1. What is the McLarty Site?

Known as the McLarty Site, this 130ha site is proposed to accommodate the new McLarty Explosives Reserve Facility. As with the existing facility in Perth, the new McLarty Facility will be used for the storage and manufacture of packaged explosives such as fireworks and as used in mining companies, as well as Ammonium Nitrate.

- The 130ha site will include an extensive surrounding buffer zone approximately 1.6km from the boundary of the core area.
- The site area currently contains juvenile pines (as part of State-owned pine plantation)
- The Forest Products Commission will continue to manage the surrounding pine plantations, with the overall Myalup State Forest remaining under the control of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

2. Where is the McLarty Site?

The McLarty Site lies south of Johnston Road, about 2km east of Forrest Highway (formerly Old Coast Road) and about 12km west of the South Western Highway.

- It is located approximately 10km from the nearest township, Preston Beach, and is well set back from the Forrest Highway, with the proposed entrance to the site about 2.5km from the turnoff.
- The distance from the road, together with the surrounding buffer, means the facility is unlikely to be visible or noticed by passing traffic.
- The site falls within both the Shire of Waroona and the Shire of Harvey.

3. What is an Explosives Storage Facility?

Explosives Storage Facilities are specially designed, highly secure areas that provide safe and suitable locations for the storage and manufacture of packaged explosives – including fireworks and those used by the mining sector – as well as Ammonium Nitrate.

- Explosives storage facilities are important infrastructure for Western Australia and provide a significant benefit to the State’s mining sector and other explosives users. There are four explosives storage facilities in Western Australia: the Perth metropolitan area, Kalgoorlie, Karratha and Port Hedland.

4. Where is the Perth Facility?

Known as the Baldivis Explosives Reserve (BER), the current Perth facility is located on Stakehill Road near the Kwinana Freeway at Karnup, in the City of Rockingham.
5. What Does the Current Facility Look Like?

The BER, like all explosives storage facilities, features a large amount of empty space. This space allows for separation between small single storey shed-like buildings. These are typically container-sized steel boxes, or brick or concrete buildings up to 20 metres square, surrounded by earth mounds.

• The whole facility is surrounded by security fencing and gates that control access.

• There is also an extensive buffer zone that makes the facility virtually unnoticeable from outside the area.

• The current facility is adjoined by a number of properties – most of the adjoining residents would not even be aware of the existence of the BER.

6. What About Safety and Security?

Explosives storage facilities present a very low risk. Modern explosives are designed to be very safe to handle during storage and transport and require specific conditions to make them explode. Similarly, Ammonium Nitrate is very safe to handle if kept free of contamination and away from fire. Consequently, in a properly managed facility, the chance of these substances accidentally exploding is essentially nil.

• In the 40 year history of the BER, no residents have reported any issues or lodged any complaints.

• All explosives are regulated in accordance with very strict, nationally consistent rules that require separation as well as hazard reduction measures.

• The minimum separation required to residential developments is about one kilometre. The proposed new facility in McLarty greatly exceeds this.

• All the safety and security measures at the current Baldivis facility, including additional measures such as patrols, CCTV monitoring and electronic access for authorised personnel, will apply to the planned McLarty Explosives Reserve Facility.

7. What About the Risk of Uncontrolled Fire?

Like all explosives storage facilities, the McLarty facility will feature a large amount of empty space between buildings and any grass on the reserve will be kept low. So the risk of an uncontrolled fire spreading from the surrounding area or through the facility is extremely low.

Regardless, given the strict safety measures and precautions that are mandatory for the storage and manufacture of explosives, a fire is unlikely to trigger an explosion – and vice versa. Explosions from explosives usually produce lots of wind but not much fire, and the separation distances between magazines prevents sympathetic detonation.

8. How are Explosives Transported?

Explosives and Ammonium Nitrate are transported to and from the facilities by road, using companies that are licenced to transport explosives in carefully labelled trucks that are easily identified. However, truck movement is very low and therefore goes largely unnoticed. Most of the vehicles entering the site are of staff travelling to and from work.

9. Why Relocate the BER?

Perth’s southern corridor has been identified as a growth area to help accommodate a rapidly expanding population, which is expected to double by 2050. With urban development and density increasing in the area, the existing Baldivis Explosives Reserve Facility (BER) needs to be relocated. The relocation will enable future housing development to help meet the needs of WA’s growing population, as well as help accommodate the future needs of the mining industry.
10. Why was the McLarty Site Selected?

An intergovernmental taskforce was formed to examine potential sites for the relocation of the Baldivis Explosives Reserve Facility. 17 sites were selected for review, however following a rigorous eight year investigation, the McLarty Site was found to be the only one of the 17 sites to meet all the strict safety, environmental and logistical criteria.

- The 17 sites were assessed against criteria such as separation distances, environmental, proximity of water sources, land tenure, and distance from the Perth metropolitan area.

- The McLarty Site offers features that exceed the stringent requirements of the existing Baldivis facility.
  - Lies within pine plantation in the Myalup State Forest.
  - Situated well away from even the closest townships: Preston Beach is about 10km north-west of the site, and Yarloop which is 14km to the east.
  - Allows for a significantly wider buffer zone than at the current BER.
  - Two bordering landowners but no homes/dwellings adjoining the buffer zone area.

