

‘20191119 “Gold Coast cruise ship terminal will be rigorously assessed’

The proposed cruise ship terminal on The Spit has taken a significant step forward with the starting gun fired on the next stage of planning’.

Paul Weston, Gold Coast Bulletin
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THE proposed Gold Coast cruise ship terminal has taken a significant step forward.

The Bulletin can reveal Queensland’s Independent Co-ordinator General has given “co-ordinated status” for the project, meaning the next stage of planning can now begin.

Council will launch public consultation on the oceanside CST with the \$650 million jetty to face rigorous assessment by the State Government.



The proposed Oceanside cruise ship terminal on The Spit at the Gold Coast.

SPIT MASTERPLAN KICKS OFF WITH WORK ON NEW PROJECTS

The CST, proposed for a site at Philip Park on The Spit, will be subjected to a detailed environmental impact statement.

A draft terms of reference will go out for “detailed” public consultation, then the council will prepare the EIS, which again faces scrutiny from residents before the Co-ordinator General makes a final decision.

A Government source says the results of the consultation will be “rigorously assessed” by the Co-ordinator General, the government’s major project regulator.



Designs for the proposed Oceanside cruise ship terminal at The Spit on the Gold Coast.

The project by being awarded co-ordinated project declaration does not mean it has obtained government approval or support.

State Development Minister Cameron Dick said major projects like the oceanside CST could only proceed if they stacked up environmentally, economically and socially.

“This a complex project, and accordingly, a comprehensive EIS is the best way to ensure the needs of the environment and the community are considered,” Mr Dick said.

Details provided by the government show the proposed project includes a 950m jetty, a wharf with a swing basin, mooring and berthing areas and a platform to transfer luggage, passengers and supplies.



The Spit master plan - showing a potential cruise ship terminal.

A 780m breakwater running parallel to the shore at Main Beach will need to be built to “protect the terminal and ships from ocean swell”. If successful with the bid, council’s plans include a terminal building in the park.

The current oceanside cruise ship terminal proposal was presented to the Co-Ordinator General in 2017 but council was advised that the master planning for The Spit would occur first.

The Government released The Spit master plan in May, and it means the CST must now be considered within the context of that plan for an Ocean Park.

Mr Dick said it was not the first time that a CST had been proposed on the Coast with several proponents pursuing plans as early as 2003. The EIS will take 18 months to two years.

“As I have made clear throughout the master plan process, the Queensland Government neither supports nor opposes a cruise ship terminal on the Gold Coast,” he said.

In June this year, as part of the Spit master plan process, pictures of the council design were provided of the CST.



The Spit master plan with a cruise ship terminal.

The CST was costed between \$400 million and \$650 million, and the master plan indicated it must be positioned to “provide a strong address” to Seaworld Dve with the facility contributing to the streetscape and visually linking to a village centre across the road.

The terminal is set back from the dunes and must provide enough space for a pathway west of the beach. Landscaping would provide buffers which screens views of the terminal from the beach.

The State Government, in preparing the master plan, announced the process would not determine whether a cruise ship terminal should go ahead or be stopped.

The master plan’s “alternative” Philip Park site is an “attractive and landscaped area” with low-key parking including a covered area for events such as Aboriginal cultural experiences.

The council budget in July provided funding of \$1.25 million for further studies on the proposed offshore cruise ship terminal. Councillors Glenn Tozer, Peter Young and Daphne McDonald voted against it.



Gold Coast Cruise Ship Terminal early designs.

Mayor Tom Tate, after delivering the budget, strongly rejected suggestions he had lost his passion for the project, saying the CST was “put on pause” for the master plan.

“Now what we want is a terms of reference similar to the Port of Brisbane. Why should it be any different, so give us that,” he said.

“We will be doing a business case. The next bit is an environmental impact study. That is what the funding is for.

“We tick those two boxes then it will go to the State Government for the tick. The people on the Gold Coast want it, whether it happens in a year or two it doesn’t really matter, as long as we get it for the city.”

If an environmental impact report flagged problems, the Mayor said he would be “the first person to vote it down”.

Comment:

It is no surprise to Gecko that the cruise ship terminal proposal has been made a coordinated project and we welcome the fact that at last the truth of all those redacted reports will be made publicly available and due diligence will be followed. Our concerns at present relate to the cost of the Impact Assessment, again being paid for by ratepayers, instead of a private developer because the mayor has apparently been unable to find a private backer. Residents really need to consider carefully at next year's Council elections whether they want to foot the bill for this dubious proposal. Not only will the city lose Philip Park, worth millions, but in the unlikely approval of the project, they could be up for \$600 million in construction costs and more for running costs if a private partner cannot be found.

<https://www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/news/council/gold-coast-cruise-ship-terminal-will-be-rigorously-assessed/news-story/6417e2b8d7ac8266ae6e78f8354415a7>