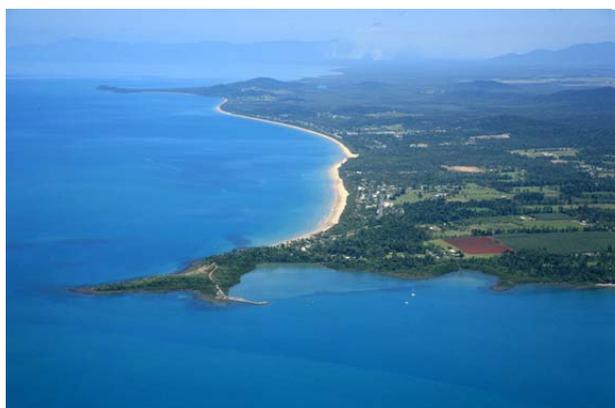


# Call for an upgraded jetty to meet boating needs at Mission Beach

*'A sustainable future through protection of the outstanding natural values'*



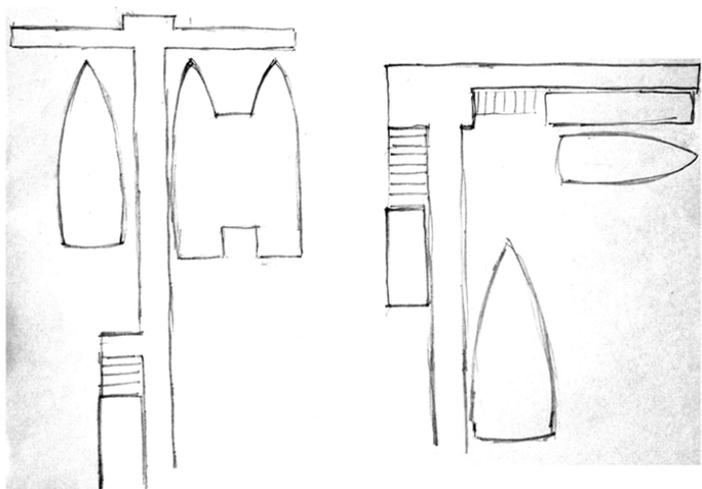
Consistent with NQ 2031 Regional Plan vision



Mission Beach requires a safe landing for passengers embarking and disembarking en route to the Islands and offshore reefs. This need has been identified by the local community, commercial operators, Dunk and Bedarra Islands and others who use the current facilities.

This could be provided by a modern T-shaped jetty at Mission Beach, with associated wharf area and pontoon landing, after considering appropriate engineering and design input.

## Jetty designed to needs



Post Yasi

Local Councils have been remiss for leaving the jetty in a deteriorating state over a long period of time. The Council and the State government are being urged to address the long standing need for an upgrade.

## Our jetty is in very poor condition



On June 6th 1994 a letter was written by the owners of Dunk Island and Barrier Reef Connection to the Office of the Co-ordinator General government of Queensland which stated ...

*“The very fact that the Mission Beach jetty facility is in a degenerated state only serves to further the proponents aim”*

Although an appropriate rebuild of the present badly maintained jetty is required, a marina as an alternative or appropriate solution to the need for safe passenger embarkation/ disembarkation is not appropriate at Clump Point, for the following reasons:

- Services from Mission Beach to the islands and reefs do not run during cyclonic or storm weather. Passengers would not be travelling by sea during rough weather. Visitors to Mission Beach need a safe landing for embarkation and disembarkation, in relatively mild weat

## Passengers will not be travelling during rough weather



The faith placed in the idea that every marina is a safe haven is unjustifiable. A marina built on a lee shore with only a rock wall separating vessels from ocean wave action could never be a safe harbour during cyclonic conditions.



Marinas  
are not  
safe boat  
havens

The coast of Mission Beach, although technically a bay, is a wide-open lee shore. It has no protection at all from the very high winds and destructive ocean wave action of a cyclone.

Wide open lee shore



No seaman worth his ticket would leave a vessel on this shore in a storm. Insurance companies would take a dim view of it, too. The use of the words "safe haven" in the name of the current marina proposal is misleading.

