



ABOVE AND RIGHT: Various scenes from Benwell Road beach.

## Some facts about Benwell Road beach

**Port of Townsville Limited (POTL) is aware of the value South Townsville residents and visitors place on access to the South Townsville beach at the end of Boundary Street on Benwell Road.**

**As the community may be aware, the area is proposed for a commercial marine precinct: Should this go ahead, the beach will be the site of the Marine Precinct and consequently will no longer be available to the public for current uses.**

**POTL would like to advise the community of the current situation:**

### **Whose land is it?**

South Townsville beach is reclaimed land permanently leased to the Port for Port-related uses. It is designated Strategic Port Land in the Port Land Use Plan.

### **Why could the public access it?**

The beach was earmarked for redevelopment as part of the Eastern Reclaim project in the 1990s but was not required at that time. POTL has allowed continued public access until the land is required. It is important to realise that the South Townsville Beach is not a "public beach" in the commonly accepted use of the term.

### **Is POTL looking at alternatives for the community?**

The beach has become a valued attraction for locals and visitors, so POTL has been actively seeking alternative recreation opportunities in anticipation of the time when the beach is needed for Port-related uses.

### **Why can't a new beach be created?**

Unfortunately it is not possible to create a new beach in the local area because all waterfront land on the western side of Ross River is taken up. The sand spit on the eastern side of Ross River is widely recognised as a sensitive environmental area for migratory birds and it is unlikely that people with dogs will be permitted in the area once the bridge over Ross River is constructed.

### **So what can be done?**

Main Roads, in conjunction with POTL, has made land available on the eastern side of Ross River to be included in a 585ha environmental reserve. This will provide new recreational opportunities for locals and visitors but, unfortunately, no dogs will be allowed. POTL has also provided a public environmental walkway at the end of Boundary Street for walking, jogging and on-leash dog walking.

Finally, POTL is seeking opportunities to incorporate access points to the river in the marine precinct development (within the boundaries of safety and security) and in any redevelopment of vacated Port land on Ross River and Ross Creek.





# Tell us what you think

Port of Townsville Limited (POTL) has employed independent consultants to meet with members of the community; including residents, businesses and all stakeholders; to get their thoughts on the proposed commercial marine precinct.

As well as making personal visits to homes and businesses in the South Townsville area to gain feedback about the project and its social impacts in general, the consultants have made trips to the beach to survey users. They have visited on weekday mornings and weekend afternoons when the tide is both in and out to get an accurate understanding of the situation.

Beach users are suggesting a variety of possible alternatives to enable them to continue their recreational activities should the marine precinct proceed.

All suggestions are valued and will be considered.

Any beach users who have not been surveyed are urged to contact the independent consultants (EBC) using the details below.

Please leave a message and your call will be returned.

## What have residents said so far?

- “If the beach could be incorporated into the marina it would be even better”.
- “It’s essential for the (commercial marine) precinct to happen”.
- “The beach was a reclaim anyway – it’s not like a natural beach is getting modified”.
- “As long as it creates plenty of work – that’s all I’m worried about” .
- “The biggest social impact will be the loss of public space... they can’t take everything and give nothing back.”
- “The precinct could be an interesting area – in places like Vancouver and Seattle they have boardwalks and fish markets... it could be quite attractive and you could potter about looking at the chandlers and tanks with fish.”



ABOVE: A consultant talks to beach users about how often they visit the beach. BELOW: A Sunday afternoon at Benwell Road beach.

## More information and feedback

For more information or to provide input into the Environmental Impact Study please contact the project team on:

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