

All candidates support jetty

With just over eight weeks before the state election on March 18, The Times will be publishing weekly updates on the Finnis candidates views on a range of local issues of significance. A number of set questions have been sent to each. Today, the candidates speak out on the future of the Rapid Bay Jetty.

By **CAROLYN JEFFREY**

RAPID BAY - The future looks bright for the Rapid Bay jetty if pledges from the state election candidates in Finnis can be followed through to action.

All four of the candidates have expressed concern about the negative impact the jetty's closure has had on the surrounding economy and tourism numbers.

The best news has come from **ALP candidate, Mary-Lou Corcoran**, who says Transport Minister Patrick Conlon has assured her the Labor government was committed to reopening the jetty.

She said the Minister was currently finalising the amount the government was able to commit to the jetty.

"I understand ... that the matter will be considered by the Major Projects Committee of Cabinet in the next few weeks," Ms Corcoran said.

She said she had pointed out to the Minister the social, economic and environmental



importance of the jetty to the community.

"I was extremely pleased that he reacted so positively and assured me that the government was committed to reopening the jetty as soon as the final decision to undertake the work had been approved."

The **SA Democrats candidate Kevin Bartolo** says the jetty should not only be repaired, but also upgraded.

"With the presence of SA's marine emblem, the Leafy Sea Dragon, the SA Democrats believe there is scope to develop a significant tourist attraction," Mr Bartolo said in response to questioning from *The Times*.

"But, for this to happen, the jetty and its environs must be not only maintained, but improved in order to induce tourists to visit the

▲ SUPPORT FOR REPAIRS ... Rapid Bay Jetty at sunset taken by Carl Mooney. Much of the jetty has been closed to the public since December 2004. Now there's new hope with all four candidates for the state seat of Finnis supporting repairs to have it reopened.

Should the jetty be reopened?



Kevin Bartolo
- Democrats
YES



Michael Pengilly
- Liberal
YES



Mary-Lou Corcoran
- ALP
YES



Kym McHugh
Ind. National
YES

area and enjoy its many attractions."

Liberal candidate Michael Pengilly supports the immediate restoration.

"The restoration should include the full length of the main area and the right arm of the jetty," Mr Pengilly said.

"Funds exceeding \$4million will need to be allocated."

Independent National Kym McHugh would join with Yankalilla council in its lobbying for funding to repair the jetty, if elected on March 18.

"I have enjoyed the unique experience of scuba diving from this jetty with the leafy sea dragons and would hope that future generations will be able to do the same," Mr McHugh said.

"This is a very important recreational fishing, diving and tourism asset for the Fleurieu Peninsula and a reminder of industry of past days when Adelaide Brighton Cement virtually built a community at Rapid Bay.

"If this jetty was located on a metropolitan beach or in a marginal electorate it would have been fixed by now."

THE ISSUE:

► **December 2004:** Due to serious damage caused by storms (and a lack of maintenance) Rapid Bay Jetty closed to the public. Fence erected at Bent 26, about 130m from the start of the jetty.

► **Repair costs:** Quotes range from \$3.9-\$8 million.

► **Lobbying:** The reopening of the jetty has been the subject of petitions and lobbying from a range of organisations including Yankalilla council and the newly-formed Friends of Rapid Bay Jetty.

► **The latest:** The jetty has been the subject of an environmental report and the results are to be reported to State Cabinet this year.

Last month vandals or users of the jetty cut a large hole in the security fencing to allow access to the more popular parts of the jetty.

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