

Coogee Coastal Action Coalition

MEDIA STATEMENT

10 February 2002

COMMUNITY OPPOSITION TO PORT CATHERINE CANAL DEVELOPMENT

A proposal to construct a residential canal development on one of the few remaining metropolitan beaches south of the river has prompted a group of concerned residents to form a new community group.

The Coogee Coastal Action Coalition (CCAC) was formed by about thirty residents at a meeting at Manning Park on Saturday. The meeting was attended by some of Coogee's oldest residents as well as a diverse mix of individuals from Fremantle, Hamilton Hill, Spearwood, Bibra Lake, Coolbellup, Wattleup and Cottesloe.

In a deal similar to the Court Government's failed Leighton Shores proposal, the new Government and developers Australand are proposing to build a Hillarys sized marina south of the old Fremantle Power Station and to the north of the main beach at Coogee. The proposal, which extends 380 metres into the ocean, is to be known as Port Catherine although it is two kilometres south of Catherine Point

Unlike Hillarys, the majority of the area behind the new breakwaters will be filled in to create new residential land over the existing beaches and ocean. The proposal also extends inland across existing regional nature reserves and includes the excavation of the Cockburn ridgeline which was previously earmarked for regionally important open space.

The CCAC claims that whilst different levels of government have been planning this canal development for years, they have completely failed to meaningfully consult with the community. The group, which is not against sustainable redevelopment of the area, has identified ten major concerns with the Port Catherine proposal, including:

1. the loss of existing beaches and recreation areas to be replaced by a private canal style development
2. the subsequent erosion of the main beach at Coogee due to the new marina groynes;
3. the devastating impact of the development on the dunes and ridgeline landscapes;
4. the loss of the remaining nearshore seagrass and impacts on important flora and fauna local to the area;
5. the need to remove existing breakwaters left behind by industry to allow for a natural beach rather than developing houses immediately behind them;
6. the loss of open space links between Manning Park, Beeliar Wetlands and the coastal reserves;
7. the poor environmental management of the existing area that has led to its degradation;
8. the state of the existing quarry and public safety concerns;
9. the lack of an overall coordinated strategic plan for the area incorporating the old Power Station and the failed industrial park at North Coogee;
10. the clean up of the toxic waste left behind by industry and the methods used to remove the contamination.

CCAC is holding a public meeting to establish a number of working groups to run its campaign. People interested in working to save the Coogee coastal zone and ridgeline should meet at Coogee Beach on the grassed area just south of the kiosk on Saturday 16th March at 2-00pm

Media Contact **Andrew Sullivan 9433 3397** or **0407 447 972**