
From: Catherine Thompson [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 4:33 PM
To: Islands2050 <Islands2050@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: Feedback re Gabriola Island OCP Review

Hello

I live on Gabriola Island and I would like to provide feedback on the proposed 200-metre shoreline buffer.

I support and understand the principle that planning rules should consider environmental protection and the protection of archeological or Indigenous areas.

But I have deep concerns about the proposed 200-metre buffer. I realize it will simply inform planning decisions rather than impose specific courses of action, but it is far too blunt an instrument. If the Trust approves the buffer as proposed, I believe it could impose a heavy burden on homeowners who wish to do even simple renovations or improvements to their property. Any protection should be applied only if there is some evidence that there is a likelihood of environmental damage or the presence of Indigenous/archeological heritage - e.g. the trust or the region should map areas of environmental sensitivity or known Indigenous presence and create a buffer on those areas, rather than creating a blanket 200-metre buffer around the entire island.

A blanket buffer imposes a reverse onus on any property owner to prove that there is no environmental or archaeological concern. That will greatly increase the cost of any renovation if a homeowner is required to pay professionals to carry out environmental or archeological assessments, even in areas where the possibility of that heritage is extremely unlikely. It is an unnecessary burden in cases where there is little chance of finding the heritage that the Trust wants to protect.

I would also urge you to reconsider the limit of 200 metres. Two hundred metres is the length of 15 school buses or two football fields. That is a large distance from the actual shoreline. A 200-metre buffer might be necessary in areas where there is evidence of significant erosion, but it is too sweeping to simply impose it on the entire coastline of the island, without any evidence of a specific need to do so.

The buffer as proposed is a clumsy instrument that will needlessly impose a heavy burden on far too many properties. If you want to build public support for important shoreline protection, the buffer must be refined to cover areas where environmental or archeological heritage is actually likely under threat

Thanks for your consideration.

Catherine Thompson
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Gabriola