



Speech by

Hon. Kate Jones

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Wednesday, 3 June 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Kirra Beach

Hon. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability) (9.59 am): The Bligh government is making progress on an election commitment to restore Kirra Beach to its former glory. Yesterday I met with Gold Coast Mayor, Ron Clarke, to progress a council partnership to remove much of the sand that has caused a great deal of frustration for residents and visitors. Councillor Clarke and I were of the same view, that action should be taken as soon as possible. We agreed that the first sand excavation works must commence next month.

The excess sand will initially be used to rebuild other beaches on the Gold Coast that have experienced severe erosion from the recent wild weather and king tides. It will also be used to fill in the water-ponding at Kirra. This is the first step in delivering on our government's \$1.5 million project to reduce the width of the famous Kirra Beach and have its famous surf break return much sooner. Once we have agreed on a project plan and stakeholder consultations have taken place on this plan, further work will begin on Kirra to move sand from the shoreline to the back of the beach to effectively narrow Kirra Beach.

While many Gold Coast beaches have suffered from severe erosion following the recent storms, Kirra Beach has held up very well against the intense power of the huge surf and king tides. The overall impact of the recent storm conditions on southern Gold Coast beaches will become clearer after the results of post storm event survey monitoring and a webcam beach width analysis are completed. Initial advice by the Department of Environment and Resource Management indicates that there has been some improvement at Kirra Beach. Pressure has recently been taken off Kirra with sand pumped by the Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing Project to Durambah Beach on the border to restore that eroded beach. We have also begun negotiating with the New South Wales government, our partner in the sand bypassing project, to develop longer term solutions to the problem of excessive sand build-up on the southern beaches.

Our government remains committed to a Kirra Beach that has been restored to its former glory and stays that way. I will ensure we deliver on that commitment by working closely with the Gold Coast City Council.