# Boat Bay - Jan 2010



Boats left on moorings during cyclonic weather



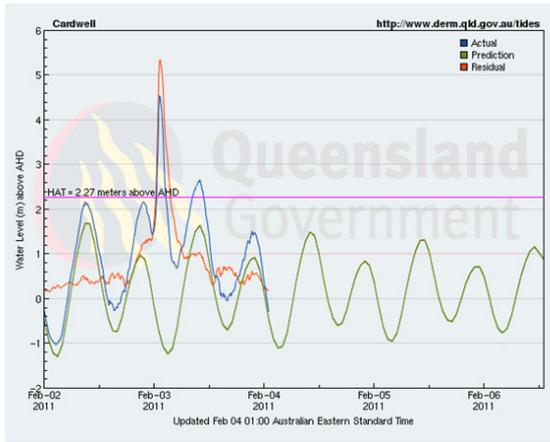
[See Page 9 Mission Beach Bulletin 153 Jan 2010](#)

Even the well-protected Breakwater Marina in Townsville began to break up, both berth and main walkway pontoons, even though the destructive wave action from the ocean could not reach the marina basin. The sea surge came within 370 mm of the tops of lower piles (the new B finger). The piles on the other fingers in Breakwater Marina are about 500 mm higher.

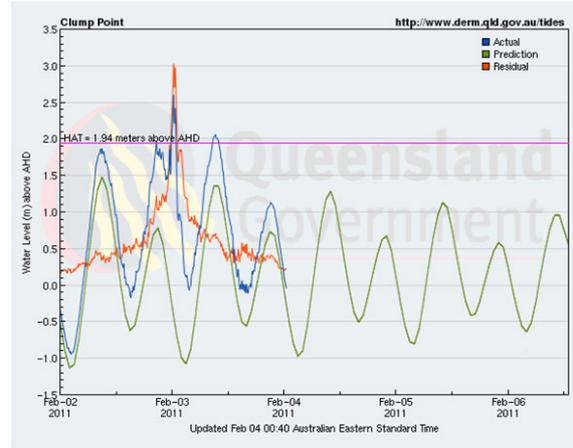


New information from BMT WBM Consultants' wave data buoys in Cleveland Bay Townsville during cyclone Yasi indicates average wave heights of 5 metres - that is, maximums as much as 10 metres - for some hours' duration (Townsville Bulletin 21 March 2011). These data, collected at 120 - 160 km from the cyclone centre, cannot be ignored when considering future cyclone impacts on maritime structures along the North Queensland coast.

