

  
10 July 2024

Committee Secretary  
Parliamentary Standing Committee for Public Works  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Department of Defence's application to undertake Rotational Force-West  
Priority Works at HMAS Stirling.

I wish to express my concern about this application to undertake Rotational Force-West Priority Works at HMAS Stirling.

HMAS Stirling, on Garden Island, is only a few kilometres from the centre of Rockingham. The City of Rockingham is a rapidly growing local government area, with a projected population forecast of 149,362 in 2024.

The Department of Defence's application includes construction of a low-level waste facility, to temporarily store nuclear waste from US and UK submarines on rotation from 2027. In addition to the potential risks of locating this temporary waste facility so close to a heavily populated area, there has been no determination or decision about a permanent storage site. This is a critical shortcoming.

The application also refers to dredging being required to support the presence of nuclear-powered submarines. Sea grasses are vitally important marine plants in the coastal environment, oxygenating the water, providing breeding habitats and recycling nutrients. Dredging activities can have direct and indirect impacts on sea grasses, resulting in removal and also reduction and burial of sea grasses.

The application also refers to consultations undertaken with key stakeholders, including two rounds of community consultation activities between 11-16 March 2024 and 2-9 May 2024. I attended the "drop in" community consultations at the City of Cockburn and City of Kwinana libraries in March 2024. The consultations appeared to be very poorly advertised among local residents and very few people were present at the times I attended. The results of a community survey, which people were encouraged to complete as part of this community consultation, have also not been released to the public.

I appreciate the opportunity to make this submission and I thank the Parliamentary Standing Committee for Public Works for considering my concerns.

Kind regards  
