

MEDIA RELEASE

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Northeast Business Park to pursue appeal hearing

The developers of the long awaited North Harbour project near Caboolture have welcomed the finalisation of a preliminary court hearing that will ultimately clear the way for its appeal to the Planning and Environment Court to be heard next year.

Northeast Business Park Pty Ltd has appealed Moreton Bay Regional Council's part refusal of a planning approval application for the 760 hectare development.

Technical legal issues raised by Moreton Bay Regional Council relating to the lodging of NEBP's application have now been resolved, with Judge Robin QC ruling that NEBP had needed State Government consent to lodge its application to council.

NEBP is already working with the appropriate state agencies to seek that consent before the appeal can be heard, probably in the middle of next year.

Northeast Business Park Chief Executive Jeff Smith welcomed the resolution of the preliminary matters and said he was eager for the appeal itself to proceed.

"These preliminary hearings were brought on by council in an attempt to halt our appeal but all they have achieved is to slow the progress.

"The legal fees for both Morton Bay Regional Council and North East Business Park are mounting, with Council alone having spent \$600,000 of taxpayers' money already and we are not much closer to a resolution," he said.

"The Planning and Infrastructure Minister Sterling Hinchliffe said the court was the best placed to decide whether North Harbour should proceed, but this process is costly for both us and the ratepayers of Moreton Bay Regional Council," Mr Smith said.

Mr Smith said Council was focussing on narrow set of perceived environmental issues, but was ignoring NEBP's environmental undertakings.

As part of its application NEBP has committed to:

- Ongoing river bank restoration and maintenance dredging;
- A decrease in effluent going into the Caboolture River through treatment and use on site;
- Potential improvements to the fish resource through stocking with indigenous species; and
- Revegetation and rehabilitation of 9 km of riparian zone.
- Revegetation and continued management of 300 hectares of open space.

In addition NEBP is already carrying out extensive water quality studies and expects to be able to improve the Caboolture River system significantly through

- The rehabilitation and ongoing protection of creeks flowing into the river from the North Harbour site;
- The control of overland flow across the North Harbour site;
- A general clean up of the river itself; and
- The establishment of a 100m wide vegetation buffer on the development site that shields the river environmentally and visually.

Mr Smith said North Harbour's public safety and economic benefits also need to be considered.

Maritime Safety Queensland's Regional Harbour Master, Captain Richard Johnson, has responded positively to proposed improvements to the river's navigation channel, citing the improvements to boating safety and the growth of the marine industry in the area as significant benefits.

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