

16 March 2009

Mr [REDACTED]

BY EMAIL [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your recent email to the Premier regarding sand mining on North Stradbroke Island. The Premier has asked that I reply to you on her behalf.

The Premier notes the environmental concerns raised by residents, Stradbroke Island Management Organisation and Friends of Stradbroke Island. The commitment that both of these groups have shown in working with the Member for Cleveland, Mr Phil Weightman MP, towards a greener future for Stradbroke Island are to be commended. Both of these organisations have made a valuable contribution to protecting the natural habitat of Stradbroke Island.

The Bligh Government recognises that Stradbroke Island is a valuable natural asset to the people of south east Queensland. The Bligh Government also recognises that this is an area that needs to be protected and preserved for future generations.

The power to grant or refuse Development Approval for Stradbroke Island, including for mining purposes, lies solely with the Redland Shire Council. The Bligh Government supports Redland Shire Council's decision to refuse Development Approval to remove and sell sand from Stradbroke Island. Further, a re-elected Bligh Government will not amend the terms of the mining lease to overturn the decision of the Council.

It should be noted that the sale of tailing sand is not authorised by the relevant mining leases, and the miner would require Council's Development Approval to export the sand from the island. Further, any land on Stradbroke Island that remains under a mining lease will be subject to strict environmental conditions. Ultimately, the miner will not be free of the conditions of its lease until the land has been fully rehabilitated.

The Premier has ordered the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct an audit of the lands covered by the mining leases on North Stradbroke Island, with a view to determining any areas that have been rehabilitated and can be turned back over to the State for designation as a National Park.

As you may be aware, the Bligh Government is committed to implementing a new National Park target of 7.5% of Queensland by 2020 and North Stradbroke Island will be a key to achieving this goal.

The Bligh Government supports the development of eco-tourism as a future industry on Stradbroke Island.

I trust this information has been of assistance. I appreciate you taking the time to share your views on these important issues.

Yours sincerely

Nick Williams
Senior Policy Advisor