

# WATER'S EDGE

PORT GEOGRAPHE LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED NEWSLETTER  
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## WHAT THE CHAIRMAN SAYS (*Jeff Priest, Chairman*)

Oh Boy!!! What an interesting couple of months as we lead up to the start of the 2008 seagrass and sand by-passing program.

Your Association does not hold itself to be expert on everything in Port Geographe, notably how to re-configure the groynes without any technical knowledge whatsoever to back it up or proof that it will work; disagreeing with the volumes of material moved without the means of measuring the material; seeking to have the Shire place noise limits on the machinery on the beach which are lower than the noise level in the cabins of machinery and thus have no way of ever being met; (does this mean that an attempt is being made to prevent the by-passing of seagrass and sand?); questioning a company utilising its democratic right to take a matter to the State Administrative Tribunal to sort out a dispute as others do; and so it goes on and on.

Where does it all end up – people becoming emotional with some insulting the qualified consultants; certain people stating that the Association is just negative and attempting to divide the community; where the real picture is that we just continue to be what we have always been – proactive, rational and prepared to let the State Government, the Shire, the developers and experts get on with their jobs without continually criticising them which is not going to help to resolve our problems.

This does not mean that we all do not have a right to question what is taking place or planned and that is the community's democratic right. Abuse is not..

In a press article I asked all affected parties to be patient until the research on seagrass movements and modelling had been completed. You guessed it - another round of letters and emails but no solutions are offered other than the old faithful – "bend the groynes now".

As members have been advised before, the developers warranted some time ago (in writing) with the Association to have in place a mechanical system of flushing the canals prior to handover to the Shire. Funny that now others are seeking to take credit for this warrant.

Clearly we need to play our own game in the Port Geographe saga by continuing to seek to be professional and proactive in all matters.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Enclosed with this newsletter is the Annual Report for 2007/2008 and details of the Annual General Meeting to be held on Monday, 4 August, 2008 at Busselton Primary School, Armitage Avenue at 7pm.

Your attendance is in your own interest.

This year we are privileged to have as our guest speaker is Mr. Cleve Flottmann, Coastal Engineer, Maritime at the Department for Planning and Infrastructure who has been working tirelessly in trying to find a solution to the sand and seagrass issues.

Cleve is to be commended for his patience in the face of community criticism of recent times.

We thank Cleve for coming down from Perth.

**WHAT THE PROJECT MANAGER SAYS** (By Rhys Kelly, Development Manager, QUBE Property Group Pty Ltd.)

Water quality affects the local land-based and coastal environment as well as the local amenity for Port Geographe residents, so it is of absolute importance to the Port Geographe Joint Venture

To ensure water quality continues to meet and exceed the quality standards residents and regulators expect, a comprehensive water quality monitoring program is being established by the Port Geographe Joint Venture in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Shire of Busselton.

Samples have been routinely collected from monitoring sites within the canals and the Marina and the samples are then measured against baseline levels obtained from the sea nearby. A pre-agreed management plan is swung into action if elevated levels are detected.

In addition to the requirements of the development approvals, the Joint Venture has been conducting extensive water quality monitoring in and around Port Geographe on a monthly basis for the past 12 months and the results have been pleasing.

To date no excessive or extended elevated levels have been detected for any measure. The water is tested against a range of quality standards which range from chlorophyll A, iron, bacteria, temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, nutrients and toxins. In addition the sediment within Port Geographe is tested for metals and nutrients.

Later this year a flushing study will be concluded to determine the extent of any additional mechanical flushing required for the Port Geographe Canals. It should be noted, however, that a mechanical system, as recommended by the project engineers, is to be in place to reduce the risk of inadequate water quality and canal flushing prior to the handover of the development to the Shire.

Some of you will have noticed that there are stockpiles of lime onsite. The lime which is stored onsite is used for two purposes. Firstly, lime as a slurry is used in the water treatment process for dewatering water to reduce the concentrations of iron and aluminium before the water is returned to the superficial aquifer via infiltration. Secondly, lime is used to treat soils containing pyrite (Acid Sulphate Soils) where the natural buffering capacity of the soils may be insufficient to neutralise any acid generation. The soil treatment ensures that soil conditions remain in a suitable state to prevent the mobilisation of aluminium, iron and other metals naturally present within the soil.

This extensive water quality testing program is additional to the groundwater monitoring conducted by the Joint Venture prior to and during construction at Port Geographe and it remains one of the reasons why Port Geographe is the most prestigious residential and resort marina in WA's most dynamically developing region.

### **SPECIFIED AREA RATE**

The fact that the Shire pays 25% is indication enough that it has a problem in this respect.

In the past month the Association has discussed the matter with the Shire and will, in due course, make representation to the Shire to amend the 25% / 75% arrangement before perhaps proceeding further in the hope of reducing the burden on Port Geographe ratepayers.

### **MOVING ON BUT NOT OUT**

Effective from 4 August, 2008 and 5 May, 2008 respectively the Chairman and the Secretary / Acting Treasurer have resigned from those positions but will continue to serve on the Committee. It has been fulfilling and a challenge to continue on the good work of the founders of the Association. The Association now has a membership base of 43% of all land owners in Port Geographe. It is also now a challenge to at least maintain that base of 43% or some 500 financial members when the Port Geographe estate is finally completed.

The time now seems right to hand over the reins to other members of the Committee and Association so that fresh blood and ideas, and perhaps a different way of doing things, can be trialled.

It appears that, except for keeping an eye on water quality and flushing of the canals, we are in a wait and watch mode until the seagrass studies and modelling have been completed in order to be sure that re-configuration of the groynes or some other method will resolve the seagrass problems we have experienced since the original development was approved in circa 1989 and additionally that any such re-configuration will not detrimentally effect flushing of the canals.

We are told that the original developers undertook some fourteen different modelling tank tests in order to arrive at the current configuration of the groynes. Hopefully technology has developed in the intervening years, but who knows? As it is said - one day at time. The important point is that the problems are being addressed and it is a matter of that continuing to happen.

As soon as a new Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are appointed you will be first to know.

### **TRIVIA TIME – GOLF BALLS**

A man entered the bus with both of his front pockets full of golf balls and sat down next to a beautiful (you guessed it) blonde.

The puzzled blonde kept looking at him and his bulging pockets. Finally, after many such glances from her, he said, "It's golf balls".

Nevertheless the blonde continued to look at him for a very long time, deeply thinking about what he had said.

After several minutes, not being able to contain her curiosity any longer, she asked:

"Does it hurt as much as tennis elbow?"