

Our Ref: BNE27332-13
BNE2007/2510
E/07/00423

Your Ref: 765-07

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

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 7 February 2007 enclosing the petition 765-07 received by the House on 6 February 2007 concerning the Great Sandy Marine Park Zoning Plan and fishing activity at Barolin Rocks and Burkitt's Reef.

The Great Sandy Marine Park is a multiple use Marine Park that aims to protect, conserve and manage a range of marine and coastal habitats, species and uses.

The Woongarra coastline, including Burkitt's Reef and Barolin Rocks, represents the southern most limit of the Great Barrier Reef inshore fringing coral reefs and supports a high diversity of marine life of over 300 fish species (including reef fish), 22 sea snakes, 20 echinoderms and numerous molluscs, nudibranchs, sharks, crustaceans, gastropods, cetaceans and encrusting organisms.

Burkitt's Reef and Barolin Rocks were selected as ideal candidates for marine national park zones (green zones), or no-take areas, as their values comprehensively represent the marine species and habitats found along the unique Woongarra coastline. The no-take areas provide marine species with a refuge generally free from impacts and help build resilience against increasing human and natural pressures in the marine environment.

In recognition of the importance of recreational fishing, the Zoning Plan provides continued access for shore-based recreational fishing along a 100 metre wide coastal strip of conservation park zone at Burkitt's Reef. An approximate two kilometre stretch of coastline at Barolin Rocks is the only area along the Woongarra coastline where shore-based fishing may not occur.

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The Government has taken all stakeholders' views into account in delivering a Zoning Plan that balances the need to protect environmental values while maintaining important industries and social activities. The importance of recreational and commercial fishing to the region was a major consideration when developing the Zoning Plan. As a result, fishing is able to continue in the majority of the Marine Park.

I hope this information is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely

Lindy Nelson-Carr MP
Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism