

No more ore exports: Liberals

By Billie Harrison

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THE State Liberal party has called for tight controls and strict monitoring on iron ore exports through Port Lincoln in a policy released this week.

The policy also calls for no further approvals beyond the current Centrex deal.

Opposition spokesperson for Economic Development, Industry and Trade Martin Hamilton-Smith developed the policy after Member for Flinders Liz Penfold and Flinders Liberal candidate Peter Treloar raised concerns the licence conditions did not provide adequate protection for the fish-

ing industry or the environment.

The Liberal Party is also concerned about the potential impact on property values, air quality, and the function of the city itself after Centrex Metals received State Government approval in October to export iron ore from the proposed Wilgerup iron ore mine using ship loading facilities at Port Lincoln.

"The government has not given Port Lincoln the level of protection it deserves," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"There are some conditions on that approval, but we believe that the conditions should have been based on an independent environmental impact assessment, which

would have involved consultation with the local community and fishing industry," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

The policy calls for a new deep sea port facility to be fast tracked at Port Bonython, Sheep Hill or another location.

"Back in October 2008 Minister Conlon announced the Spencer Gulf Port Link Consortium led by Flinders Ports had been selected to undertake a feasibility study for the development and operation of an export facility at Port Bonython," Mr Hamilton Smith said.

"The study was completed and delivered to government in March 2009.

"Despite government claims Port

Bonython was high on its list of priorities, there has been no action on the proposal.

"In September 2009 Centrex and Chinese mining giant WISCO (Wuhan Iron and Steel) announced plans for the joint venture development of a deep sea port at Sheep Hill, subject to relevant government approvals.

"But still we have no indication of interest or action from the government.

"Their only action has been to allow ore exports at Port Lincoln, which has the community and fishing industry alarmed, particularly since another company, Lincoln Minerals announced its intention to seek a licence similar to that of Centrex."

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