



Hon Andrew McNamara MP

Member for Hervey Bay

Ref: BNE30428-5

BNE2008/4448

SU/08/1174



**Queensland
Government**

**Minister for Sustainability,
Climate Change and Innovation**

14 APR 2008

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

Dear Mr ~~Laurie~~ *Neil*,

Thank you for your letter of 13 March 2008 concerning Petition No. 981-08 and 1020-08 regarding the Moreton Bay Marine Park zoning plan review.

Public consultation on the draft zoning plan has recently drawn to a close, with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) receiving more than 8,000 submissions. The level of public support for protecting this valuable part of south-east Queensland's lifestyle, culture and economy has been overwhelming.

The principal aim of the draft zoning plan is to protect Moreton Bay Marine Park's unique biodiversity and values – while allowing for its sustainable use by all groups, now and into the future. The draft zoning plan was prepared with the utmost technical and scientific rigour, with the EPA engaging an independent Expert Advisory Panel to ensure the scientific integrity of the review process. This Panel provided a series of recommendations to the EPA to guide development of the draft zoning plan, including a series of 13 Scientific Guiding Principles and an endorsed method for analysing all available information. One of the key guiding principles provided by the Panel was to protect a minimum of 10 percent of each of the marine park's 16 different habitat types in green "no take" zones.

The EPA has considered an extensive amount of data and consulted widely throughout the review process to ensure that the draft zoning plan has minimised, as much as possible, the impact on the wide range of people who use and value Moreton Bay Marine Park.

The data gathered by the EPA identified the area surrounding Pannikin Island (MNP27), the proposed green zone to which this petition refers, as being a unique habitat of high environmental value. It was proposed as a green zone because it is the only example of inshore mangrove habitat connected to the mainland on the western foreshore of Moreton Bay. It also provides important feeding grounds for dugong and protects a representative sample of both intertidal and sandy habitat; two of the marine park's 16 habitat types. To limit the potential impacts of this proposed zone on those who use the area, the zone was specifically placed to avoid the main channels east of Pannikin Island which are known to be important for both commercial and recreational fishing.

Level 17
160 Ann Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15155 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3336 8032
Facsimile +61 7 3227 6309
Email sustainability@ministerial.qld.gov.au
ABN 65 959 415 158

As mentioned in the petition, the Moreton Bay Access Alliance has proposed reducing this zone to encompass only the limits of Pannikin Island; which would provide protection for just one of the two identified habitat types in this area. The EPA has also received a number of submissions through the public consultation process proposing another alternative of extending the proposed zone east to encompass both Pannikin and Long islands, to ensure that both habitat types in this area are afforded protection.

The EPA is now recording and analysing all information gathered through the public consultation process to produce the final zoning plan. All submissions are being assessed in line with the 13 Scientific Guiding Principles to ensure the final zoning plan achieves its aim of conserving Moreton Bay Marine Park's biodiversity and natural beauty while ensuring it is sustainably enjoyed by all members of the community over the next decade.

I hope the above information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew McNamara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew McNamara MP
Minister for Sustainability,
Climate Change and Innovation