



Environment Centre of the NT – since 1983



All c/- G.P.O. Box 2120
Darwin 0801

Ph: 8981 1984

Email:
ecnt@octa4.net.au
adelepedder@amcs.org.au

Dear Government MLA

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What costs \$326 million (\$326,952,000), will threaten five Top End sites of international conservation significance, and has no credible justification?

Answer: Stage One of the proposed Glyde Point heavy industry estate! (Source: *DPI slide show 2005*)

The NT Department of Planning (DPI) is currently spending almost **three quarters of a million dollars** (\$700,000) on the preparation of a draft EIS for this project – mostly going to consultants GHD Ltd.

It has already spent another **half a million** (\$514,000) on 'preliminary reports' – going to KBR Ltd, URS Ltd and KPMG Ltd. DPI continues to pour public money, which could be put to so many better uses, into the bank accounts of consultancy firms with frighteningly little government awareness or scrutiny.

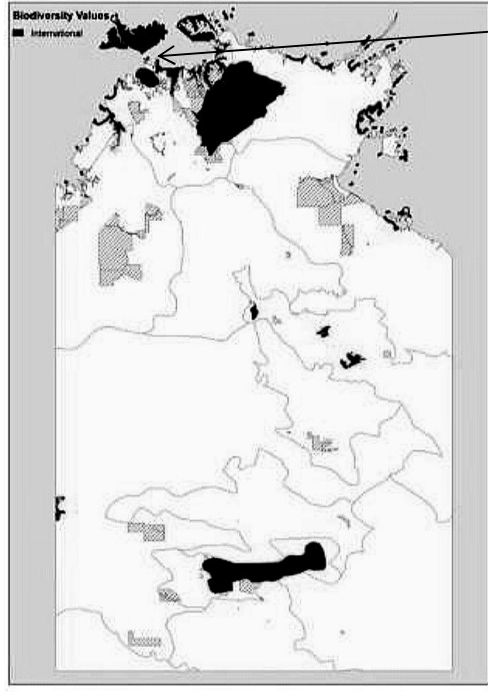
Here is why the NT government must act NOW to turn off DPI's Glyde Point cash cow:

1. No credible or reliable studies have been conducted looking at **options** for the siting of further heavy industry in the greater Darwin region, and the relative costs and benefits of various alternative sites.
2. No appropriate or up-to-date **criteria** have been prepared by DPI for the selection of possible sites for heavy industry in the greater Darwin region, e.g. avoidance of sensitive marine and coastal environments.
3. No rationale has been presented for **replicating** at Glyde Point – a near-pristine coastal and marine environment 50 km from Darwin – all the tens of millions of dollars worth of infrastructure that **already exist** in the greater Darwin area, i.e. ports, shipping channels, pipelines, railway lines, powerlines, road networks, and people.
4. There seems to be no awareness in government of the **magnitude of risks and impacts** associated with the siting of heavy industry, with all its infrastructure, at Glyde Point. Glyde Point is located at one of only two narrow entrances to Van Diemen Gulf. This narrow entrance, partially blocked by the Vernon Islands and associated reefs, is renowned for its dangerous currents and tidal flows, not to mention cyclonic activity.
5. Van Diemen Gulf is a **semi-enclosed** marine environment of the highest natural and Indigenous cultural conservation value bordered by:
 - i. Kakadu World Heritage National Park coast
 - ii. Western Arnhem Land coast
 - iii. Cobourg/Garig Gunak Barlu National Park and Marine Park
 - iv. The Tiwi Islands
 - v. Djukbinj and Mary River National Parks and coastal conservation reserves.

These five places have been recognized in the NTG's Parks and Conservation Masterplan (2005) as '**sites of international conservation significance**' – a fact which seems to have completely escaped DPI's notice.

Any risk of significant or ongoing airborne or waterborne pollution or contamination of this marine and coastal environment would cause national and international outcry.

6. DPI seems to have no understanding of modern best practice integrated planning – instead seemingly choosing sites for large scale industrial development on the basis that they are conveniently owned by the government (i.e. the shadowy ‘NT Land Corporation’), and then proceeding to try to push through its chosen site via the expenditure of large sums of public money on reports written by consultancy firms.



Location of proposed heavy industry development at Glyde Point.

Note semi-enclosed marine environment (Van Diemen Gulf) surrounded by sites of International conservation significance including Kakadu coast, West Arnhem coast, Cobourg Marine Park and Tiwi Islands.

Map: "Figure 8: Sites of international significance for biodiversity conservation", NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan, 2005.

According to its EIS tender documents, DPI is currently proposing to finalise the draft Glyde Point EIS, submit it to the EPA for ‘preliminary comment’ – without release to the public – and then to sit on the EIS until it chooses to release it for assessment under the Environmental Assessment Act. **Allowing DPI to go down this route is locking the government into a site and a project design which we believe is, and will be shown to be unacceptable, unaffordable and unworkable.**

We urge the government to re-think its apparent support for this very flawed process and the Glyde Point heavy industry and residential development. **It would do the government great credit to demonstrate it is aware of the many complex and problematic issues involved and announce a review of heavy industry development in the greater Darwin region.** That way a much more rational, robust and defensible outcome has a chance of emerging and being accepted by the public. The alternative carries major risks to the environment, government and the public.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information on this most important issue for the future of the NT. To view our detailed report on the Glyde Point issue see: http://www.ecnt.org/pdf/marine_glyde_report.pdf

Yours sincerely

Peter Robertson
Coordinator
Environment Centre NT Inc

Adele Pedder
Marine Campaigner
Australian Marine Conservation Society Inc