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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Further changes at Abbot Point?**

The possibility of land-based disposal of dredge spoil at Abbot Point was today greeted with caution by North Queensland Conservation Council.

‘So far all we, and apparently the Minister, know is that North Queensland Bulk Ports have been looking at land-based sites for the disposal of the three million cubic metres of dredge spoil that it has to deal with at Abbot Point if the expansion goes ahead’, said NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

‘We are not surprised that they are looking at land-based sites; they are required to do so under the Act and the guidelines. However, we would challenge any so-called solution that just saw the transfer of environmental damage from one site to another’ she said.

‘Before we get too excited we, and the Minister, need full details.

‘ We would also be looking for the permits that have been provided by the GBR Marine Park Authority to be revoked, and an assurance that the public would not be left picking up the tab for any more expensive but better dredging or dumping option.

‘Above all, we want to see a firm commitment from the Minister that he has banned the dumping of all dredge spoil throughout the entire Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

‘At the moment, all the Minister is promising is that spoil from capital dredging will not be dumped in the Marine Park. His commitment excludes the much larger amount of dredge spoil associated with

maintenance dredging and still allows dumping in the World Heritage Area' Ms Tubman said.