

Moreton Bay

Combined Island Associations
(M.B.C.I.A.)

"Justice & Better Island Access for all"



Vol 2. No1.

www.moretonbaycia.com

JULY –SEPTEMBER 2007

Keep on asking and it will be given to you; keep on seeking and you will find; keep on knocking and the door will be opened to you. Mathew 7.7

LOOKS LIKE THAT INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY IS BEING INTRODUCED BY STEALTH

Without consultation, a differential general rate component of \$80 for island property will fund an \$860000 SMBI Capital Reserve in 2007/08. The Environmental Management Group is budgeting \$850000 of this amount (\$750000 for open space land acquisitions, \$50000 for open space improvements and \$50000 for community building improvements). It is part of the following SMBI Capital Reserve 10 – Year Implementation Plan included in Council Minutes. The reserve plans \$4,755,000 spending on roads and drainage infrastructure by June 2017.

| SMBI Capital Reserve | 2007/08 \$ | 2008/09 \$ | 2009/10 \$ | 2010/11 \$ | 2011/12 \$ | 2012/13 \$ | 2013/14 \$ | 2014/15 \$ | 2015/16 \$ | 2016/17 \$ |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Differential over Mainland rates | 860000 | 894400 | 930176 | 967383 | 1006078 | 1046321 | 1088174 | 1131701 | 1176969 | 1224048 |
| Open Space Land Acquisition | 750000 | 480000 | | | | | | | | |
| Open Space Improvement | 50000 | 355000 | | | | | | | | |
| Community Bldg. Improvement | 50000 | 55000 | | | | | | | | |
| Roads/ Drainage Infrastructure | | | 930000 | 485000 | 505000 | 525000 | 545000 | 565000 | 585000 | 615500 |
| Community Infrastructure | | | | 485000 | 505000 | 525000 | 545000 | 565000 | 585000 | 615500 |
| Closing reserve balance | 10000 | 14400 | 14576 | 11979 | 8037 | 4359 | 2533 | 4235 | 11204 | 5252 |

Mayor Don Secombe's press release of 2 July 2007 says "SMBI residents will pay more than their mainland neighbours" ... "in this budget and the last one mainland residents have higher charges for sewerage while SMBI residents will pay a higher general rate this year that will be used specifically to benefit the islands".

The new differential minimum rate is \$636.75 per year for Southern Moreton Bay Island Residential 1 land and \$80 more than the mainland Residential 1 differential minimum rate of \$556.75 per year. The charging of a differential rate is possible by the changing island rating categories from Residential 1 to Southern Moreton Bay Islands Residential 1 (Minimum). Clearly the Council is acting unfairly; all residential land should be treated the same as it was last year after zonal changes; levies for specific works like the Russell Island Swimming Pool have been collected in the past without such categorisation; it is better to use special charges for capital reserve accumulation; for the first two years the capital reserve will buy more land and not the roads we need badly; and to infer that the islands are not paying their fair share because they do not have sewerage is wrong. Complaints to the Ombudsman against may not stop this imposition.

If you DO NOT AGREE with the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Residential 1 (Minimum) rating category, you SHOULD OBJECT and MUST GIVE REDLAND SHIRE COUNCIL WRITTEN NOTICE OF YOUR OBJECTION IN WRITING BY 8 AUGUST 2007. THE OBJECTION should simply be on the sole ground

"Having regard to the criteria decided by Redland Shire Council by which rateable land is categorised, I believe my land should have been included at the date of issue of the relevant rate notice, in Residential 1."

Include your PROPERTY REFERENCE and also specify the facts and circumstances on which the claim is made. SEND YOUR OBJECTION IMMEDIATELY TO

The Chief Executive Officer
Redland Shire Council
P.O. Box 21
CLEVELAND Qld 4163

**Its important for everyone to turn up to the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Sign on 12.30pm (sharp) - SATURDAY 25 AUGUST 2007
REDLAND BAY COMMUNITY HALL BESIDE POLICE STATION
(near Barge Terminal)**

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED HOW RSC TOOK CONTROL OF THE BAY ISLANDS?

