



Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef Minister for Science and Youth Affairs

Our Ref: CTS 17678/22
Your Ref: A960686

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11 November 2022

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for letter of 13 October 2022 attaching a copy of Parliamentary Petition No. 3766-22 concerning the Taylor Point buy back for a conservation park.

I am aware that some members of the Cairns community and local conservation groups have for many years opposed any development of the Taylor Point headland and have lobbied the Queensland Government to purchase the property for dedication as a protected area. The Taylor Point property is valued by the local community for its scenic amenity in a highly urbanised landscape and for the informal pedestrian access it provides to the beach and rocky foreshores of the headland.

Protected area expansion is guided by *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030*, a 10-year plan for supporting the growth, management and sustainability of national parks and other protected areas. The Strategy seeks to protect representative samples of the State's biodiversity and its important cultural heritage values. It also provides an expansion target of 17 per cent of the terrestrial land area of the State.

In identifying and prioritising potential protected area acquisitions, the Department of Environment and Science considers numerous factors including the property's natural and cultural values; known threats to those values; the representativeness of those values within the existing estate; proximity of the property to existing protected areas; the property size; and future management needs; the estimated sale price as well as the State's available protected area acquisition budget.

The department has previously evaluated the Taylor Point property for its suitability as a protected area. While the property does have local, cultural, biodiversity and recreational values, it does not rate highly under the current protected area criteria for priority acquisition, primarily due to its small size (about 18 hectares) and relative high cost (listed on the market for \$8 million). The Taylor Point property is also isolated from the nearby Earl Hill and Smithfield Conservation Parks and is situated in a highly fragmented and urbanised landscape.

I also note that the Cairns Regional Council recognises the scenic values of Taylor Point and has instituted strong planning controls under the *Cairns Plan 2016* – the property is partly zoned Open Space and partly zoned Environmental Management and is subject to several restrictive overlay provisions including Landscape Values and Hillslopes. While the Council has granted the landowner preliminary development approval for a material change of use of the lot, and development approval for subdivision of the lot into 18 lots, the applicable planning controls and development conditions should ensure that the headland's scenic values are adequately maintained.

I trust that this information has been of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MS', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Meaghan Scanlon MP

Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef

Minister for Science and Youth Affairs