



Conserving the NATURE of the Moreton Bay Region



13 August 2014

Mr Daryl Hitzman
CEO
Moreton Bay Regional Council
PO Box 159
Caboolture Qld 4510

Dear Mr Hitzman

MBEA Submission re the MBRC Draft Planning Scheme

Please find attached our submission, which has been prepared following detailed examination of the Draft Planning Scheme and several discussions and meetings with senior council staff in the lead up to its release and during the consultation period.

In line with our mission as reflected on our banner, the focus of our comments is on the protection of the natural ecosystems and environment of this region which have seen such rapid change and degradation during the term of this Council since amalgamation.

We applaud Council's stated aim of not continuing down the same path, which is clearly unsustainable, and are encouraged by some of the statements and vision in the Draft Plan e.g. the listing and mapping of Class 1 Environmental Areas, which we have been informed will be protected, and the depiction in the mapping of an extensive network environmental corridors.

Our comments are based largely on our continuing concern at the lack of firm policies and commitments to achieve Council's stated goals which are not apparent in the Draft Plan which, in the way it deals with the environment, presents more a commendable vision than a plan.

By way of example, the Draft Plan does not deliver on the categorical commitment in your letter of 1 August 2012, which is attached, and the relevant section included below, that Council would address our longstanding concerns.

Vegetation clearing is mostly managed through the Planning Scheme. Policies that relate to the management of vegetation will be drafted in line with the Planning Scheme development and consultation sessions. Also these policies will link the Plan to on-ground vegetation management works that are conducted by Council employees and others.

Further advice will be provided to the community when the consultation period for the Planning Scheme takes place.

Yours sincerely,

Daryl Hitzman
Acting Chief Executive Officer

We are concerned that without clear, comprehensive and firm policies; legislative support including penalties; scientifically based targets; provision of the necessary funding mechanisms; audit, review and reporting processes; then the current Draft Plan is just a vision for the future – not a plan, and that it will fail to achieve its stated goals. The above essential components to accompany and underpin the Council’s vision for the environment in the Draft Planning Scheme are missing, or in the case of the policies – too narrow or incomplete. By way of attempting to highlight more clearly the fatal weaknesses of the Draft Plan:- As we celebrate this year the 70th anniversary of the successful Normandy landings, we might reflect on what a disaster D Day would have been if the plan for that event went no deeper and contained no more substance than a “vision” for a free Europe.

We are disappointed at the lack of response to our requests for an extension of the consultation process which we believe has been fast tracked and marginalised. This has made it very difficult for the community to properly engage with the process.

We will be looking to see how and where our valid, and soundly research based concerns and comments are addressed in the final Plan, and naturally would make a representative(s) available to discuss any matter with staff.

The above matters are addressed more fully in the attached submission, which includes historical information and communications etc. These are all extremely relevant to the Draft Plan and are included in their entirety as formal components of our submission which, for the sake of the future of our environmental areas and the future of the region, needs to be carefully considered and responded to.

As the original founding member of the Moreton Bay Eco-Alliance, I, with the support and agreement of my fellow founding members, have authorised Mr Robert Ian Bell to compile the accompanying comments on the Draft Planning Scheme on behalf of our broadly based, region-wide alliance of environmental groups.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment

Yours sincerely

Zaida Variava

for Moreton Bay Eco-Alliance

cc MBRC letter 1 August 2012

Office of the CEO



Enquiries: Mr. Russell Garske
Phone: (07) 3480 6564
Fax: (07) 3480 6758

Our Ref: A7159800 RG:djr
Your Ref: -
Date: 1 August 2012

Mr. I. Bell
President
Bribie Island Environmental Protection Association
PO Box 350
BRIBIE ISLAND QLD 4507

Dear Mr. Bell,

Vegetation Management Policy

I refer to your letter dated 21 June 2012 and advise that as you would be aware Council is currently drafting a new Planning Scheme for the Moreton Bay Region.

In drafting this Plan, Officers are using a "green infrastructure approach" to streamline and refine environmental mapping for the region.

The public consultation for the draft Planning Scheme and associated documents is anticipated to be in the period 2013/14. At this point the public will have an opportunity to review the Scheme and supporting documents and provide submissions to Council for consideration.

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Further advice will be provided to the community when the consultation period for the Planning Scheme takes place.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daryl Hitzman", is written over a horizontal line.

Daryl Hitzman
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Customer Service Contacts

PO Box 159 Caboolture QLD 4510 | T 3205 0555 | F 3205 0599 | E mbro@moretonbay.qld.gov.au | W www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au