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Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

18 May 2025

To: Minister, Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
Team at Department of State Development, Infrastructure and planning working on the Bribie Island Erosion and Breakthrough Review project

Email: info@dsdilgp.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister and team working on this project

RE: Bribie Island Erosion and Breakthrough Review Terms of reference – April 2025

This Letter/email has been sent by the Organisation Sunshine Coast Association of Residents Inc. (OSCAR).

The Organisation Sunshine Coast Association of Residents Inc. (OSCAR) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit umbrella/peak organisation covering resident and community organisations on the Sunshine Coast and Noosa Local Government Areas (LGAs) in South East Queensland.

OSCAR currently has over 36 member groups from the Pumicestone Passage to Noosa and from the Coast to the hinterland and ranges with these organisations having collectively over several thousand engaged and community minded members

The OSCAR overarching Vision states: *"The residents of this region enjoy being part of a connected and engaged community living in an area of outstanding natural beauty. They recognise that they are custodians of the unique and abundant biodiversity, beaches and green spaces of the region."*

OSCAR aims to support member organisations by:

- 1 Advocating to local and state government and the public on policy issues that are of regional significance and of concern to our members;
- 2 Acting to resolve issues of strategic or region-wide relevance that are referred by member organisations;
- 3 Representing the member organisations on region-wide matters of interest to the community;
- 4 Maintaining awareness and responsiveness through frequent and regular ordinary meetings and dialogue with member organisations; and
- 5 Practising professional, honest and ethical conduct.

For further information about OSCAR visit the website www.oscar.org.au

OSCAR thanks the government for the opportunity for community members to respond to this inquiry. We are basing our response to this part of the process by making comments related to the Terms of Reference (TOR) using points in the TOR from the Terms of Reference document, but as listed below and numbered by OSCAR in order to allow for comments as appropriate.

Overall OSCAR is supportive of a Review and the proposed topics for review, as per the Terms of Reference.

However, we understand that the Review of the Terms of Reference before being published was limited to one community group associated with Pumicestone Passage. Perhaps had more than one group been a party to reviewing the TOR, some of the issues we have raised may have identified and been addressed.

1. Scope

Issues and areas expected to be included in the review include, but are not limited to:

- i. *Developing urgent recommendations to stabilise the situation for consideration by Government*

OSCAR response: OSCAR appreciates that there is a desire to stabilise the situation but suggests that considerable costs may be incurred for interim works. These works, and money, may be wasted if a durable solution is recommended by the final Review. The State Government must also be prepared for a “no action” response.

- ii. *Undertaking a desktop review of previous reports and studies relating to the cause and impacts of the long-term erosion of the island and the breakthroughs in 2022 and 2025*

OSCAR response: OSCAR supports this as an essential measure but **recommends** that an international desktop study of similar events in other locations across the world also be undertaken to learn from those findings.

- iii. *Identifying causes for the ongoing erosion of the island and subsequent wash overs and breakthroughs*

OSCAR response: OSCAR supports identifying causes but must include the understanding of base causes resulting in the erosion to date.

- iv. *Identifying impacts of the breakthroughs on the natural protection of Caloundra including residents, business, recreational boating, and the Coast Guard.*

OSCAR response: OSCAR supports this task and also **recommends** that the study should consider not only Caloundra but also northern coastal areas to at least Alexandra Headland, given that system impacts the entire Sunshine Coast. We also suggest that the Review be expanded to include any longer term implications for the southern parts of Bribie Is and even Deception Bay - the eastern coast and the Passage side, as well as the continuing flow through the Passage, water quality indicators, and siltation risks.

Additional issues should also be considered, such as:

- 4WD vehicle usage on eastern beaches of Bribie
- factors affecting sand generation and distribution such dredging and sand mining in coastal areas of Deception Bay
- tidal prism changes in all sections of the Passage and their causes

- v. *Assessing the impact of dredging and shipping channel operations in Moreton Bay that affect Bribie Island including on sand migration.*

OSCAR response: Again as we are talking a coastal system, OSCAR **recommends** that such impacts should be investigated across the coast again to Alexandra Headland, to consider any cumulative impacts.

- vi. *Considering natural and anthropogenic changes contributing to island erosion across mainland catchment areas and Moreton Bay that affect Bribie Island.*

OSCAR RESPONSE: OSCAR supports this recommendation, but again **recommends** that such a study be undertaken looking at the coastal system as a whole. What consideration is to be given to Climate Change as a whole and specifically - sea level rise and damaging extreme weather events? Also specific to this location other factors as examples could be:

- 4WD vehicle usage on eastern beaches of Bribie
- factors affecting sand generation and distribution such dredging and sand mining in coastal areas of Deception Bay
- tidal prism changes in all sections of the Passage and their causes

Other possible causal factors to be considered in this TOR include for example: coastal development on Bribie Island, Deception Bay and further south such as mangrove removal and canal and marina developments such as North Harbour.

