

CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Rosalie Woodruff MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Bridget Archer MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

QUESTION:

Tasmanian Aboriginal constituents have asked me if you will halt major project developments until adequate Aboriginal heritage protection laws have been agreed to.

Currently, there are developments being proposed on significant Aboriginal sites and burial grounds at takina/Port Dalrymple and kinimathatakinta/George Town and your Government's \$10 million four-wheel-drive tracks on ancient burial places in takayna. At the moment, the laws do not protect the destruction of such sacred sites that hold the stories and knowledge and identity of Aboriginal people. Large-scale projects of this magnitude should not be considered before the legislation is finalised.

Will you commit to not proceeding with any approvals of these types of developments until the Aboriginal heritage legislation has been finalised and passed?

ANSWER:

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has no involvement in either the declaration or approvals of major projects. A major project is declared by the Minister for Planning, provided it

meets certain eligibility criteria, and assessed by the independent Tasmanian Planning Commission and people with expertise in the subject area of the project.

We remain committed to delivering new, contemporary legislation to support the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage, and encourage all members to engage in the current consultation process to ensure their voices are heard.

However, there are existing laws in place to protect Aboriginal Heritage and until these laws change, which will be a decision of both Houses of Parliament and cannot be pre-empted, all developments will need to comply with the current laws.



Hon Bridget Archer MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Date: 30 April 2026

Minister for Housing and Planning
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport
Minister for Local Government

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05 MAY 2026

Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP
Leader of the Greens

c/- Laura.Ross@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Dr Woodruff

On 14 April 2026, you asked a constituent question in the House of Assembly:

Tasmanian Aboriginal constituents have asked me if you will halt major project developments until adequate Aboriginal heritage protection laws have been agreed to.

Currently, there are developments being proposed on significant Aboriginal sites and burial grounds at takina/Port Dalrymple and kinimathatakinta/George Town and your Government's \$10 million four-wheel-drive tracks on ancient burial places in takayna. At the moment, the laws do not protect the destruction of such sacred sites that hold the stories and knowledge and identity of Aboriginal people. Large-scale projects of this magnitude should not be considered before the legislation is finalised.

Will you commit to not proceeding with any approvals of these types of developments until the Aboriginal heritage legislation has been finalised and passed?

I am responding to you as the Minister responsible for planning.

Major projects may be declared by the Minister for Planning, provided they meet certain eligibility criteria. Major Projects are assessed by the independent Tasmanian Planning Commission and people with expertise in the subject area of the project.

The Tasmanian Government remains committed to delivering new, contemporary legislation to support the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage and encourage all members to engage in the current consultation process to ensure their voices are heard.

While we acknowledge the draft legislation relating to Aboriginal Heritage is currently out for consultation, there no plans to halt assessment and development of major projects while this process takes its course.

There are existing laws in place to protect Aboriginal Heritage and until these laws change, which will be a decision of both Houses of Parliament and cannot be pre-empted, all developments must comply with the current laws.

In terms of the Major Projects assessment process impacts to Aboriginal heritage are considered through advice from relevant regulators and the imposition of conditions and restrictions to address the requirement to avoid, mitigate and manage Aboriginal heritage in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975*.

These protections remain in place until such time as any amendments are presented to and passed by the Parliament.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Kerry Vincent', written in a cursive style.

Hon Kerry Vincent MLC
Minister for Housing and Planning