



Hon Dr Steven Miles MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and
Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef

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Our Ref: CTS 09608/16
Your Ref: 10.4 Petitions

19 MAY 2016

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 21 April 2016 enclosing a copy of Petition No. 2572-16 tabled in the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

The gun emplacements and associated structures on Bribie Island, collectively referred to as Fort Bribie, were constructed in conjunction with other such defence installations in Moreton Bay, to aid the defence of Brisbane during World War II.

Fort Bribie was located on the northern end of Bribie Island to secure the shipping channel into Moreton Bay and Brisbane. While this was a strategic location for this purpose, it was not an ideal location to sustain the long term structural stability of the complex. This area of Bribie Island is highly vulnerable to continuous natural coastal erosion, with the subsequent shoreline regression having been continuously monitored and recorded for the past 10 years. It has been identified that this natural shoreline regression can be expected to result in an eventual breakthrough from the eastern beach to Pumicestone Passage, although the exact location is undetermined. It is therefore the Queensland Government's position to allow for natural processes and reserve investment of management options to ensure the most effective expenditure of the public resources. This position is consistent with a 2008 report outlining an 'Agreed Agency position on the Coastal Erosion on the Northern Bribie Island'.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) acknowledge that the Fort Bribie complex has been significantly impacted by ongoing coastal regression and it is expected that further impact will occur over time. They have further identified that the structures, through necessity, were constructed rapidly to provide a short term level of robustness from readily available materials and techniques. Unfortunately the construction has not provided long term structural integrity in the aggressive marine and bush environment. In the 70 plus years since construction, the Fort Bribie structures have suffered from concrete decay, timber structural member collapse and from reinforcement steel corrosion.

While QPWS do not consider it feasible to arrest the broad scale coastal regression, they are active in ensuring the safe public interaction with the complex, applying appropriate protection techniques in keeping with heritage management guidelines and preservation of the story the complex represents to the development and evolution of the State of Queensland.

QPWS has managed the Fort Bribie complex under the advice of periodic heritage engineering audits. These three yearly audits recommend minimal intervention to the accelerated decay, sufficient to ensure public safety. The original Fort Bribie layout has been mapped, individual structures' detail recorded, extensive photographic evidence from throughout the complex's history sourced, captured and recorded and the historical story recorded, including original records and personal recollections. QPWS is currently assessing the recommendations of the latest heritage report to guide further works providing for safety and public appreciation of the site. QPWS is also currently in liaison with the University of Queensland to provide the most up to date 3-D imagery of the structures to ensure a permanent record of the utmost detail.

The State of Queensland is committed to capturing the historical record of Queensland's World War II commitment, the significant contribution of Queensland men, women and children to that commitment and the significant role of Fort Bribie in the defence of Brisbane. QPWS would be pleased to liaise with the Bribie Island community, as represented by the groups outlined in the petition, in seeking their support to develop the most appropriate options in presenting the Fort Bribie story to the people of Queensland.

I hope this information has been of assistance to you. Should you have any further enquiries, please contact Mr Philip Halton, Chief of Staff in my office on telephone (07) 3719 7330.

I would be pleased if you would arrange for the tabling of this letter in response to the Petition in accordance with Standing Order 31 by 19 May 2016.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'SMiles', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

DR STEVEN MILES MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and
Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef