

Council Policy ignored in Spit Light rail Consultation

MEDIA RELEASE 28/4/2017

Gecko Environment Council has written to the CEO of Gold Coast City Council to ask for an explanation of why the correct process of consultation was not followed in the Light rail proposal for The Spit.

Lois Levy, Gecko Campaigner said “Gecko is extremely disturbed at the process undertaken to have a light rail extension to The Spit via Main Beach and we are seeking an explanation of the failure of due process to be followed. The lack of process appears to be a breach of the Local Government: *Act Section 176 (a) appropriate standards of conduct and performance are maintained; and section 171(3) or 173(4) (a) a councillor failing to comply with the local government’s procedures*”.

The first the community knew about this proposal was a posting on the Mayor’s Facebook page and an article in the Sunday Mail, 2nd April. It was immediately obvious, to campaigners for The Spit to remain low rise development, that this was a ruse to enable high rise development as high rise development is permitted 800m either side of the light rail track

Lois Levy said “To the best of our knowledge there has never been a proposal or resolution taken to Council as required, nor has the proposal been discussed by the Infrastructure Committee despite the obvious importance and major financial commitment involved in such a proposal. Indeed Councillors were only informed about the proposal by an email from the Mayor after the article had appeared in the media. There is still no resolution as required.”

No business case for has been put forward to Council and the community and it would appear that this proposal is entirely to facilitate the development of high rise buildings on The Spit by Sunland, ASF and perhaps other developers.

Gecko asks by whom and how a Council ‘Haveyoursay’ questionnaire to the public was authorised for a major project with no input from our elected representatives and the required resolution. The City of Gold Coast Community Consultation policy appears to have been completely ignored.

The questionnaire provides four options with no background information on any option, its cost, who would pay for it and no information about the consequences of such a proposal, namely that high rise and high density development is permitted 800m either side of the light rail track. Those residents and businesses directly affected by this proposal, such as those in Tedder Ave, were not informed or consulted and a rightly angry at this process which is already having dire consequences to their livelihoods and lifestyle.

The Mayor has suggested in the past that the funding for this light rail extension to The Spit could come from Sunland Development Company and/ or ASF, however it is our understanding that the legislation covering infrastructure contributions from developers does not cover public transport. If this is so, the community is entitled to know how such an expensive proposal could be funded.

Contact: Lois Levy

Gecko Campaign Coordinator. 0412 724 222