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Your Ref: 386-04

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 20 October 2004 forwarding a copy of a petition received by the House on 19 October 2004 concerning erosion at Banksia Beach on Bribie Island.

I have sought further details on the issues raised in the petition regarding the history of erosion and residential development at Banksia Beach.

The erosion history of this site was investigated in the recent report prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) entitled "Options for the Management of Beach Erosion along the South-western Foreshore of Bribie Island, Caboolture Shire". The EPA has further assessed the recent erosion trends at Banksia Beach from shoreline changes between May 1994 and June 2004, based on recent aerial photography.

This assessment clearly demonstrates that the Banksia Beach shoreline has been relatively stable over the last 10 years. Some minor erosion pockets are noted and other areas have actually built up with sand. This is consistent with the EPA's assessment of coastal processes in the area, that sand is moving in pulses northward along this coast, but generally the coast is relatively stable. The impression provided in the petition that the park along Banksia Beach is being lost to erosion is not supported by this assessment, although minor erosion is occurring.

The need for a rock or concrete revetment for the entire 1700 metre length of this coast for erosion control does not therefore seem justified. Pockets of erosion can be managed by replenishing those sections of beach with imported sand as recommended in the above report and the EPA will continue to encourage the Caboolture Shire Council to undertake this remedial action.

This view is consistent with policy 2.2.2 (Erosion Prone Areas) of the “State Coastal Management Plan – Queensland Coastal Policy” which states: -

“For developed areas, structural engineering and stabilisation works will be initiated only as a last resort where erosion presents an immediate threat to public safety or property and infrastructure that is not expendable. The siting, design and materials used for works will not cause any significant adverse impacts on the coastal resources of the location nor interrupt the natural cycles of erosion and accretion of beaches.”

State coastal land at Banksia Beach undoubtedly has significant recreation value to the community. This land and the tidal interface also have significant environmental values that must be considered in the use of this land. The adjacent Pumicestone Passage lies within the Moreton Bay Marine Park and is a listed RAMSAR site. The maintenance of natural coastal processes in this area is critical to the protection of beach amenity and the preservation of coastal habitat and biodiversity.

In relation to the statement that the beachfront parkland at Banksia Beach is the result of a reclamation back in the 1980s, the beachfront parkland at Banksia Beach extends over some 1700 metres of which 450 metres, or about one quarter, is the result of reclamation activities within the Dux Creek Special Lease (Lots 98 and 186 on Plan CG4657). The remaining beach is as it was prior to this time, although it is noted some clearing of vegetation and filling of low areas on the dunes behind the beach did occur at the time of residential development. This shoreline history is readily documented on repetitive aerial photography of the site back to 1974. The beach created by the Dux Creek reclamation is backed by a revetment wall that is part of the Pacific Harbour canal entrance training works. This wall will provide protection against movements of this artificial section of coast.

I consider that the EPA’s position on erosion management at Banksia Beach, as described in the above report, remains appropriate for managing coastal processes in this area, including localised erosion. On the information provided to date, there would appear to be no compelling justification for the EPA to reconsider the recommendations in the above report or to support the construction of a revetment along this beach.

I understand that the Council has recently formed the “Banksia/Sylvan Beaches Erosion Reference Committee” comprised of community and government stakeholders, to discuss and advise the Council on these matters, and I understand that Mr Rymer is on this Committee. This would seem to be an appropriate forum in which to resolve any conflicts for action on this matter.

I hope this information is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely

Desley Boyle MP
Minister for Environment
Minister for Local Government and Planning
Minister for Women