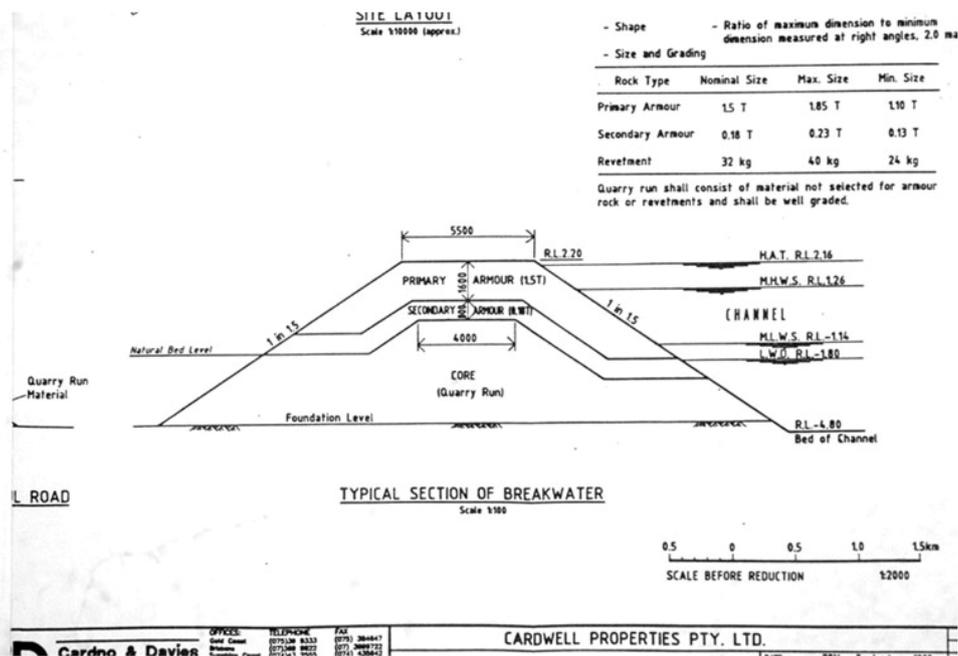
### Wave data buoys for Cardwell



### Wave data buoys for Clump Point



New information from a study by former Swinburne University Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Young and Swinburne oceanographers Professor Alex Babanin and Dr Stefan Zieger has found that over the last 23 years an increase has been measured in the high end of ocean weather observations, such as 10% in highest wind speeds and 6-7% in highest wave heights (ABC Radio 25 March 2011). The design of any structures built or anchored on the open shores of Mission Beach will need to take into account these and future increases in wind and wave action.



To protect a marina and its contents from the sea surge and associated wave action of a Category 4 or 5 cyclone, the rock wall proposed as part of a marina would need to be a cliff rather than a wall. The height of the "wall" would need to be at least 7 metres, and possibly 10 metres, above Highest Astronomical Tide (HAT); or, if (say) a bit less than 7 metres above HAT, a hundred or more metres wide across the top. The base of such a wall would be enormous, leaving little natural sea bottom exposed. Imagine the impact on the aesthetics of Mission Beach and on the perception of visitors seeking presentation of World Heritage scenic values.

Marinas are basically boat storage basins. With a cyclone approaching, given the usual uncertainty of path and intensity, many boat owners would inevitably leave their boats there through indecision, and risk losing them. In "Port Hinchinbrook" marina, near Cardwell, the piles were readily observed to have been too short for the pontoon girdles to remain in place during a cyclonic sea surge, yet many owners left their boats there despite the high risk of destruction.



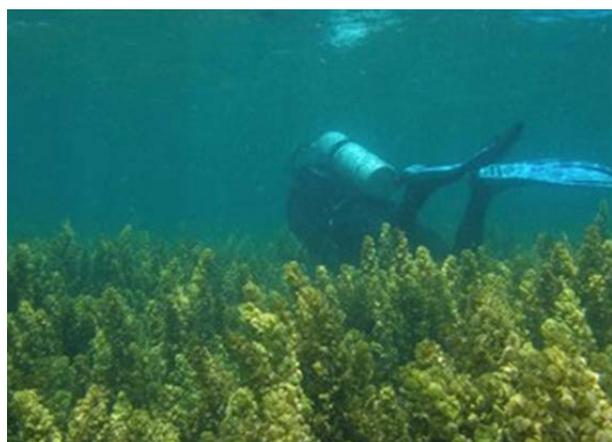
At Mission Beach it would be the foreshore vegetation, the benthos and the road, which would bear the consequences of broken pontoons and broken boats, all the related pollution, and the clean-up and repair costs.



## 14 Species of Seagrass

There are major concerns about the real life impacts of marina construction and ongoing operational disturbance on the natural values of Boat Bay, a habitat protection area. There would be immediate permanent hydrological changes and loss of seagrass, an essential food for dugongs.

Dugong depend almost entirely on seagrass as a food source, although algae will be taken if necessary. There are 14 species of seagrass found along the Wet Tropics coastline, many of which are in our area. Sargassum algae (seaweed) beds form essential habitat for many small and juvenile animals - such crabs, prawns, fish and molluscs. Sargassum is highly seasonal.



Halophila seagrass, which grows sparsely like this, is preferred by dugong due to its high nutrient and nitrate content. Seagrass beds can be damaged by dredging, smothering by sediment or changes in turbidity. Seagrasses can form mixed groupings, and may be found from shallow estuarine waters down to over 50 metres depth.



Pipefishes and seahorses (family Syngnathidae) occur along our coastline and many are restricted to specific habitats, including estuaries and mangroves. Syngnathids are protected globally by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species). Some animals, such as the beautifully camouflaged Sargassumfish, are dependent upon the seaweed Sargassum.



This anglerfish (*above right*) has evolved into an excellent mimic of a section of Sargassum (all the better to swallow an unsuspecting small fish).

This *Halicampus* pipefish (*right*) also mimics a piece of seaweed, but so that it is not eaten (it hunts tiny crustaceans among the seaweed).



