

Step towards shire OK

Perdaman's federal environmental approval welcomed in Collie

PERDAMAN Chemicals and Fertilisers' recent announcement of federal environmental approval for its planned \$3.5 billion Collie urea plant is the next step towards putting a formal application for planning approval to the Shire of Collie.

It was an important step Collie Shire President Cr Wayne Sanford said on Tuesday.

"It is my understanding that the approval relates to clearing for water supply/disposal and also for the conveyor belt," he said.

"Federal approval for the Shotts Industrial Park site itself, being progressed by LandCorp, is still being considered by the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts."

Once an application for planning approval has been received and assessed by shire staff, it will be put out to the Collie community and referred to relevant authorities for comment and input.

A final decision will then be made by the full council.

While the council is yet to receive detailed information in the form of an application for planning approval, it is understood that the project will create 1500 jobs during construction and 200 permanent full time jobs.

"Certainly from the perspective of the economic and social inputs, the Perdaman proposal is very attractive. It is also viewed by some as integral to the future of Griffin Coal," Cr Sanford said. "In saying this, I am sure the council will be looking closely at other elements of the proposal, such as localised environmental and community issues"

Collie-Preston MIA Mick Murray said the project would be "a huge advantage to the South West region and the economy".



INDUSTRIALIST: Vikas and Maegha Ramba in March last year when they announced their plans for a urea plant at Collie.

"There would be jobs in all sectors of the project during construction. If the timing is right, Perdaman plant construction could well pick up workers whose contracts had ended as the BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina expansion project tapered off," Mr Murray said.

Cr Sanford said the council had been liaising closely with Perdaman for the past 12 to 18 months. "We have been very strong in promoting the absolute need for Perdaman to support the Collie community should this project become a reality," he said. "In the first instance our focus will be on trying to maximise employment opportunities for our local community, and trying to ensure that people employed outside of Collie are strongly encouraged to reside in our community".

Perdaman Chemicals and Fertilisers corporate director Andrea Walewski said environmental regulatory approvals were extremely onerous "so to get an approval at all, notwithstanding the onerous conditions that must be met, is a major milestone".

Perdaman's chairman and managing director, Vikas Rambal, confirmed: "This approval addresses offsite environmental impacts and does not include the project site itself, which is the subject of a separate federal referral by the owner of the site, LandCorp."

The Perdaman project — Australia's first coal gasification plant turning Collie coal into urea (fertiliser) — would deliver considerable benefits to the WA economy, Mr Rambal said.

"The planned capital expenditure is about \$3.5 billion and annual export earnings in excess of \$800 million," he said.

This announcement is expected to be the first in a series of announcements over the coming weeks. More announcements are expected on contracts relating to the plant's construction and provision of other service — specifically rail, port, water, wastewater disposal and land.