



Greens NSW Submission

RE: **Pindimar Abalone Farm Project MP 10 0006**

Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001
urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed Pindimar Abalone Farm Project.

I have a number of concerns with the proposed development including the impact of a development of this size so close to a Marine Park Sanctuary Zone, the likelihood of high mortality rates of abalone in the final project and the risk of spreading disease in surrounding waters.

a. Marine Park Sanctuary Zone

The size of the development so close to a Marine Park Sanctuary Zone is a serious cause for concern, with particular concerns about the discharge of effluent into the surrounding pristine waters.

b. Mortality Risk for Abalone

Average year-round temperatures for the surrounding estuary waters are 20.63 degrees with average monthly temperatures going down to 19.1 Celsius at the lowest and 24.1 Celsius as the highest.¹ Information provided by the NSW Department of Primary Industries Abalone Hatchery Manual shows that for late juvenile and adult abalone (the stage they spend the longest in) optimal recommended water temperatures are between 14-18 degrees, 12-23 degrees is considered tolerable with temperatures above and below this being considered lethal.²

This means that the water drawn up for the project from the estuary will be of a temperature sufficient to cause mortality on numerous occasions each year. Data from the Manly Hydraulics Laboratory Report MHL913 from January 1999 shows that the temperature in the Port Stephens estuary is constant from the surface to the bottom at the point 9km from the heads, where this project is proposed to be situated.³

¹ <http://www.seatemperature.org/australia-pacific/australia/port-stephens-may.htm>

² <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/publications/species-saltwater/abalone-intensive-hatchery-production> page 31.

³ Port Stephens/Myall Lakes estuary processes study, NSW Department of Public Works and Services, Manly Hydraulics Laboratory, 1999



David Shoebridge MLC
Member of the NSW Legislative Council

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12 May 2014**

Effluent issues created by the farm are also anticipated to be substantial, particularly on occasions where large numbers of the thousands of abalone in the tanks are distressed or dying as a result of high water temperatures.

c. Disease risk

All of the above also heightens the risk of spread of disease by the project, including the risk of mollusc disease in surrounding areas. Research undertaken by the Victorian Department of Primary Industries identified the risks for abalone viral ganglioneuritis as including high stocking densities and high water temperatures, meaning water about 17.5 to 18 degrees Celsius.⁴ This is the precise mix of factors proposed for this project.

d. Poor circulation in the estuary

It is proposed that waste from the development will be pumped into the estuary. Contrary to the assertion by the applicant, the evidence from Manly Hydraulics Laboratory report is that flushing times for Port Stephens are estimated at 10-12 days. The impact of this pollution on the nearby Marine Park Sanctuary zone is therefore likely to be significant.

Finally, the previous version of this development was rejected as a result of a successful appeal to the Land and Environment Court and this larger proposal will only be more damaging to the environment.

We have further been advised that other abalone farms in Australia have been in marine environments, not in sensitive estuary environments like this. There are therefore heightened concerns about the precedent that would be set by approving such a contentious and damaging development.

For the reasons set out above I would urge the commission to reject this application.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office at david.shoebridge@parliament.nsw.gov.au or (02) 9230 3030 if you have any questions regarding this submission or require further information.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Shoebridge', written in a cursive style.

David Shoebridge
Greens NSW MP

⁴ <http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/fishing-and-hunting/fisheries/marine-pests-and-diseases/abalone-disease/research-and-surveillance/development-of-management-strategies-for-herpes-like-virus-infection-in-abalone>