# 39 Species of Mangroves

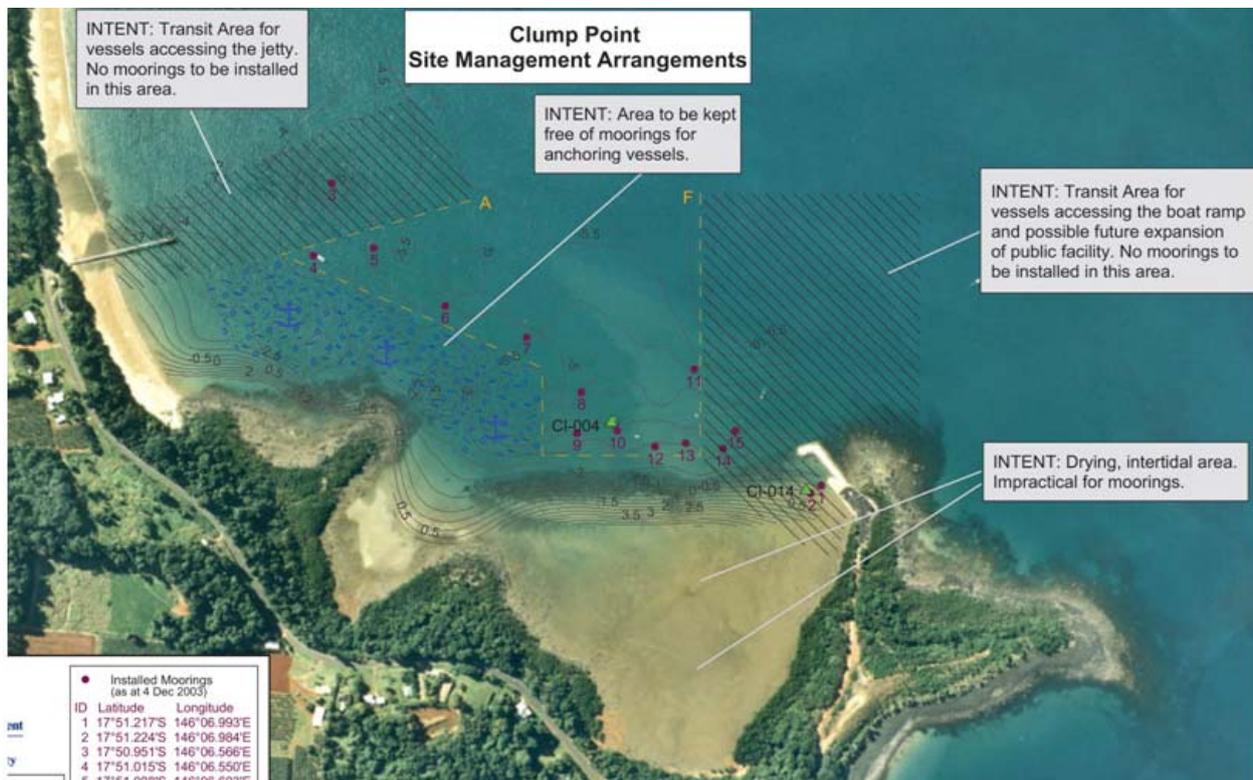


There are 39 species of mangroves along the Wet Tropics coast, with diversity increasing up rivers and in wide, soft-substrate estuaries. Fewer species exist along our exposed lee coastline. The unique Clump Point is very special as it is the only place in the Wet Tropics where a basalt headland exists, with mangroves and diverse rainforest growing on it. This juxtaposition is one of the most surprising features of the region and it must be protected.

## Following is the relevant legislation, state and Commonwealth.

The development of Boat Bay for a marina is inconsistent with all Queensland state and Commonwealth legislation. Marine Park and Coastal legislation is so strong that approval would be virtually impossible.

Much of the proposed site is **Queensland State Marine Park**.



In 1994 the incoming state Labour government declared the longest marine park in the world, including the whole length of the intertidal zone of the Queensland coast. To build a marina in Boat Bay would mean excising part of this state marine park.

