



Hon Stephen Robertson MP
Member for Stretton



Minister for Natural Resources,
Mines and Energy

1 JUN 2004

Mr N J Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Alice and George Streets
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 23 April 2004 forwarding a copy of a Petition lodged in the Queensland Legislative Assembly, requesting the House to call on the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Minister for Sport to take all necessary action to prohibit removal of vegetation from areas of Crown Land at Macintosh Park and north and south of Narrowneck on the Gold Coast and prevent the further degradation and encroachment of these areas in connection with the Gold Coast Indy race and associated events.

The new *Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2004* that commenced on 21 May 2004, clarifies when a permit is required to clear native vegetation on both freehold and State land. Where State land is held in trust by a local government and dedicated as a park for public use, the clearing of vegetation on this land will generally require a permit from my Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy under the provisions of the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*. This is the case regardless of whether it is a local government proposing to do the clearing or any other third party.

However, there are a few specific exemptions that allow certain clearing activities to occur on trust reserves without a permit. These exemptions are outlined in Schedule 8 of the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* and include clearing by the trustee (generally the local government) for essential management activities such as removing dangerous trees; clearing vegetation that is not remnant vegetation as shown on the regional ecosystem maps held by my department; and clearing for a routine activity that has prior approval of my department, for example clearing for weed control according to a pest management plan.

There are a number of other clearing activities that are exempt. However, these only relate to specified clearing activities undertaken by other third parties as required under other legislation such as the *Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990* and the *Electricity Act 1994*.

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The new vegetation clearing laws also affect when an application can be made for clearing. In order to lodge an application for clearing, a local government would either need to apply under the ballot for a clearing allocation or satisfy my department that the clearing was for an ongoing purpose as defined under the recently amended *Vegetation Management Act 1999*. For example, an application can continue to be accepted outside the ballot if it is for necessary built infrastructure and if there is no suitable alternative site for the infrastructure.

Applications are assessed against the performance requirements within the relevant regional vegetation management code. The performance requirements are based on the purposes of the amended *Vegetation Management Act 1999* including the conservation of remnant vegetation; maintenance of biodiversity and ecological processes; and ensuring clearing does not cause land degradation. An application must be approved if it meets each of the performance requirements within the code.

My department is not currently processing any applications for clearing lodged by Gold Coast City Council.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Robertson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP

LAI UPON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE
THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENT



Hon. Terry Mackenroth MP
MIN52159.04
S04/1880



Deputy Premier
Treasurer
and Minister for Sport

09 JUN 2004

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15/6/04

Mr N Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
CENTRAL DOCUMENT EXCHANGE M29

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition No. 303-04 tabled in the Legislative Assembly by Mr J P Langbroek MP, Member for Surfers Paradise on 21 April 2004.

The petition requests the House to call on the Honourable the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Honourable the Minister for Sport to take all necessary action to prohibit the removal of vegetation on areas of Crown land situated at MacIntosh Island and to the north and south of Narrowneck within the city of the Gold Coast.

The petition indicates there is considerable public concern that existing vegetation may be removed from these areas in connection with the Gold Coast Indy Race and associated events and calls upon the Queensland Government to prohibit the removal of such vegetation and the further degradation of, and encroachment on, these areas.

The Gold Coast Indy Race officially titled the Lexmark Indy 300 event is recognised internationally and nationally as one of the premier sporting events in Australia. The event has an estimated economic impact of \$50 million per annum to the Queensland economy with the primary beneficiary of the event being the Gold Coast community.

Any consideration for the future development of areas as nominated in petition number 303-04 would, as the petition correctly identifies, rests with the Gold Coast City Council ("the Council") in the first instance. Representatives of the Gold Coast Motor Events Company, the organisation responsible for the conduct and promotion of the Gold Coast Indy event, advise that an application was lodged with the Council in 2002 for the clearing of vegetation and construction of three viewing mounds in the areas to the north and south of Narrowneck.

Council approved the development of one viewing mound to the south of Narrowneck with no loss of vegetation. The remaining two proposals were not approved by Council.

Any further development of land within the Gold Coast Indy event precinct would, in the first instance, be considered by Council after an application by the Gold Coast Motor Events Company.

I would like to point out that any consideration by the Queensland Government of Indy related development matters within the event precinct area will occur in the full context of the benefits the event brings to the State, particularly the Gold Coast and the impact of any proposed development.

As a consequence, the Queensland Government will not categorically prohibit any further development, but will consider each matter presented to it on a case by case basis.

Should you require further information with regard to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely



TERRY MACKENROTH