BACKGROUND

Redland Shire Council has neglected the islands and blames the Queensland State Government for lack of servicing. Just recently Redland Shire Mayor Don Seccombe said on 2 July 2007, 'The challenges and burdens of managing our islands place great demands on Council resources as we strive to rectify poor planning outcomes from previous state governments and provide essential services and community infrastructure for these communities.' The following information from early 1971 is provided to show from minutes held at the Queensland State Archives that the council took over for the islands without any opposition, in cognizance of its responsibility and after a government funded feasibility study.

FIRST MOVES

On 13 May 1971 at a general meeting, the council moved that its Subdivision Committee investigate the Bay Islands and their future relationship with the council. On 2 June 1971, maps were tabled showing the island subdivision. At a general meeting on the 10 June 1971, the council considered correspondence from the Department of Local Government advising they would be pleased to receive any representations council may make on the Islands of Moreton Bay, being included in the Redland Shire Area. This was referred to the next Interviewing Committee of 24 June 1971, where the council discussed the matter with Department of Local Government officers. At that stage, it was appreciated that the islands of Russell, Macleay, Lamb and Karragarra, in particular, must **ultimately come into the Redland Shire**. Council was not seeking to walk away from its responsibilities, but was not in a position, financially to accept them. It was decided there should be a feasibility study and that council should contact the Co-Ordinator General and ask him to make an inspection and/or feasibility study of the council taking over the islands; that council finds it difficult to spend money outside its Shire; and, that there also be a round table discussion with this Council, the Department of Local Government and the Department of the Co-Ordinator General. The council's Finance and Works Committee on 16 August 1971 received correspondence from the Co-Ordinator General advising he did not agree to the proposed conference so the Council referred the correspondence to the Department of Local Government.

PREMIER INVOLVED - BRIDGE PROPOSAL MOOTED

On 14 October 1971 council chairman E.G.W. Wood wrote to the Premier Hon. J. Bjelke-Petersen re the absorption of the four islands, Russell, Karragarra, Lamb and Macleay within the shire but without State assistance of \$20000 per year "it would be beyond the finances of this Shire to take over these islands and administer them with any degree of success." He pointed out in his letter present difficulty with "...a great influx of subdivision to these four islands with uncontrolled subdivision"...."that esplanades are being made available for sale to the public with unconstructed roads, and the Local Authority has to idly stand by and know that at some future time all of this difficulty will come within its control." Belatedly, at a General Meeting of the Council on 21 October 1971, council resolved that **the matter of subdivision of the Bay Islands be referred to the Premier**. On 1 December 1971 the Subdivision and Planning Committee met and tabled letter from the Premier to the Chairman, advising further submissions were expected to be brought to

Cabinet soon. The State Government was examining the islands. In March 1972, State Cabinet endorsed a *Survey of Major Islands of Moreton Bay* which refers to a **proposal for a bridge** connection from the North Stradbroke Island linking intervening islands to the mainland near Redland Bay. This recommended land to be set aside for possible construction of bridges from the western side of the island in the vicinity of Dunwich, and or the south western area of the island **where rights of way for future roads should be considered** when more detailed physical land use plans are prepared.