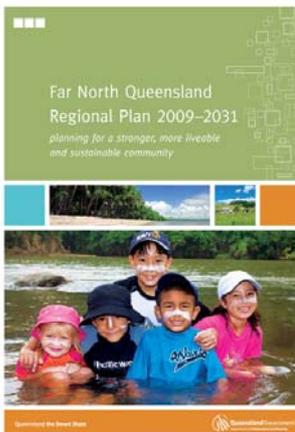
Under the previous Coastal Plan most of the proposed site was declared an **Area of State Significance (natural resources) (ASSNR) significant wetlands**. Although the ASSNR designations do not appear in the new Coastal Plan, significant coastal wetlands will continue to be protected. Although a potentially marina-enabling designation "*Maritime Development Area*" (MDA) was published in the original draft for Boat Bay, it was deleted from the final (now published) draft. The new Plan states that there will be a study into maritime facility use for the whole Cassowary Coast.



**\*\* The Clump Point Boat Harbour Reserve has not been designated as a maritime development area in the Queensland Coastal Plan. This is because the plan enables small scale marine infrastructure such as that located here to be considered anywhere on the coast and there are no restrictions on re-establishing infrastructure that has been damaged or destroyed.**

**The Department of Environment and Resource Management, in conjunction with the Cassowary Coast Regional Council (CCRC) and relevant State departments and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, will be completing a public maritime infrastructure planning study during 2011. This will examine the nature and scale of maritime infrastructure needs along the CCRC coast and assess potential sites from a social, environmental and economic perspective. The results of this study will be used to determine if and where new maritime development areas are required to be included in the Queensland Coastal Plan. The study will also meet the requirement that a management or master plan is prepared for the reserve should it be identified as the optimal site for maritime infrastructure.**

It is only a few years since the Mission Beach community went through a detailed consultation process to create the **Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031**



FNQ 2031 Regional Plan vision for Mission Beach

- The urban footprint at Mission Beach will be constrained to minimise future impacts on ecological values, coastal hazard risks and loss of the village character
- Mission Beach is considered as priority area for biodiversity conservation
- Land Use policy 4.1.7 seeks to protect the values and character of village activity

(a statutory Plan, which ultimately binds local councils). The Mission Beach community has reflected in the contents of the Plan their concern about the protection of the natural habitat and village lifestyle of the area.

*"The urban footprint at Mission Beach will be constrained to minimise future impacts on ecological values, coastal hazard risks and loss of the village character. Densities are to be kept low and building heights limited to avoid increasing traffic generation and urban impacts. Future development should occur around village nodes and avoid linear form, maintain and restore cassowary habitat, and ensure good corridor connectivity." (p26)*

*"Mission Beach ... considered as priority areas for biodiversity conservation (DCILGPS, 2000)". (p41)*

*"Land use policy 4.1.7 seeks to protect the values and character of village activity centres. Village activity centres such as Kuranda and Mission Beach have a strong village feel and linkages with regional landscape and rural production values ... Planning scheme proposals to increase density at specific localities must ensure that an appropriate balance of regional planning objectives can be achieved. This includes maintaining the valued FNQ lifestyle and character, tropical urban design and open space ..." (p75)*

The local Djiru people are close to finalising a Native Title claim. Their cultural sites are another protected feature of Boat Bay.





## Djiru Country

### Clump Point Sign Returns

There was a large gathering to watch the unveiling of the replacement of the Djiru sign that was stolen from Clump Point lookout 12 months ago.

Thanks to Janine Ewens for her initiative and all those who supported her with the many donations for a raffle to raise the funds for the sign.

Thanks also goes to the CCRC for their \$520 contribution.

Janine said she felt the sign needed to be replaced to show the Djiru people, the Traditional Owners of Mission Beach, that the community cares and acknowledges the importance of the land.





Djiru elder Pastor John Andy made an impassioned speech about the importance of Clump Point for the Djiru people's cultural, spiritual, social, educational and recreational values.

He spoke of how it was a place where his people had met with other groups, held ceremonies, fished,

hunted, camped and collected resources for thousands of years.

