alternative power generation models:

“We all know that we have one of, if not the best solar power generation sites in the world, but the question remains of if methods like this are financially viable as yet”

Lack of reticulated gas was not considered as a growth issue:

“This isn’t really a pressing issue as the provision of gas bottles for houses is an easier option than providing gas from a main”

“The reliance on gas could be minimised anyway with people relying more on solar water heating”





Public Transport

The reliance on cars as the primary mode of transport was recognised and seen as something that could possibly be minimised by the creation of greater incentives for other modes of transport such as greater provision of bike / cycle ways; as well as disincentives for the use of cars such as the implementation of limited or pay parking. However, it was noted cars are a very attractive form of transport in the Pilbara climate and significant effort will be required to change behaviour.

There was support for the concept of a peak time bus service of increased frequency and reliability connecting Port and South:

““This would be a great service but it needs to be done well to make sure it is used by the general public”

Caution was urged in the promotion of park n ride schemes that could involve long-shift workers waiting for shuttle buses and then driving home at the end of shift. The concern is the effect of fatigue on road safety.

****Ends****