

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question On Notice

Thursday, 14 February 2019

1874. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Environment representing the Minister for Transport

I refer to the Gibb River road upgrade - Derby Highway to Fairfield-Leopold Downs Road and the destruction, removal and in some cases burial of Boab trees along the latest stretch of road being upgraded, and photographs found here: <https://robinchapple.com/gibb-river-road-boabs>, and ask:

- (a) why were so many Boabs removed from the road shoulder and or destroyed, whilst others in closer proximity to the road were left standing;
- (b) how many Boabs were removed;
- (c) how many Boabs were destroyed;
- (d) how many Boabs were buried;
- (e) with reference to the parking bay approximately 50km from Derby, why were the Boabs that were there removed and replaced by an unnatural line of salvaged Boabs;
- (f) given that the road is as stated by Main Roads as, "an iconic 4WD adventure route and major tourist attraction due to its rugged nature", why was such a large road verge created;
- (g) what is the width of the road verges in this section of the road;
- (h) why is the road verge in this section wider than in other sections;
- (i) which agency has oversight of the environmental impacts and issues in creating such massive road verges; and
- (j) if none to (i), why not?

Answer

- (a) The only Boab trees removed were those deemed absolutely necessary for safety reasons.
- (b) 19 Boab trees were removed, of those 16 were replanted.
- (c) Nil
- (d) 3
- (e) Boab trees removed from clearing areas were replanted in a safe area outside of road clear zones.
- (f)-(h) Main Roads generally maintains an 8-10m wide clear zone in road reserves in the Kimberley Region for road user safety. Additional width was cleared on one side of the road for a construction detour, which will regenerate in time.
- (i) Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
- (j) Not applicable

