

'Friends of Boat Bay' opposes marina proposal

A new community group has been formed to oppose the proposed marina at Boat Bay. It is called "Friends of Boat Bay" (FoBB) and its objectives are to lobby Local, State and Federal Government agencies to protect the natural values of Boat Bay, and not to allow any new facilities in the bay.

FoBB is circulating a petition, see below, which I encourage you to sign and drop in to the C4 Environment Centre at north Mission Beach before 11th May.

I am acting as Secretary of the group, but I would like to make it clear that my articles in the Mission Beach Advertiser, and elsewhere, appear under my own name and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of any of the groups and committees that I am involved in.

You may have seen media reports that both Johnstone and Cardwell Shire Councils have given the Mission Beach Harbour Pty Ltd (MBH) proposal 'in principle support'. While it is true that Cardwell has done so, Johnstone has not, and they are the key authority here.

I was at the Cardwell Shire Council meeting when Cr Carmel Silvestro said, "I move we write a letter of support because I think we ought to support thater ...that kind of stuff." Cr Ken Fox seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the vote was carried unanimously.

Johnstone Shire Council, however, have had a presentation by MBH but have been careful not to express support, other than to confirm that MBH is entitled to make a formal development application. This is a change to the position that the Council would call for Public Expressions of Interest for a safe mooring facility. This new position seems to be a return to the old status quo, and does not preclude anyone else making a development application.

It remains true that Mission Beach Marine Facilities Joint Board thinks that the facilities at Clump Point need to be upgraded. At their meeting of 27th February, they agreed the fees for commercial users of the Narragon Beach and Dunk Island Spit jetties.

The old charging scheme was based on \$4 per passenger, although it is not clear whether it was always collected. The new scheme sets an annual usage fee for each operator, with Quickcat paying \$50,360 and Lawrence Kavanagh paying \$40,998 and the rest bringing the total up to \$102,200.

Whether this is enough to pay for all the maintenance needed to keep the jetties up to scratch, I don't know. But I have been advised by people that should know that if the regular maintenance work of sand-blasting and painting and renewing the sacrificial anodes is kept up, the jetties should last 'indefinitely'.

I would have thought that if the jetty fees are insufficient to cover these maintenance costs, then the fees need to be increased. This is a case where the 'user-pays' principle should definitely apply.

The other major piece of public infrastructure in Boat Bay is the boat ramp. I haven't unravelled the detailed history of this project, but briefly the original design was too expensive, so the plan was cut back until it was affordable. Unfortunately, what we have ended up with is a car park that is only six inches above the high tide mark, and a protective rock wall that is only two feet above.

There are photos on my web site taken on 27th February this year, at the top of a king tide (4.07 metres). You can see that even on a particularly calm day, the slop (you couldn't even call it waves) was lapping onto the bitumen and around the tyres of the parked cars and boat trailers.

If some rough weather coincided with a king tide, waves would sweep right across the car park and over the rock wall. In cyclonic conditions, you can easily imagine the rock wall being completely washed away.

Did somebody say "Public Liability Insurance"? I wonder what the Council's insurers would charge if they knew how easily a member of the public could be swept off the car park in their car and drowned.

□ Dave Kimble

To: The Mayor of Johnstone Shire Council

From: Friends of Boat Bay

We, the undersigned are absolutely opposed to the marina development in Boat Bay at Clump Point for the following reasons:

1. Loss of marine habitat
2. Detrimental effects of dredging
3. The undesirability of creating a four hectare island
4. The adverse impact on our precious marine environment of 150+ boats

and would rather see the existing community facility and the environmental integrity of the area be maintained.

Maps, photos and other background materials are available on the internet at:
www.znet.net.au/~dkimble/clumppoint.htm

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE

Please return this form to C4's Visitors Centre, Mission Beach, by 11th May 2002