

Media Release

Councillors- Vote No!

Gecko- Gold Coast and Hinterland Environment Council Assoc. Inc. (Gecko) today wrote to all Councillors expressing its members' grave concerns that Council may continue to support the ASF possible proposal tomorrow's Special Council meeting.

The Council will be voting tomorrow on the following motion framed by Council officers:
Motion to vote that "Council to support the continued application of due process and consideration in regard to the ASF proposal **as it relates to the IRD process.**" **Item 2** for the **Special Council Meeting** to be held Friday, 2 May 2014.

Gecko Secretary Rose Adams said, "Our members are urging Councillors to vote against this proposed motion for the following reasons:-

- 1. It is not Council's role to support the ASF proposal as it relates to the IRD process, and the ASF Consortium's bid for a casino licence.** This is a separate process to the Broadwater Marine Project and Council should not be involved in demonstrating favour to a preferred candidate for the granting of a casino licence. There are two companies on the Gold Coast bidding for a casino licence and Council has no place supporting one over the other. The other company Ridong has at least purchased their own land for the IRD and is not seeking to take 75 hectares of irreplaceable public open space in the Broadwater away from the people of the Gold Coast. We note that Council officers who prepared the report for this Friday's Special meeting have finally realised, in *13 Stakeholder Impacts*, that the population growth of the city requires all of the Broadwater public open space.
- 2. Council continues to fail in its probity duty of care with its failure to investigate the fraud and corruption involved with two of the companies that make up the ASF Consortium.** As reported in the Australian newspaper April 19-20, the two companies CCCC Guangzhou Dredging and all its subsidiaries and China State Construction Engineering Corp have been banned by the World Bank and other banks for 8 years from 2011 for fraud and corruption in two large projects in the Philippines.
- 3. Council must be aware that ASF Consortium falsely listed the company with the ASX as being a preferred proponent. This is now being investigated by ASX and may be referred to ASIC because** of its impact on share prices when they are only a possible proponent.
- 4. There is no Broadwater Marine Project to consider, let alone vote on this Friday.** Deputy Premier Seeney has stated in his letter of 8th April that the Broadwater Marine Project process is now complete and there is no need for an additional MOU. ASF have failed to produce a proposal that meets the criteria of Deputy Premier Seeney's letter to Mayor Tate of 12th February and have only produced a series of pictures and vague information in the lead up to their popularity poll which was required to be completed by 5th May 2014. There are **no facts, no technical information, no detailed plans, no definite site for a CST.** The Council Officer report states, 5.2, that the permission by State Government to allow ASF to release the EOI information in regard to the IRD process may not be relevant as the situation has changed.

5. **The ASF “Community Consultation”** was a farce and could not be considered “appeared adequate” (Council report 2/5/2014, 5.3, Dot point 4). Council can have no confidence in whatever the results are of this “consultation.” **The consultation vote was about a casino licence application, not the Broadwater Marine Project and Council should not be involved in the IRD casino licence application process.** The sample of Gold Coasters involved in this popularity poll were **not provided with detailed, accurate and verifiable information** on which to make a judgement as to whether it is desirable to proceed with the ASF possible proposal. **Their vote was uninformed which is against the most basic of community consultation principles.**

The sampling was very strange in that those telephoned were asked if there was a male aged between 18-34 years and only if this person did not exist in the home or was absent at the time of the call did they move to 'the oldest male in the household' and if they were not present or did not inhabit that household then they would survey the person who first answered the phone (often a female). Was this to purposely bias the results by surveying those most likely in the household to be unemployed or employed in trades or the construction industry? i.e. to pitch the to the 'we need jobs demographic' and unsupported claim that 'ASF will create 12,275 jobs' for GC?

6. **There are serious risks to this ASF possible proposal which Councillors appear to be intent on ignoring.**

- **There is no mandate in the community for this project.** The Mayor’s claim that he has a mandate is mistaken as the majority of voters were unaware of his support for a CST in the 24 hours prior to the Council election of 2012. Note also this was for a CST only, not a casino licence or takeover of the entire Broadwater public open space. Also please note Deputy Premier Seeney’s requirement that “....”*that any gaming licence granted would be conditional on **the prior establishment and ongoing operation of a successful cruise ship terminal.***”
- **Councillors, like the public, will be voting on a casino licence application, not a BMP** application and there is no verifiable factual information about either proposal, only non-verifiable claims on the so called GC evolution website put up by ASF.
- **Any cruise terminal is not likely to be financially viable** as a stand-alone project as stated in the AEC Report 2012 even if it could be guaranteed that sufficient number of ships could access the Broadwater under all weather and tide conditions. It must be remember this project will not be a home port. Will the city be left with the costs of a failed CST project?”

Despite repeated assertions that the ASF possible proposal would be at no risk to Gold Coast residents, Council cannot guarantee that there will not be an impact on revetment walls in rivers and canals, or that sea level rise and storm surge will not adversely affect development on Wavebreak island or that the influx of an undisclosed number of dwellings will not adversely affect the market. Council has already spent well over \$500,000 on this possible project, which is supposedly at no cost to Council, and appears from the Officer’s report to be considering spending another \$1 million. **How can Council justify this** when the city is struggling to pay for the Commonwealth Games as well as normal expenditure and now has major expenses in regarding the IT system?

Gecko members would like all residents to contact their Councillors and urge them to be prudent and uphold their duty of care and vote against continuing this process relating to both the Broadwater Marine Project and the Integrated Resort Development process.

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