

**Libby Mettam MLA**  
WA Liberal Leader

**Hon Neil Thomson MLC**  
Shadow Treasurer  
Shadow Minister for Environment

### **WA Liberals Will Streamline Environmental Approvals to Unleash Investment**

A WA Liberal Government will streamline the environmental approvals process to get the State Government out of the way, and let industry do what it does best: innovate for the future and create jobs; while ensuring we maintain world-class standards to protect our environment.

"According to the WA Chamber of Commerce, \$318 billion of known investments in the resources industry is currently awaiting environmental approvals," said Libby Mettam, WA Liberal Leader.

"Labor's delays are killing jobs and killing investment.

"Under a Government I lead, clearing that backlog of environmental approvals will be a priority from day one."

The Vogel-McFerran Review commissioned by the Cook Labor Government, contains sensible recommendations to improve the environmental approval process, despite this Labor has implemented just a handful of the recommendations.

"In typical Labor fashion, they have only implemented the reform which creates a new office in the Perth CBD and established a cross-departmental working group," said Neil Thomson, Shadow Environment Minister.

"Labor has just created more bureaucracy and done nothing to get dirt moving.

"Peter Dutton's recent commitment to halving environmental approval timeframes, and to handing decision making power back to the states is welcome news for WA but will mean nothing under the Cook Labor Government, which continues to hold up billions in new projects," said Mr Thomson

A Liberal Government will immediately implement our plan to streamline WA's approval processes to harness the potential of our natural resources in a responsible manner.

"Streamlining the environmental approvals process will boost investment, particularly in critical mineral exploration and foster job creation in WA," said Ms Mettam.

"It will position WA as a key player in the burgeoning critical minerals sector.

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“Our Plan will drive innovation, economic prosperity, and environmental stewardship, while laying the groundwork for a vibrant and sustainable future for our state and its residents.”

Despite the Cook Labor Government’s commitment to ‘declare war on green tape’ it is clear WA Labor is paralysed by an ideology fundamentally at odds with supporting our resources industry.

“Despite his promises, Roger Cook has neglected the environmental approvals system, and he is not serious about reforming it,” said Ms Mettam.

In addition to streamlining the environmental approvals process, a WA Liberal Government will reinvigorate the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA).

“The ERA is WA’s own independent economic and regulatory policy assessment body, which has languished under Labor,” said Mr Thomson.

“We will reinvigorate it, to increase transparency about Government policy and decision making with independent economic reviews.”

“By contrast to Roger Cook’s inaction, a Liberal Government I lead will be relentless about creating the right business environment to unlock new markets and forge prosperity for future generations of Western Australians,” said Ms Mettam.

**ENDS**

### **The Liberal Plan to Streamline WA's Environmental Approval Process**

1. A WA Liberal Government will streamline the approvals process by amending the Environmental Protection Act.
2. A WA Liberal Government will introduce strict conditions on the use of stop-the-clock provisions to provide greater certainty and reduce unnecessary and unexpected project delays.
3. A WA Liberal Government will enable parallel approvals to reduce unnecessary delays.
4. For significant projects, a WA Liberal Government will amend Part IV of the Environmental Protection Act:
  - a. including removing appeals on decisions not to assess a proposal under Part IV and reviewing other appeal rules and procedures; and
  - b. defining the standing of an appellant, to manage and exclude unnecessary, repetitive, and vexatious appeals.
5. A WA Liberal Government will amend Part V of the Environmental Protection Act so appeals on matters which are not considered as significant and strategic, will be heard by the State Administrative Tribunal.

This will ensure the Appeals Convenor can focus on matters of the greatest economic significance to the State while enabling the SAT to deal with administrative matters, which it is equipped to do and currently does under planning laws.

6. A WA Liberal Government will introduce new 'deemed approvals' processes with particular focus on conditions within environmental management plans to help keep projects moving and shift the focus of DWER and the EPA away from approval gatekeeping role to have a greater focus on genuine environmental protection.
7. A WA Liberal Government will remove duplication in climate-related assessment and regulation where it is already legislated by the Commonwealth – there is no point doing something twice.
8. A WA Liberal Government will abolish the Social Surrounds Policy and replace it with a Statement of Compliance. This will provide proponents the opportunity to demonstrate they already meet regulatory requirements in areas such as Aboriginal Heritage, local government and other planning laws and, importantly, climate policies under Federal Government legislation.

It will eliminate duplication which has frustrated the industry and will ensure the EPA is focussed on its core business of environmental protection.

9. A WA Liberal Government will stop funding the Environmental Defenders Office. It is ludicrous taxpayers' money is being spent propping up activists.