

Thursday, 26 February 2015

2741. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

I refer to question without notice No. 11, asked on 17 February 2015 and question on notice No. 1320, asked on 19 June 2014 by Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and I ask:

- (a) did the investigation conducted by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) assess whether the site was a sacred site for the purpose of section 5B of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (AHA);
- (b) if no to (a), why not;
- (c) on what grounds was it not assessed as a sacred site;
- (d) was the site investigated by an archaeologist;
- (e) given the site's known mythological associations documented on the DAA site file, did a DAA anthropologist evaluate the site in the recent investigation;
- (f) if yes to (e), what was the view of the DAA anthropologist(s) who assessed the site, and will the Minister table the DAA anthropologist's advice;
- (g) if yes to (e), what are the name(s) of the DAA anthropologist(s) who assessed the site;
- (h) if no to (e), why not;
- (i) was the site assessed for its significance to the Aboriginal people under section 5B of the AHA;
- (j) if no to (i), why not;
- (k) what was the view expressed by the Wardandi representatives and traditional owners consulted by the DAA on the site's significance to Aboriginal people under section 5B of the AHA;
- (l) is it correct that the DAA's assessment of the site was based purely on archaeological values;
- (m) if yes to (l), why, given the site's documented mythological associations;
- (n) if no to (l), what other matters under section 5 of the AHA were considered in the DAA's investigation and assessment;
- (o) has the status of the site been altered in the term of this Government;
- (p) if yes to (o), when, and on what grounds;
- (q) will the Minister table the report to the Aboriginal Culture and Materials Committee on the DAA investigation; and
- (r) if no to (q), why not?

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(a)–(r) No. It is the role of the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee to evaluate Aboriginal sites, not the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The Department has written to those people who have an interest in the area, through their legal representatives, seeking their views and comments. The Department is awaiting that information to better inform the proposed review of DAA 5848 Cliffs at Wallcliffe by the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee. There has been no change to the status of DAA 5848 Cliffs at Wallcliffe on any of the Department's systems.



Minister for Aboriginal Affairs