GRANT RECEIVED FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY

On 6 June 1972, council's Finance and Works Committee met and received notification of a Department of Local Government grant of \$1,500 towards cost of feasibility study for inclusion of certain islands in the Shire. They resolved that, although a grant of \$3000 was requested, the study go ahead. On 3 July 1972 the committee **received from Department of Local Government the grant of \$1,500 towards the cost of carrying out the feasibility study** and resolved that a further application be made of \$1,500. On 2 August 1972, the Finance and Works Committee met and received a preliminary report of the feasibility study from John Wilson & Partners engineers. They met again on 7 August 1972, and received correspondence from the Department of Local Government advising no further grant was contemplated at that time. They resolved that the engineers be advised that they are not to exceed the \$1,500 allocated for the feasibility study. At a special meeting of council on 26 October 1972 the final report of the Feasibility Study was tabled. Copies of the report were circulated to councillors with the minutes of this meeting. The Chairman asked that the report be treated as confidential at that stage. At a general meeting of council on 9 November 1972, the final report of the Feasibility Study was tabled. It was stressed that the need for the Islands to be financially independent. The Shire Clerk drew council's attention to a recommended Five Year programme, and that this be adhered to. The council moved that the report be adopted and forwarded to the Department of Local Government, with the additional advice that it is to **be borne in mind that council cannot merely acquire land for arrears of rates after 3 years; these lands must be bought at public auction**; and, that Council considers a Town Plan for the Islands is essential, and this would be expensive. On 3 January 1973, John Wilson and Partners presented to the Finance and Works Committee a schedule of urgent expenditure for the first three-year period of Council taking over the Bay Islands. This matter was left to the Chairman and the Shire Clerk to finalise.

INCLUSION OF THE ISLANDS

At a General Meeting of 18 January 1973 the council received advice from the Department of Local Government, with map, advising **notice has been given to include certain Bay Islands within the boundary of the Redland Shire; Gazettal Notice published on the 13th and 20th January, 1973**. The Council resolved that there be a preliminary discussion on this matter at the next Interviewing Committee Meeting. At the Interviewing Committee's meeting on 25 January 1973, a letter from the Minister for Local Government to the Chairman setting out details of assistance was tabled and considered. The committee recommended that the Chairman, in his reply, should make it quite clear that the Department of Harbours and Marine was to look after all waterfront facilities. The Council resolved that the Shire Clerk be instructed to make the necessary arrangements with the Director of

Local Government for the implementation of an Interim Development By-law. It was noted that the grant for administration costs had been reduced and that this was insufficient. The Clerk was asked to prepare a draft reply to the Minister, asking for an additional \$20,000 to cover administration costs for the first year especially, and also landing access for the council, and the construction and maintenance of ramps and jetties to be the responsibility of the Department of Harbours and Marine. The Shire Clerk informed the committee that the cost for sending out rate notices to the Bay Islands, on a computer for the first year, would be \$5,000. He expected that in the next Budget, council would require at least \$30,000 for office machinery.

COUNCIL AGREES TO ACCEPT THE BAY ISLANDS

At a Special Meeting of council on 1 February 1973, the letter from the Minister for Local Government together with the recommendations of the Interviewing Committee and a schedule of administration costs, were reviewed. **Council resolved to be prepared to accept the Bay Islands as delineated as Division 6 on the map supplied;** that the minute of the Interviewing Committee be confirmed subject to request for increased allocation for Administration which is estimated at \$55,000 in the first year, and subject to addition after the words, "the responsibility of the Department of Harbours and Marine," the words, "without

claim on the Council"; that an application be made for Treasury Loan 1973/74 of \$60,000; that the loans be interest free for 3 years; that council requires an additional \$40,000 for plant as existing plant is overloaded and council has no vehicles available for the islands. At a Finance and Works Committee Meeting on 1 March 1973, a letter from the Minister for Local Government to the Chairman regarding the Bay Islands inclusion was received. Council resolved that the reply be left in the hands of the Chairman. The Committee recommended that a resolution and a draft town planning by-law be submitted immediately to the Department of Local Government for insertion of the metes and bounds description as supplied by the Survey Office; copies of 400 registered plans at a cost 50 cents each be obtained from the Titles Office; the Bay Islands, if included within the Shire, be called Division 6 and an election be held to appoint a Councillor.

On the 10 May 1973 the islands were included into the Shire of Redlands as Division 6 and gazetted as such on the 12 May 1973. At a Special Meeting of council on 31 May 1973, council resolved to prepare a town planning scheme for Division 6 of the Shire. At another Special Meeting immediately after council resolved to adopt an interim town planning by-law.

CHANGED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

Advise our Committee person: iandrews@ihug.co.nz promptly please

SUBMISSION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW COMMISSION.

