



29 July 2026

Hon Emily Bourke MLC
Minister For Climate, Environment and Water
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ADELAIDE SA 5001

Mr Ben Bruce
Chief Executive
Department for Environment and Water
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Dr Jon Gorvett
Chief Executive Officer
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BY EMAIL: Minister.Bourke@sa.gov.au; Ben.Bruce@sa.gov.au; yourepa@sa.gov.au

Dear Minister Bourke, Mr Bruce and Dr Gorvett,

**Adelaide Beach Management Review – 2026 Dredging and Sand Rehandling Operations:
Request for Clarification**

We write jointly following the Department for Environment and Water's (DEW) presentation to Council on Monday 27 July 2026 on the Adelaide Beach Management Review and the proposed 2026 dredging and sand recycling operations. We appreciated the briefing and recognise the substantial technical work DEW and its consultants have undertaken.

Council also wrote to DEW on 16 July 2026 seeking clarification on a number of technical, environmental and operational matters ahead of that presentation. A number of those matters remain unresolved, and Monday's presentation, particularly the description of a new sand rehandling process, has raised further questions from Council and from members of our community.

Mayor Evans would also like to thank Minister Bourke and Mr Bruce for the direct communication on Wednesday 29 July 2026, and for the openness both showed to facilitating information sharing with Council and with residents concerned about these coastal issues. This letter is intended to formalise, in writing, the matters raised in that conversation.

We would like to re-affirm Council remains committed to a constructive, collaborative relationship with DEW and the EPA in achieving a sustainable long-term outcome for Adelaide's beaches, and raise these questions in that spirit.

1. Sand rehandling and seabed impact

- The 2026 program introduces sand rehandling via cutter suction dredge, a step not used in the 2024 trial. What assurance and monitoring is in place to confirm the dredge lifts only the sand placed by the barge, rather than eroding the underlying seabed or beach profile, distinct from the barge-placement telemetry already described?
- What assessment has been made of the additional turbidity risk created by this three-stage process (barge drop, cutter resuspension, pipeline redeposit), and how will volumes be independently verified to prevent additional take from the surrounding seabed?

2. Trigger levels and public monitoring data

- What are the specific numeric environmental trigger values (turbidity, noise and other parameters) for the 2026 operations, over what averaging period are they assessed, and what is the timeframe for a decision to modify, pause or stop operations once a trigger is approached?
- Can buoy and satellite monitoring data be published in real time for public scrutiny, rather than only through periodic reporting?

3. Cumulative ecological impact

- Has DEW undertaken, or does it plan to undertake, a dedicated study of the cumulative ecological impact of sand placed at West Beach over recent years, beyond the shorter-term before-and-after monitoring done for the 2024 trial? If none is planned, why not?

4. Sand source consistency

- Several DEW technical positions have changed materially over time – including the existence of a viable marine sand source, seagrass risk, and northern beach sand grain size. A plain-language account of what changed and on what evidence would help rebuild confidence. Can DEW also confirm the 2026 program, which includes an external Outer Harbour source, remains consistent with prior Ministerial correspondence describing recycled sand as sourced from the northern beaches?

5. EPA consultation and ongoing role

- What feedback did the EPA receive during consultation on the 2026 Dredge Management Plan and licence application, and how was it considered?
- Beyond setting licence conditions, what ongoing role will the EPA play in monitoring compliance and enforcing a stop-work direction, and will Council be advised in real time of any breach?

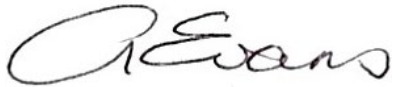
6. Future borrow areas and program review

- Does NBA4 remain under investigation as a future borrow area, and would any future proposal require separate environmental assessment, EPA approval and community consultation?
- Following the 2026 operations, what process will determine whether the long-term \$190 million program needs refinement, and how frequently will it be independently reviewed? Is there a target design of sand profile that can be made public so the community can understand the end state we are collectively aiming for?

We recognise most of these questions sit within DEW's and the EPA's technical and regulatory responsibilities rather than matters of Government policy, and seek clarification accordingly.

Given the 2026 operations are proposed to commence in Winter/Spring 2026, we would appreciate a written response at your earliest convenience, and remain very happy to meet to discuss any of the above.

Yours sincerely



Angela Evans
Mayor
City of Charles Sturt



Paul Sutton
Chief Executive Officer
City of Charles Sturt