

Attention: Danicia Dutry
Director Q & A Communications Group
First Floor, 68 King Street
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Danicia

FREMANTLE PORTS – OUTER HARBOUR PROJECT

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the above application for the development of an Outer Harbour in Cockburn Sound.

Recfishwest is the peak body representing the interests of the estimated 643,000 recreational fishers in Western Australia. We are formally recognised and funded by the Government in that role. Recfishwest places the highest priority on preserving the future of recreational fishing and the resources it depends on in Western Australia.

Recfishwest represents the interests of the many thousands of Western Australians who fish in Cockburn Sound. It is estimated that Cockburn Sound is probably the most intensively used recreational boat fishing location in Western Australia (Fisheries WA Research Report no. 117, 1999). It is vitally important that Cockburn Sound is kept available for shared recreational use. A major problem confronting recreational users of Cockburn Sound is that there is very little access available between Woodman Point and Wells Park at Kwinana Beach, a distance of about 14km. The development of the Outer Harbour will further reduce the opportunity for recreational fishing access to this area. Cumulative loss of access to the ocean and beaches of Cockburn Sound has become a priority concern of Recfishwest.

While Recfishwest understands the importance of development for the sustainability of a strong economic future in Western Australia, we believe that adequate consideration must be made to the potential environmental and social impacts of such projects.

Recfishwest has a number of concerns with the proposed Outer Harbour development;

- The further loss of more than a kilometre of mostly natural shoreline, in the already greatly modified shoreline between Fremantle and Kwinana, is unacceptable. We have consistently stated that the cumulative impact of each successive development places an ever greater onus on proponents to demonstrate the overall public good that falls from each proposal. We believe that this has not been demonstrated in this case;
- The further loss of seagrass in Owen Anchorage is unacceptable. We are also concerned about the significantly greater loss of potential seagrass habitat. This represents the cumulative impact of this and other developments on the seagrass ecology.

- Loss of recreational boating access to popular fishing areas that will now constitute the Outer Harbour. These include popular crabbing and fishing grounds.
- The proposed desalination and power plant discharge pipe will be situated amongst a major shipping channel of the Outer Harbour development. This influx of warm salty water will work as a significant fish attractant and would subsequently attract large numbers of recreational anglers. Recfishwest is concerned that recreational anglers will be excluded from this site as a result of the Outer Harbour development.

Recfishwest understands that certain areas of the harbour must stay off limits to the public due to safety reasons. Recfishwest request that recreational anglers are adequately compensated for the loss of community aquatic property.

Should all planning permissions come to pass, Recfishwest respectfully requests that the proponent considers the following aspects;

- Access by recreational fishers to the outer wall of the harbour.
- Recreational boating access to fish inside the harbour as well as access to fish the proposed desalination and power plant discharge pipe.
- Designated areas on the outer wall for safe fishing.
- A fishing platform under the causeway bridge (similar to the Mandurah bridge) which has wheelchair access for disabled fishers.
- Development of new launching facilities and redevelopment of existing launching facilities within Cockburn Sound.

Recfishwest believes that if our requests are meet by the proponents the corresponding support from recreational anglers for the Outer Harbours project will be much greater. In the scheme of the whole project the cost of our simple requests will be minuscule.

We hope that our recommendations for the Outer Harbours project are given the credibility which our status as the peak body representing Western Australian anglers warrants. Please do not hesitate to contact our office on 9246 3366 should further information or clarification be required.

Yours sincerely

Frank Prokop
Executive Director

6th December 2005

CC Hon Alannah MacTiernan, Minister for Planning and Infrastructure
Hon John Ford, Minister for Fisheries
Hon Dr Judy Edwards, Minister for the Environment; Science
Doug Bathgate, Chairman RFAC
Peter Rogers, Executive Director, Department of Fisheries

Chairman – Des Wood
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