On 9 May 2007, MBCIA lodged a submission to the Local Government Review Commission which is proposing to recommend changes to local government boundaries in Queensland.

The Commission was informed that initially in 1973, there was an agreement between the State Government and Redland Shire Council that funding for road infrastructure would be sourced from rates collected minus an administration fee but that agreement was never followed. Thus an inadequate ad hoc process of funding infrastructure for islands and a chaotic strategy for staging development has eventuated. The Government did not monitor the Redlands Shire Council in a stewardship role to ensure proper development. Dwellings are now scattered all over the five un-serviced islands. Thus the retrospective provision of roads and reticulated water and sewerage is made more difficult and expensive as a result of this scattered settlement pattern. The Council's attitude was therefore and still remains to provide minimal roads and drainage and water connections only when development warrants it. The islands still remain without sewerage. There is little open space for active sport and recreation like parks and football fields etc.

Presently there are about 12,000 developable island allotments. All need services of some kind. An estimate of the value of servicing such land with roads, drainage and sewerage alone would range in the \$0.6 billion to \$0.75 billion to bring them up to mainland sub-divisional standards and this could be much higher depending on barge transport costs. Yet till now, Redlands Shire Council has been reluctant to provide the \$0.7 billion or more that would be required to bring the islands up to mainland standards.

On 28 February 2007, confronted by such a shortfall in funding for the islands, the Council adopted a stance to deliver a SMBI road funding submission to State Government and to approach the Federal Government to support provision of infrastructure on SMBI including the suggestion of land for community open space needs.

In this perspective, the islands have been seriously deprived of at least \$0.7 billion in infrastructure by a Council that has had control of the islands for 34 years and now is in the process of asking other agencies for grants to do the job. The questions to be considered are "Would the islands be better serviced if the boundaries of the local government area they are situated in are changed?" "If not, then can the islands be temporarily excluded from the norms of local governance so that projects can be undertaken by another not so lethargic construction authority?"

There are opportunities for the State Government to take back control of the islands for say five (5) years and complete the infrastructure, sewerage and a bridge to the mainland and then hand them back to a Local Government that can care for them. If we had a bridge to the mainland then the sewerage could be pumped across to the mainland. In an email from the Mayor of Redlands of 3 May 2007 "A request has been made to the Office of Urban Management and the Infrastructure Minister to reconsider this transport link (a bridge to the Southern Moreton Bay Islands) in the next Regional Plan 2010." The electricity pylons bringing electricity to the bay islands and on the mining and water facilities on North Stradbroke Island are near the end of their working life and new cables can run across a bridge if it was built. Additional future water pipelines and communications cables could be similarly routed on a bridge at little cost and environmental damage to undersea alternatives. Proposed sewerage outfalls into the sea, as against wastewater recycling pumped to over a bridge to a closer mainland local government, may also become a factor in decisions recommending boundary changes.

The submission examined present community of interest and infrastructure needs for the islands and impinging factors such as the water grid and waste water recycling initiatives of the State Government and then promoted ten options. These options looked a nil option and change of boundaries so that the Southern Moreton Bay Islands become; part of a larger council area; part of an amalgamated council area, part of another larger council area; be split into two different council areas; become their own council area; become a larger council area with other islands such as Coochiemudlo and North Stradbroke Islands; become part of a larger Redland Shire area with a bridgehead into Gold Coast City area; become part of a larger subdivided council area south of Victoria Point (possibly with Coochiemudlo Island and merged with Logan City council area, and; or become part of a joint local government area for specifically addressing the infrastructure problems of the Southern Moreton Bay.