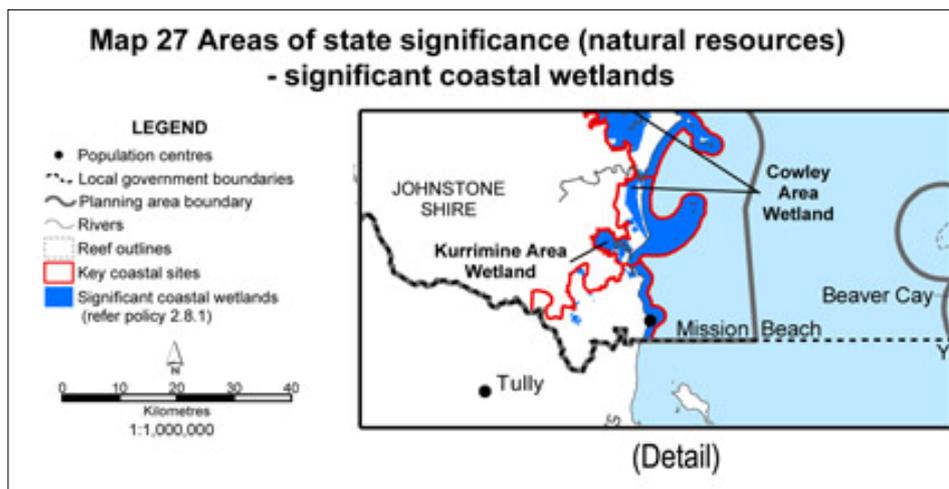
The reinstated sign tells how Clump Point is an important part of the Djiru country that includes story places, hunting and fishing grounds, waterholes, ceremonial, camp and burial sites.

John was emphatic in his speech that the Djiru people do not want development and particularly a marina to happen in Boat Bay.

**Djiru elder John Andy "was emphatic in his speech that the Djiru people do not want development, and in particular a marina, to happen in Boat Bay"**

Mission Beach Bulletin no 153 March 2010

All of Boat Bay is within a **Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP)** dark blue zone: **habitat protection**. In 2003 the nature of the GBRMP zones was changed, with the enactment of the **Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003**. The new mapping is statutory, that is, the provisions associated with each zone have the strength of law.



# Outstanding biodiversity supporting endangered species and ecosystems

A marina proposal would also trigger referral to the Commonwealth under the **Environment Protection and Conservation of Biodiversity (EPBC) Act**. This referral would relate to direct and flow-on impacts on listed species, such as migratory species (eg dugongs, turtles) and endangered species (eg cassowaries).



The Commonwealth Government recognises the authority of properly made state legislation and will not approve development activities which are inconsistent with state legislation.

The Tropical North Queensland Tourism Opportunities Plan (TOP), published in July 2010, selected Boat Bay as a site for a brand new large scale marina development. The TOP is not, however, a statutory plan. It has no legislative power. No matter how exciting it sounds to tourism proponents, it is little more than a wish list put together by a group of like-minded people.

It was extraordinarily unfortunate that the writers of the TOP did not consult the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) and their planners, legal advisers, or the local community. It was especially unfortunate that these offerings to business proponents were not assessed for their compliance with the relevant planning and environment law.

Some businesses recently arrived in Mission Beach may have been misled by not being made aware of most of the relevant legislation.



**Exceptionally high diversity of ecosystems**

- Wetlands of national significance
- Endangered grassland
- The only mangroves growing on basalt soil in the Wet Tropics
- Unique coastal basalt rainforest
- Critically endangered littoral rainforest

## Low impact tourism

The nature and beauty visitors travel to the area to enjoy can only be conserved to the extent that large maritime structures are not built within habitat protection zones.



The push for a marina would also see the Mission Beach community acrimoniously divided, as Cardwell was by the Oyster Point/"Port Hinchinbrook" debacle.

Community division would follow in the footsteps of the recent long-lasting example of Cardwell, where assault, death threats and other forms of intimidation were directed over many years against those who had opposed the environmentally damaging "Port Hinchinbrook" proposal.



## Oyster Point



This marina project was promoted on the grounds that the locals would get an "all-weather, all-tides boat ramp", in defiance of engineering advice that the site was subject to severe siltation. A good boat ramp was built, but it is far from "all-tide". Like the rest of "Port Hinchinbrook" marina and associated waterways, it cannot be kept open, due to severe siltation (as the 1977 Queensland Harbours and Marine Department Study forewarned) and lack of unlimited storage space for dredge spoil; seadumping of dredge spoil is not permitted.

The natural values of Bingil Bay, Boat Bay, Clump Point, Mission Beach and the Mission Beach hinterland, are well documented and have strong statutory protection.

THE NATURAL VALUES OF

# Clump Point



**How you can help**

Council in partnership with the traditional owners, community members and Terrain NRM is undertaking a range of projects including weed control, removal of rogue coconuts and revegetation.

