

Mr Tim Watling  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Phone: +61 2 6277 3511  
Fax: +61 2 6277 5811

[rrat.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:rrat.sen@aph.gov.au)

Good morning Mr Watling

Smithson Planning's core business is town planning & environmental assessment, but my personal forte is strategic regional planning and development.

In November 1997, Smithson Planning published under copyright the Rainbow 2000© Project – a Regional Planning Strategy for Albany & the Great Southern of Western Australia.

That plan would see Albany move to a population of 150,000 over 20-30 years, and entailed about \$5.0 billion in capital investment – the major project being seaport relocation, airport expansion, a toll-route ring road with rail access, all under the guise of a public private partnership called the Albany Port Corporation.

That might seem everyday now – but 17 years ago, few people were thinking in such terms.

Albany as a city is at a crucial point in its history, and there are several unresolved issues requiring attention, in particular the Grange Resources \$2.9bn Magnetite Project, but also control of the city waterfront and the maintenance of port accessibility for road and rail heavy freight – specifically for Grains and Woodchip exports, and fertiliser imports.

We look forward to the Hon. Warren Truss MP's announcement shortly on the Albany Ring Road Project, and the design plans for Princess Royal Drive in particular. There would seem little point to us as a professional in the field allocating \$325m on a ring road, if there are no matching \$100m plans to drive a road / rail freeway through the centre of the City and its waterfront during the Anzac Centenary 2014-19 commemorations, and as a precursor to the Albany Bicentennial 2026-27 celebrations.

# Federal-State \$1m grant puts ring road on agenda

KEIR TURNBULL

THE Albany ring road is back on the State Government's agenda, with \$1 million in joint State and Federal funding announced this week for the next two stages of the long-awaited \$120m project.

After a visit to WA last week with O'Connor MP Tony Crook, Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister Anthony Albanese announced the Labor Government would agree to cover half the \$1m cost of planning stages two and three.

Soon after, the State Govern-

ment announced it would contribute the other half, despite recent indications from Transport Minister Troy Buswell the ring road was not on the State's agenda.

Mr Albanese said completion of the project would reduce heavy haulage traffic in town, deliver better driving conditions on Albany and South Coast Highways, improve freight movement to and from Albany Port, and provide better access to the Mirambona Industrial Park.

Current estimates put the overall cost of all three stages at \$120m, including planning costs.

Mr Buswell said planning would commence this year and would determine future State funding commitments.

Mr Albanese said further Federal funding for construction would be considered once planning was done and accurate costings were obtained.

It is not known when actual construction would begin.

Stage one of the ring road, Menzies Road, was completed in 2007, linking Chester Pass Road with Albany Highway.

Stage two will link Lower Denmark Road and Hamman Road, and stage three will link Albany Highway with South Coast Highway and Lower Denmark Road.

Member for O'Connor Tony Crook said the ring road was an important infrastructure project for Albany and he was glad Mr Albanese had committed funding.



Troy Buswell



Anthony Albanese

Albany MP Peter Watson said the State commitment was positive but strange given recent indications from Mr Buswell.

"It's taken the Federal Labor Government to kick-start the State Government into looking at something that is an important

issue for the people of Albany," he said.

CARTOON

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Albany Advertiser - 22 Mar 2012 p1 - Federal State \$1m grant puts ring road on agenda.

Intertwined are the issues of energy security, privatisation of the supply chain network, and the continuity of the succession management structures for broadacre farming and agribusiness managed investment schemes.

In the past year, I have briefed the Federal Member for O'Connor, several WA Senators (Labor & Liberal), Perth-based consular staff from the Embassies of Japan and the Peoples Republic of China, two Albany newspaper editors and the big-four Albany Bank Branch managers.

I am pleased to say that almost all agree with our assessment of the situation, that the port needs to move - that's politics, and interestingly enough, no-one wanted to argue the point.

If you would care to preview the Rainbow 2000© Project powerpoint presentation, it is available on Smithson Planning's facebook at -

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.154042347988361.32422.126321394093790&type=3>

I look forward to your reply, and the opportunity to present the project for the Committee's consideration - a hearing in Albany would be most beneficial to the Committee's appreciation of the situation.

Following are the supporting arguments and I have attached the two (Commonwealth & State) briefing notes.