In considering the options the best option was that there were changes to boundaries so that the Southern Moreton Bay Islands became part of a larger amalgamated council area as it addressed community of interest and infrastructure problems, whilst being best to address the environmental problems of water and wastewater recycling. By joining the Southern Moreton Bay Islands to Gold Coast/Logan, existing forced and ambivalent community of interest ties will be broken. Environmental issues related to water grid allocation and waste water recycling are handled very well. This would mean Redlands becomes a Super Council with either Logan or Logan and Gold Coast combined. Logan City Council needs an increase in its area. If it is deemed that Logan City is more able to administer the Bay Islands then there would be the expectation that Logan would be assisted with State/Federal Government grants and loans to complete island roads and sewerage infrastructure and bridge the islands to the mainland if the State is not prepared to take back the islands for five years or more. We feel the Southern Moreton Bay Islands will reach their full potential quicker under Logan than being left with Redlands.

The second best option was the "No boundary change" option on the proviso that the State Government takes over the administration of the Southern Moreton Bay Islands for say five years so that roads and sewerage infrastructure can be constructed to meet the boom that is occurring at present.

The third best option was the option that sees the slight change of boundaries so that Redlands expands and takes a small area south of the Logan River mouth in Gold Coast and possibly part of Logan. This option retains the community of interests of the islands and slightly extends into other local authority areas. The advantage here is that Redlands gains a small part of Gold Coast near the Logan River mouth and possibly an eastern fringe of Logan near the Logan River. This means that Redlands can then reduce considerably its costs in provision of

infrastructure and providing a bridgehead for water delivery and waste water transfer to its own mainland facilities. Still Macleay and Lamb Islands wastewater is a problem and the propensity for a cashed-strapped Council will be to have outfalls into Moreton Bay. Redlands can then reduce considerably its costs in provision of infrastructure and providing a bridgehead for water delivery and waste water transfer to its own mainland facilities. The Southern Moreton Bay Islands have been neglected in the past. Still there needs to be \$0.7 billion of infrastructure works of a mainland standard to be completed. The council may argue only a fraction of this amount needs to be expended as islanders do not need this standard of development. If there was any way this could be remedied faster by Local Government boundary changes then the Local Government Review Commission can investigate the best possible way to do this.

ANNUAL JUSTICE AND INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Since the AGM in November 2006, RLDA Investigate has spoken with professionals on their Executive in order to assist us. Following discussions with a lawyer in Southport on 30.03.07, the Justice Sub-Committee began sorting documentation some of which has been received recently from members towards a BRIEF for our lawyers. Photocopying of diaries entries containing valuable information have been completed. A workshop date is planned soon to categorise these documents.

RLDA Investigate's Executive John Vella took two of our members with him to politely request the Mayor to answer his correspondence and to meet with he and others on the Management Committee but he sent his assistant out to the counter instead. A date was arranged, then cancelled at short notice by the mayor following which Mr Vella asked RSC for a copy of its Code of Conduct.

PUBLIC DEBATE: Redland Times reporter was informed of all this and invited by Mr Vella to accompany him on 22 January 07 to challenge the Mayor to a Public Debate concerning complaints by landholders and residents. Mayor refused any meetings whatsoever. Stonewalling by RSC has made it impossible for our Association to make any progress at all. Intent was to discuss landowners grievances in a non-confrontationist manner, but it didn't work.

APRIL 2007: MP John English promised to speak to RLDA Investigate on two occasions, then did not keep his promises. Stonewalling yet again.

FEBRUARY TO MAY 2007 - DEPT. NATURAL RESOURCES: Investigator made several trips from Grafton NSW to the Southern Moreton Bay Islands and Beenleigh Branch of DNR to glean further information. He has not asked for any remuneration for his expenses as he also works as an advocate for other ratepayers who are experiencing shabby treatment by other councils. There is a branch of RLDA Investigate in the Redlands which will continue to support landholder's rights under the Australian Constitution.

REMEMBER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Sign on 12.30pm (sharp) - SATURDAY 25 AUGUST 2007
REDLAND BAY COMMUNITY HALL BESIDE POLICE STATION
(near Barge Terminal)

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2007-2008 ARE NOW DUE
FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN PLEASE RETURN YOUR MEMBERSHIP FORM AND FEE
Send to: Rod Carter, President, MBCIA PO BOX 1042, MACLEAY ISLAND, QLD 4184