

# Citizens Helping Inskip Peninsula

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Hon Anna Bligh  
Premier  
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Dear M/s Bligh,

The Inskip Peninsula is a low lying sand mass immediately North of Rainbow Beach and South of Fraser Island. Much of it was sandmined and when the Commonwealth government stopped sandmining on Fraser Island, sandmining on Inskip became uneconomic. The Bjelke Petersen government looked after its sandmining mates by issuing Development Leases over parts of Inskip (Swapping for sandmining leases that were of no value)

Great "Development" plans were made and CHIP was formed to fight them. The Goss government bought back two Development Leases. One of these was an area just North of Rainbow Beach known as the Old Mill Site ( it had been the area where the mineral sands were dry milled to extract the valuable components) Two main by products were stored on site. One is a black sand and the other is radioactive. Mineral Deposits who operated the dry mill heaped up the black sand and buried the radioactive sand.

The other main development lease was held by a company called Rainbow Shores. The land covered by the lease was adjusted by the Goss government so that there were two sections to it. The Southern section was approved for development for a population of about 4000 about 10 years ago. Currently less than a quarter of this capacity is developed. Application has been made to rezone the Northern section for 6000 people. There are many reasons why the application should be refused on an area with a maximum height of 5m AHD. All the water for the coastal area comes from the sandmass including the head of the Noosa river and there are already development approvals for all this water. There are many other reasons for refusal and EPA, in a draft submission, has listed the many reasons why development approval should be refused.

When the developer and Cooloola Shire Council finally got the message that the development on the Northern lease could not go ahead, they scrambled around to put the developer in the best possible position. A previous government (Bjelke Petersen) had swapped useless mineral leases for valuable development leases. The Council and the developer set out to convince the Bligh government to do the same. Could they swap the Northern Lease for a lease over the Old Mill site which is smaller but much more valuable? Could they reverse the work of the Goss government who had bought back the lease for several reasons (it was unsuitable, it had radioactive sand, and the land was needed by the Rainbow Beach community.)

The proponents of this gift argue two things.

1. *The developer is entitled to develop land as he has a lease. If he can't develop the land on which he has a lease he is entitled to other land in compensation.*

Just stating the case makes it clear that it is ridiculous. Rainbow Shores bought a lease to a section of land. The land is no good for development. Bad luck – perhaps they should have been more careful. The Queensland Government should not compensate developers with our assets when a developer makes a bad decision. Perhaps the Queensland government gave an express or implied guarantee of development when the lease was issued. If it did it is not in the Lease document. The Lease says that the developer will put in

a development plan to the Queensland Government and the Shire council of a proposed development and if and when it is agreed they should seek normal rezoning etc.

The developer has never done this. It is a 30 year lease (1/11/84 to 31/10/2014) Both the Queensland government and the Shire have a right of veto over development independent of rezoning. The plan must be submitted within twelve months of the issuing of the lease. (by 1/11/85) There is no case for compensation for not approving unsuitable development. Even if some small scale development (Camping and caravan areas etc) were considered suitable for the Northern Lease, the developer would find it uneconomic. The Northern lease was set out as a tourist facility zone (Club Med or something similar). That is why the Goss government approved it. It certainly was not intended as residential land for 6000 people. For the developer and Cooloola Shire Council to argue that the land would fit 6000 and so Rainbow Shores is entitled to equivalent land is a gross distortion.

2. *Rainbow Beach needs a large development to give it a critical mass and so services can be provided.*

On 29/8/96 the design residential population of Rainbow Beach was 3,329 and Rainbow Shores Stage 1 was 4,100. (Cooloola Shire Council figures) That's a total of 7,429 at that time. Since then an additional 1200 persons have been added by rezoning and other changes. That's a total, with no further development, of 8,629. If another 6000 people are added by Rainbow Shores we get 14, 629 The population of Gympie is around 11,000. At present the population of Rainbow Beach would be less than 2000. More people are necessary but they are already in the works and Rainbow Shores Stage 1 has about 10% of its design population.. There is Crown land available at the rear of Rainbow Beach if the water constraints were not there and a population greater than 8629 was considered desirable.

And an increase in population greater than this is not desirable. The people of Rainbow Beach and the people of Cooloola Shire have a remarkable degree of agreement that Inskip should not be developed. At present we are asking a question of all candidates for the local government election, "*Do you believe that there should be further residential development on the Inskip Peninsula?*" The responses so far are 22 no and 4 yes. We would presume that most of the candidates can read the majority view of the electorate, or they are a sample, and the new council that is elected will be against Inskip development. Rainbow Beach doesn't want or need further development

The erosion on the main beach make the relocation of the surf club important and the Old Mill Site would give the community a chance to locate and relocate facilities and to develop the area for the community.

I have asked Mr Lucas for a position on the committee reviewing land use on the Inskip Peninsula.. I have not received an answer. I congratulated the government on its decision to review land use. It should have been done 20 years ago. However a review involving only government departments and the local council will not bring forward all the views and solutions. Three thousand campers use Inskip regularly and have for many years. Who represents them? Who represents anglers? Who represents other users not based in Cooloola? These users, including myself, have a knowledge of the area and its issues that is greater than the government or the council.

But what is important now is that the Queensland government not be rushed into giving away land to a developer who sees the chances of making a fortune receding and a council who are having a last desperate throw to help a developer before they are thrown out.

Yours Sincerely

Reg Lawler  
Chairperson  
4/3/08