

Government reps talk Boat Bay construction

CHARLIE PEEL

Community support for current design plans for the improvement of boating safety at the Perry Harvey Jetty is greater than 50 per cent, according to a government spokesman.

Representatives from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning were at Mission Beach last week, to answer questions from local residents regarding future works to the Perry Harvey Jetty and Clump Point boat ramp.

A spokesperson said that while support for the installation of a rock wall breakwater in front of the jetty is mixed, the plans to improve the boat ramp were popular.

"There has been strong support given for the improvement plans to the Clump Point boat ramp," the spokesperson said.

"It's been met positively by most people."

He said many locals had offered constructive suggestions, such as some sort of tie-off facility on the eastern ramp, to enable boaties to leave their boat briefly before backing a boat trailer down the ramp.

"This wasn't in the design but it is possible there might be a solution within the budget," the spokesperson said.

"It's clear people want us to make the current lanes more usable, while

still adding another lane and improving facilities.

"The people with concerns have been helpful and constructive and it's good for us to hear good local knowledge.

"That goes for both the boat ramp and jetty."

The spokesperson said the breakwater wall at the head of the Perry Harvey Jetty hadn't been as popular and reactions were mixed, with numbers slightly in favour of the current design.

Issues raised include water depth, sedimentation, environmental concerns and space for commercial operators.

The spokesperson said all of these factors were incorporated into the design, which was deemed appropriate for a vessel 24 metres long, with a 1.9m draft and 60 tonne displacement.

"The modelling we have done down in Sydney shows that this structure will enable boats to be tied safely to the jetty 99 per cent of the time, instead of the current 50 per cent," he said.

"The residents of Mission Beach have made it loud and clear that the jetty at Mission Beach needs to provide a chance for economic opportunity."

The spokesperson said the project was pending local support but if construction begins in April or May it can be completed by the end of the year.

Aurecon employees were seen conducting measurements near the Perry Harvey Jetty last Friday.

Wongaling Beach resident Ray Scarborough said that after speaking with the department representatives he felt more enlightened about the project, however, he still had concerns about access for large commercial operations.

"It has given me a bit of a better picture about what's happening," Mr Scarborough said.

"The plans aren't necessarily in conflict with what other people have envisioned for the area.

"I can understand both sides of the coin, but I do feel this process has given people some idea of what has gone into the design and where the project is heading."

On that other side of the coin are those who believe the rock wall at the end of the jetty will not be adequate for providing a safe environment for boaties and encouraging economic activity.

Director of Mission Beach Boat Harbour Tony Lee believes there are many questions that still need to answers.

"Where are commercial operators supposed to store their vessels, refuel and reload in rough conditions?" Mr Lee said.

"It seems like this venture will go ahead, but it's against common sense.



MORE LANES: Residents have urged the State Government to increase the usability of the current lanes at the Clump Point boat ramp, add a new lane, and to provide more parking for boaties.



AURECON: Aurecon workers were seen conducting measurement exercises near the Perry Harvey Jetty on Friday.