- vii. *Developing long term recommendations to reduce risk of further damage, including to mainland foreshore, infrastructure, and waterways, preserve Bribie Island and maintain navigation through Pumicestone Passage*
OSCAR response: OSCAR supports this process but **recommends** that the recommendations being made should be a coastal systems-based report and must be accompanied by a risk assessment, both physical and financial. This would be similar to the business cases developed for transport proposals. In terms of recommendations the Report should also consider the implications for the current handling of coastal areas and potential changes required for current and future development. This may include recommendations in relation to both Local Government Planning Schemes and State Government Legislation. Such analysis may require input from additional experts.
- viii. *Undertaking consultation with Local Government, Federal Government and the local community on short- and longer-term solutions.*
OSCAR RESPONSE: This is an essential component of this process. **OSCAR recommends** that this TOR should be amended to include "relevant Local Governments" given that Moreton Bay Region and its Planning Scheme could be contributing to the problems and in the longer term also impacted by what is happening in the Sunshine Coast Region, dredging in Moreton Bay and Moreton Region. Brisbane City Council could also be relevant given Port of Brisbane activities.
- ix. *Any other relevant matters the independent reviewer considers appropriate to the review*
OSCAR response: OSCAR suggests that this is an important component of the TOR. We are aware that nowhere in the TOR is there any direct reference to Climate Change and associated components – warming of the oceans, increased tidal height and storm surges, increasing likelihood of Cyclone occurrence and severity, all leading to further coastal erosion. Is one to assume that the use of the term "natural" and "anthropogenic" in TOR 6 is intended to include elements of Climate Change? We ask why there is no Reference to Climate Change anywhere in the TOR. **OSCAR recommends** that direct reference to Climate Change and its implications for the future of this location be included.
- Additional comments.**
 OSCAR suggests that any recommendations must be tested for impacts on the flora and fauna in Pumicestone Passage. This is especially important given the RAMSAR status for the Pumicestone Passage. Impacts on cultural heritage sites and artefacts is also important.
- We also note that the proposed widening and deepening of the shipping channel is now open for submissions? Any recommendations from this Review must take account of that proposal and its outcomes.
- ## 2. Report
- i. *The output from the review is the final report.*
OSCAR response: - it would appear that the Government is seeing this issue as an open and shut case. We suggest that such an approach might be politically expedient and fulfil an election promise, however, such an approach demonstrates potential short-sightedness. **OSCAR recommends** that should the independent Review determine that more work should be undertaken in understanding this issue and the implications beyond Bribie Island including other coastal area of the Sunshine Coast LGA, then they should be permitted to make a recommendations for further work to be undertaken.
- ii. *The report will include review of existing analysis, outcomes of consultation and short- and long-term recommendations.*
OSCAR recommends: that the Review should include analysis of the impact of further climate change as per our recommendation to TOR 6.
- iii. *The review report will be compiled for submission to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State*

Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. – OSCAR Supports this and makes the following recommendation:

That the Report is listed as only intended to be submitted to Deputy Premier even though many other ministers will likely have an interest e.g. environment/QPWS/ tourism, fisheries, sport/recreation, heritage/indigenous, natural resources, ports, water police/coastguard, economic development - so there should be reference to the Report also going to other relevant ministers to consider the Recommendations and to prepare appropriate responses for consideration by the Deputy Premier. It cannot be assumed that appropriate consultation and discussion will occur across government agencies.

- iv. *A critical element of the scope is that recommendations for immediate action can be made prior to the completion of the final report.*

OSCAR response: - **OSCAR recommends** that our comments to TOR 1 are taken into consideration in this component of the Review.

- v. *Following approval, the final summary report may be published.*

OSCAR response: OSCAR questions why the State Government would consider **NOT** publishing the final summary Report and in fact not publishing the Total Report. **OSCAR recommends:** that in the interest of transparency the summary and full report be made available publicly via the Department's website and preferably at same time the report is referred to the State Government.

3. Public engagement

Community consultation will ensure transparency and that community views are representative of the local population. This will include a project webpage for written submissions and locally led community forums.

OSCAR response: If the State Government is serious about Community Engagement and Transparency then it will release the summary report including a detailed collation of comments by community groups and individual community members.

We find this last statement re the release of the report extremely disappointing.

This is not treating the community with respect and is not being transparent. The government wants the community to spend time making a submission while at the same time the government says the report "may" be released. With all due respect to the Department, the Government and the Minister this response is contradictory to Community Engagement 101

Conclusion

OSCAR understands that a second round of consultation will be open to residents and stakeholders, on specific recommendations ahead of the final review report. We appreciate that many of our recommendations relate to the TOR as listed. We ask that in the draft report the additional factors we have raised be included.

We wish the Government well in this endeavour, while respectfully requesting that serious consideration be given to our suggestions and recommendations.

Yours sincerely



Melva Hobson PSM
President OSCAR

Organisation Sunshine Coast Association of Residents

