

Raby Bay canals

Community update

Updating residents of Raby Bay on issues relating to canals

Canal and lake refunds

A public meeting was held on 20 November 2017 at the Redland Performing Arts Centre, where BDO, the accounting company appointed to calculate and manage the refund, answered residents' questions in relation to refunds.

Reserve fund balances, calculation methodology and the refund process itself were some of the topics discussed, to clarify how the canal and lake levy refunds were calculated.

Questions asked included queries about the interest paid back to property owners and the link between the reserve balances and refund project.

BDO representatives and Council officers talked through the approach taken, explained how the refunds were generated and referred to the range of material on the website where all community members can review the process.

The distinction between the reserves and the refund project was explained. In some years Council spent more than was raised through the levies in that year, while in other years Council spent less. Based on

Council's external legal and financial advice, Council refunded the unspent special charges.

Attendees also heard how Council chose to apply interest to the refund amounts that was significantly higher than the interest revenue earned by Council and transferred to the reserve over the six financial years, and higher than standard commercial rates of around 3 per cent. It was actually based on rates from the Queensland Law Society and ranged from 9% to 11%.

The vast majority of ratepayers have now received their individual refunds from Council. Council took the proactive step to refund the unspent charges, following a review of relevant legislation.

A copy of the BDO report, its summary and Q&A's from the meeting are on the Council's website. They are also available at the Cleveland Customer Contact Centre for those without easy access to a computer and/or the internet.

If you cannot access these online documents please call Council on: 07 3829 8999. It is also on Council's website: www.redland.qld.gov.au

Have your say

Redland City Council maintains the canals at Raby Bay and Aquatic Paradise and the lake at Sovereign Waters. Activities include dredging the waterways so they remain navigable and repairing the revetment walls. Those who own canal or lake waterfront property pay the most for maintenance, however all ratepayers contribute to some degree through general rates.

Council is undertaking citywide community engagement to find the best way to manage and fund the maintenance required for our city's canals and lake.

Meetings have been held with ratepayer associations and estate ratepayers. Other community feedback opportunities will include open house displays, pop-up stands at local events, library displays, and telephone surveys. A survey on the use of the canals and lakes is available at www.yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/canal-and-lake-waterways.

In addition, a Citizen's Advisory Panel is being coordinated and comprises 40 randomly selected and independently recruited residents from Redlands. The panel includes 10 canal and lakefront residents, 10 coastal residents, 10 island residents, and 10 from the broader ratepayer group.

The Panel will hear from experts and local residents, when they meet over the next few months until February 2018, to carry out detailed deliberations and make recommendations to Council.

For more details visit: yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au

On 20 November, residents asked their refund queries of Council and BDO.





Setbacks to canal revetment walls

Redland City Council has been working with canal residents regarding the application of the nine metre setback from revetment walls on waterfront properties. Discussions have centred around three broad areas: structural integrity, amenity, and access to revetment walls for maintenance. Local Councillors in the areas of Raby Bay and Sovereign Waters and Council officers have met with local residents during November to hear their concerns on these complex issues.

Structural integrity

The Canal and Lakeside Structures Overlay (CLSO) came into effect as part of the Redlands Planning Scheme in March 2015. It is this overlay code which currently guides how revetment walls adjoining canals and lakes can be developed.

The overlay code triggers the requirement to obtain a planning approval where development is proposed within nine metres of a revetment wall. To demonstrate compliance with the code, engineering design certificates must be provided to Council to ensure that any development within that zone will not cause any movement or damage to the existing revetment wall and canal frontage.

However, Council was advised by state government that the Draft Redland City Plan 2015 could no longer regulate the impacts of development on the structural integrity of revetment walls as this matter is covered by the State Building Assessment Provisions. Instead, these impacts will be assessed as part of a building application, with an advisory note to certifiers in the Draft City Plan.

At this time Council continues to lobby the state government to specifically require the protection of the structural integrity of revetment walls in its building provisions. Depending on the response Council receives from state government, potential amendments to the draft City Plan may need to be further considered.

Amenity

Protecting the amenity of the canals (where new development is proposed within nine metres of a revetment wall) is also being discussed with residents, particularly the impacts on vistas and view lines.

The existing provisions contained within the Canal and Lakeside Structures Overlay and the provisions in the Draft Redland City Plan 2015 specifically protect the amenity of the canals. For proposed development in Raby Bay, Aquatic Paradise and Sovereign Waters, the provisions ensure that the amenity of adjoining premises is maintained by:

- ensuring consistency with the setbacks of adjoining buildings and structures, and
- avoiding dominating or detracting from the built form, waterway and landscape setting of the location.

Council is considering stringent planning controls and will seek residents input into any changes to the provisions.

Access for maintenance

Council is currently evaluating the best way to address concerns about structures overhanging revetment walls, and the potential for such development to affect the costs associated with repair and maintenance activities.