Yours faithfully,  
**SMITHSON PLANNING**

*Neil R. Smithson*

Neil R. Smithson

Managing Director  
PIA<sup>CPP</sup>, EIANZ, NELA, LGPA, AAPC, NTWA, FDI, CSC 2003

Tel : (08) 9842 9841  
Fax : (08) 9842 9843  
Mob : 0419 556 444



Address : 1 Ashwell Street, Albany WA 6330 Australia  
Postal : PO Box 5377 Albany WA 6332 Australia

Web : [www.smithsonplanning.com.au](http://www.smithsonplanning.com.au)  
Facebook : [Neil Smithson](#)  
Facebook : [Smithson Planning](#)

Smithson Planning - Consultants in National Investment Growth Pathing  
Australian Business Number : 46 782 764 220

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Please find **attached** our :

- ❖ Rainbow 2000® briefing note – Federal Cabinet.
- ❖ Rainbow 2000® briefing note – State Cabinet.

Following our recent presentation to the Great Southern Development Commission on 24 Feb 2014 (at the request / direction of the Premier Colin Barnett and Minister for Regional Development Terry Redman), I was pleased to brief Mr Rick Wilson MHR, the Federal Member for O'Connor on 11 Mar 2014 – that was followed by a briefing with the Regional Management Team of Main Roads WA Great Southern on 09 Apr 2014, and the gazettal of City of Albany LPS #1 on 28 Apr 2014.

There have been several interesting articles in the local Albany newspapers recently – Albany Advertiser (06/03 p8 'City gears up for Anzac commemorations) – and to quote the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Albany on Anzac, "it's extremely important that we get the preparations right – if it doesn't get done right, the Commonwealth, the State and the City are all going to cop it".

It was also pleasing to hear both State and Federal representatives reaffirm their expectation of the imminent development of the Albany Waterfront hotel site, and the desire to see hotel development proceed on the Middleton Beach site – and that action may be supported by the formation of a new regional tourism organisation for Albany.

We also note with interest the appointment of the Hon. Alannah MacTiernan MHR, Federal Member for Perth, as the Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Western Australia, Regional Development and Infrastructure – that is indeed a most interesting development given her previous role in State Government, and more particular the Albany waterfront.

The matters raised by our briefing notes have peaked considerable interest in State Cabinet, particularly for the Ministers for Transport (the former who recently resigned), Planning, Mining, Tourism, Agriculture, Forestry, Regional Development & Lands.

Now that the City of Albany LPS #1 has been gazetted, the focus of attention has firmly fixed on our comparison of road & rail reservations along the city waterfront (refer federal briefing note).

Basically, the Port of Albany / WA Dept of Transport have failed over 16 years to negotiate any improvement in their current position in relation to :

- ❖ Stages 2-5 of the Albany Ring Road (Stage 5 being the Hanrahan Road – Port Albany section)
- ❖ The Great Southern Railway.

Effectively, the Port of Albany will have to oppose waterfront development forever – a pointless task in the lead-up to the 2016 Federal Election and the 2017 State Election – given :

- ❖ Albany Anzac 2014-19 Centenary; and
- ❖ Albany Bicentennial 2026-27.

I believe a majority of the sitting Western Australian Senators now support the proposition advocated in the Rainbow 2000® Project, and understand the necessity for seaport relocation, and the formation of an Albany Port Corporation (PPP).

In my opinion, bigger is better, because nothing will solve the Port's problems other than relocation – in which case, they are going to need all the foreign investment they can muster – hence the new year briefings with the Chinese and Japanese consulates in Perth as the principal stakeholders in the \$2.9bn Grange Resources Southdown Magnetite Project.

I believe the Anzac / World War I centenary events will only grow in stature, and that the 2018 commemorations will be the largest of all to conclude this historic period of Remembrance – and of course, that is followed by the city's Bicentennial in 2026-27.

I trust this information is useful, and if we can assist you further at this time, please call.

Yours faithfully,  
**SMITHSON PLANNING**

*Neil R. Smithson*

Neil R. Smithson  
Managing Director  
PIA<sup>CPP</sup>, EIANZ, NELA, LGPA, AAPC, NTWA, FDI, CSC 2003

Tel : (08) 9842 9841  
Fax : (08) 9842 9843  
Mob : 0419 556 444



Address : 1 Ashwell Street, Albany WA 6330 Australia  
Postal : PO Box 5377 Albany WA 6332 Australia

Web : [www.smithsonplanning.com.au](http://www.smithsonplanning.com.au)  
Facebook : [Neil Smithson](#)  
Facebook : [Smithson Planning](#)

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Australian Business Number : 46 782 764 220