- Accessed primarily from the Forrest Highway, with the proposed entrance to the site some 2.5km from the turn-off, it is unlikely that the reserve will be visible from the road or any future train line.

11. Environmental Impacts?

The McLarty Site is located on land currently used as pine plantation.

- Native vegetation was removed decades ago.
- The core area to be cleared currently contains juvenile pines and saplings.
- The 1,090ha buffer area will be retained for forestry use.

12. What Benefits Does the McLarty Site Offer?

The McLarty facility will be a long term employment generator – manufacturing plants at the current BER employ approximately 30 people.

- Possible increased patronage of local businesses, including cafes and petrol stations.
- The relocation to the McLarty Site will meet the growing needs of the mining sector.
- The site and surrounding area is also found to contain much needed quality sand and limestone as used for building and redevelopment projects – so extraction is planned.
13. Why is Sand and Limestone Extraction Planned?

An inter-agency committee has identified a shortage of building materials between Perth and Busselton. A dependable supply of these materials is crucial for construction and building involved with development.

Transporting these basic raw materials from distant sources increases costs for housing and all developments. However, the safety buffer bordering the 130ha McLarty site contains extractable sand and limestone – estimates suggest a yield of at least 1,500,000 cubic metres.

To help address the issue of supply and transport, the Government is planning to facilitate access to the available basic raw materials from the McLarty Site.

- Access to the materials will help the regional community by opening up a new source of basic raw materials in the district.
- The Department of Mines and Petroleum will manage the site and extraction will be subject to stringent regulations under the Mining Act, recognised internationally as being amongst the very best.
- The extraction of the sand and limestone could yield royalty earnings of about $2 million.
- Groundwater resources will not be affected as sand extraction cannot be carried out within three metres of the highest groundwater level.
- Safe operational practices will be insisted on and monitored throughout the period that sand and limestone are extracted.

14. What will be the Impact on Local Traffic?

The extraction operations will involve trucking of the materials to the sites where the community will use it. Most access will be from the Forrest Highway so there should be little or no impact on the community.

- Operators will be required to engage with the relevant Shire regarding suitable transport routes for incoming and outgoing vehicles.
- Operators will be given specialised road directions to limit impact on traffic.
- Operators will be required to contribute to local road maintenance.

15. What are the Timelines for Extraction?

The operation will be in accord with the Mining Act that allows for extraction over 21 years. Depending on the circumstances, extraction is expected to proceed for the whole period of the lease, and therefore the rate of extraction and subsequent trucking is expected to be low.

- The Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) has called for Expressions of Interest for the potential sand extraction and the Minister for Mines and Petroleum will issue an invitation to the company submitting the best extraction proposal. The proposed quarry will only go ahead if suitable applicants are identified through the EOI process.

16. Is Rezoning Required?

The Baldivis Explosives Reserve must be relocated by December 2016. At this stage, work is expected to commence on the land construction in 2015.

Before this can happen, there must be an amendment to the Greater Bunbury Regional Scheme and the Peel Regional Scheme, followed by an amendment to the Local Planning Scheme for the Shires of Harvey and Waroona.

The amendments are needed to enable the rezoning of the land for the proposed McLarty Site from State Forest to Special Purpose Reserve.

17. What is the Process for the Greater Bunbury and Peel Regional Scheme Amendments?

On 31 October 2014, the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) gazetted the proposed amendments to the Greater Bunbury and Peel Regional Schemes for advertising for public comment.

- The public comment period provides the community with the opportunity to provide formal feedback on the planned rezoning of the land.
- Copies of the full Amendment Report for the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme Amendment 0035/57 and Peel Region Scheme Amendment 038/57 are available on the Department of Planning website, the offices of the Shires of Harvey and Waroona, the Department of Planning offices in Bunbury and Mandurah, the Battye Library and the WAPC in Perth.
18. When do Submissions Close?
Submissions close 5pm Friday, 9 January 2015.

19. How can I Lodged a Comment?
Any person who wishes to make a submission to support, object or provide comment on the proposed amendment should do so on a Form 57.

- This submission form can be found with the Amendment Report. For your convenience, we have provided hard copies of Form 57 during today’s information session.

- Submissions must be lodged with:
The Secretary
Western Australian Planning Commission,
61 Victoria Street,
BUNBURY WA 6230

20. What are the Timelines for the Project?

Rezoning: State Forest to Special Purpose

All dates are estimated and subject to change.

- Application to Department of Planning (DoP) for rezoning - Complete
- Recommendation to Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) - Complete
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) assessment - complete
- Proposed Greater Bunbury and Peel Region Scheme Amendments advertised for public comment - underway
- Scheme Amendment 60 day public comment period closes - 9 January 2015
- Assessment by WAPC - April/May 2015
- Subject to the above, Scheme Amendment Approval - June 2015

Design and Construction

The following timelines are subject to rezoning approval

- Design - June to October 2015
- Works Tenders - End 2015
- Construction - End 2015 to mid 2016
- Relocation of existing BER users to the McLarty Site - commences third quarter 2016
- Relocation of the existing BER completed by end 2016