Please enjoy the outstanding natural values of the Clump Point area and associated facilities including the Cutten Brothers walking track, boat ramp and headland lookout. Please report any unlawful clearing of vegetation on public land or disposal of waste including garden clippings and contact Council if you wish to become involved in any of the projects.

For further information please contact Cassowary Coast Regional Council on 4066 0055

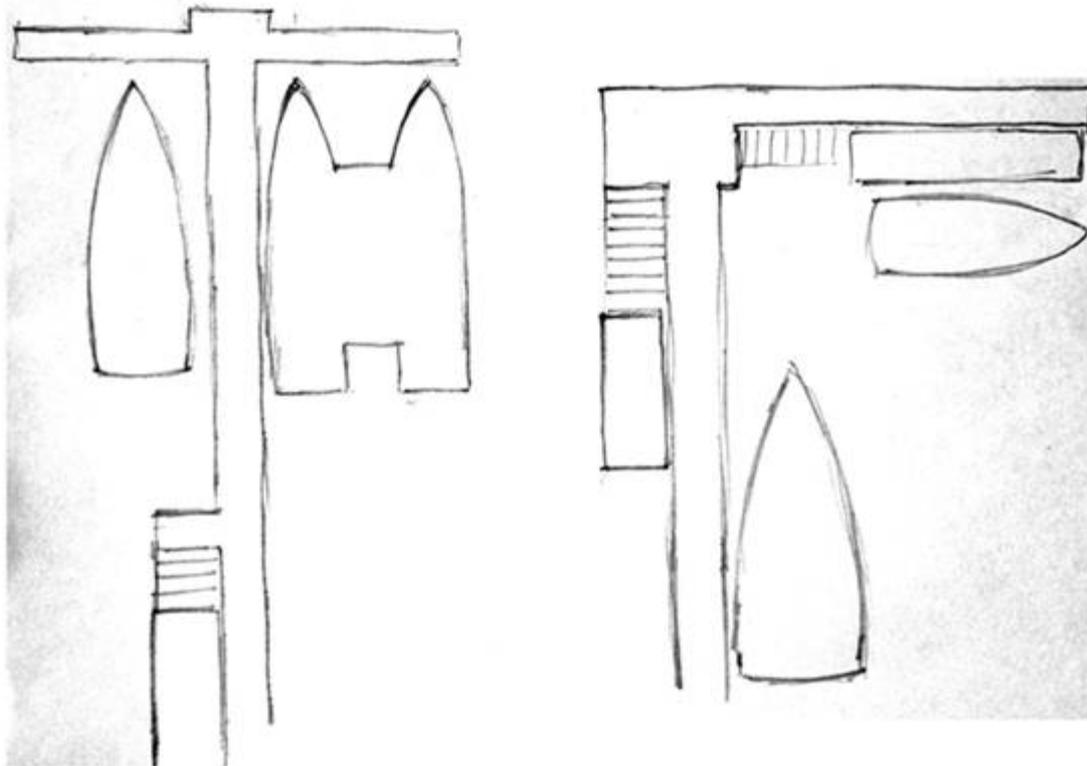


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Terrain/CCRC partnership produced brochure highlighting the importance of the natural values of Clump Point [Read brochure](#)

Support for a modern T-shaped jetty, with associated wharf area and pontoon landing would give Mission Beach the marine facilities it needs. It would be a major step toward securing a sustainable economic future for Mission Beach by offering a unique visitor experience based on the community vision of a relaxed village atmosphere.

## Jetty designed to needs



## Sustainable Community, environment and economy



A good tourism strategy starts with growing the local community. To quote the Pacific Area Travel Association....

**"The key phrase to planning should be residents first, tourists second. It sounds contradictory but it is the best kind of tourist development. It's the best, most secure, the longest lasting, and the most profitable" "The best visitor experience is to share for a moment a unique countryside and an enviable lifestyle"**



An appropriate rebuild of the present badly maintained jetty should be a priority and would not sacrifice the natural, social and cultural values of Mission Beach.



**For more information;**

<http://www.missionbeachcassowaries.com/boat-bay.html>

**Please contact**

[missionbeachnaturally@gmail.com](mailto:missionbeachnaturally@gmail.com)