

Minister for Energy and Renewables
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Minister for Parks

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Mr Andrew Jenner
The Jacqui Lambie Network
Member for Lyons
Via Clerk of the House

Dear Mr Jenner

I write in response to your constituent inquiry regarding foreshore erosion at Okines Beach, Lewisham.

I continue to engage with local residents and the Lewisham Foreshore Management Association, as does the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) in relation to the foreshore erosion matters at Okines Beach.

Illegal structures at the site were removed as part of works to regenerate and improve access to the site. Many of these structures were not compliant and were degraded, with components also washing into the nearby waterway.

PWS have now largely completed the remediation works with a revegetation project to commence next Autumn. The works undertaken to date, include much needed improvements for wayfinding options to the beach through an improved pathway, fencing and access points. These have primarily been instituted as mitigations to prevent people accessing the beach through informal areas which has added to the impacts to the foreshore.

By way of background, any further interventions at the site, including a rock barrier would need to be carefully considered in the context of the area being a dynamic landscape that is subject to natural coastal erosion processes.

Due to previous considerations at the site, the Tasmanian Government is also critically aware, that the addition of hardened infrastructure at the site, would trigger a referral to the Australian Government in accordance with a referral under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBCA). This is due to potential impacts to nearby populations and habitat of the critically endangered red handfish.

The Tasmanian Government previously decided not to proceed with hardened infrastructure interventions due to a previous submission under the EPBCA and the subsequent requirements to undertake additional modelling and surveys for impacts to the critically endangered red handfish. The cost of a referral under this process is expected to be in excess of \$200,000, with no guaranteed outcome.

The current situation for submissions being assessed by the Australian Government in accordance with the EPBCA should also not be underestimated.

The Tasmanian Government is aware of a significant number of referrals that are currently with the Commonwealth where the EPBCA processes have stalled and decisions are not forthcoming. This

is a frustrating process for proponents who have invested time and resources in good faith, following a process with statutory timeframes that are extended, with no guarantee of a timely outcome.

I understand that the Association is seeking further advice from the Australian Government in relation to the EPBCA process. I have encouraged the Association to continue these discussions.

My office, along with PWS, will continue to liaise with both the Association and local residents on matters relating to the foreshore.

Thank you for the question.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Duigan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Nick Duigan MLC
Minister for Parks