



Bartholomew leads fight to restore popular beach

Kirra surfers call for action on pointbreak

by Gemma Patterson

THE Titans have Skilled Park, now Gold Coast surfers want their own 'stadium'.

Surfing legend Wayne 'Rabbit' Bartholomew says the Kirra break is like a stadium of the surf, and he wants governments to cough up funds to restore it to its former glory.

"Governments make parks, raceways and stadiums like Skilled Park, they make all these public amenities for sports but not for surfing," said Mr Bartholomew.

"We have 50,000 to 70,000 recreational surfers living on the Gold Coast and the industry pumps hundreds of millions of dollars into the economy every year.

"The Government needs to look at that and finally recognise that surfing is a recreational amenity and Kirra

Point needs to be upgraded."

Mr Bartholomew, who sits on the Kirra Point Committee, has been fighting to bring back the Kirra break for more than 10 years, ever since 30m was lopped off the Kirra groyne.

He said the pointbreak was now rarely able to be surfed because of sand build-up caused by dredging and pumping.

At a cost of \$150,000, geo-textile bags would extend the end of the Kirra groyne to its pre-1996 length, but the city council says more details are needed on adverse affects.

Other ideas to bring back Kirra include a \$4 million additional outlet farther to the west for pumped sand, said Mr Bartholomew.

The council has approached the Environmental Protection Authority and is now awaiting a response from the State Government about

the outlet.

A third community-backed option is for new grids to be created offshore at Kirra and Bilinga, costing hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"Sand pumped from the beach would be placed in these grids and that will ease the sand flow into Kirra," said Mr Bartholomew. "At the moment the dredged sand is being dumped into the Coolangatta bay."

With the council election this Saturday, Division 14 councillor Chris Robbins has also voiced frustration over the Kirra break.

"I am very keen to see a solution to the problems caused by the massive sand build-up in Kirra as it is affecting both the economy of Kirra and the enjoyment of the region by surfers, divers and all the residents who love this beautiful place," she said.



Surf legend and Kirra Point Committee member Wayne Bartholomew wants Kirra restored to its former glory