



CBH has had a presence in Kwinana for 50 years.

## Buffer zones safeguard communities

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“Such an economic powerhouse of activity should be treasured and protected

**W**ESTERN Australians like to think of themselves as lucky: lucky to live in WA and lucky to live in the best country in the world.

Our lifestyle, economy and living standards are the envy of many. A short drive down the Kwinana Freeway brings you to a vital piece of our economic success story that dates back more than 60 years.

The Kwinana Industrial Area stands as a testament to the economic prosperity and industrial prowess of our region. Boasting a diverse range of manufacturing, chemical processing, and petroleum refining facilities, it serves as a cornerstone of our economy, providing employment opportunities and driving growth.

It is our premier heavy industrial area, employing more than 40,000 people and worth \$15 billion a year to the local economy. Its operations are crucial ingredients for other sectors of our economy such as manufacturing, mining and agriculture.

It is the industrial hub that provides the fuel for your car, the power and water for your home, the bottled gas for your barbecue, and the chemicals and fertilisers used in the critical industries of mining and agriculture.

Since taking on the role as director of the Kwinana Industries Council, I have had the privilege of visiting many of our members and learning about the important contribution they make to our state, economy and communities. The size, scale and significance of their operations is remarkable and often goes unnoticed.

Such an economic powerhouse of activity should be treasured and protected.

The buffer zone that surrounds the KIA is the result of careful, wise and proper planning dating back to Kwinana's establishment as Perth's premier heavy industrial area.

The buffer zone's aim is simple: to ensure that industry and the community can coexist. Careful management is needed when heavy industry and residential areas are in close proximity.

The Western Trade Coast, including the KIA, is undergoing a major transformation with new projects, industries and operators coming in.

The largest of these is Westport, the new container harbour for the state, and defence projects as part of AUKUS. These are game-changing projects. However, as the face of Kwinana industry evolves, the need for the buffer does not diminish.

The push by some developers seeking to encroach on the buffer zone is shortsighted and reckless. It makes no sense to have people living so close to a heavy industrial area.

The importance of buffer zones in safeguarding communities cannot be overstated. The Kwinana buffer zone serves as a vital safeguard against the inherent risks posed by heavy industry, offering residents peace of mind and assurance of their safety and maintains the amenity of their communities.

Without adequate buffer zones, the coexistence of industrial and residential areas becomes a precarious balancing act, fraught with potential dangers and uncertainties.

It is imperative that we reiterate the importance of maintaining and preserving buffer zones around the KIA. Any encroachment or diminishment of these buffer zones not only jeopardises the safety and wellbeing of our communities, exposing residents to unnecessary risks and vulnerabilities, but also puts jobs and the wider economy at risk.

We must prioritise the maintenance and enhancement of buffer zones as a fundamental aspect of urban planning. That's why the KIC and its members will not back away from this issue. We continue to work with government agencies, industry stakeholders, and local communities to ensure the buffer zone is not eroded or undermined.

• David Harrison is director of Kwinana Industries Council