



12 December 2019

Inquiry into the Implementation of the Spit Master Plan

As the Chief Executive of the Gold Coast's peak destination marketing agency, Destination Gold Coast, I appreciate the opportunity to provide input relating to *The Spit Master Plan Bill 2019 (Bill)*.

For the Gold Coast to remain the nation's premier leisure destination in highly competitive tourism environment, there is a need for continued investment in catalytic infrastructure, product and experiences that will attract, grow and sustain visitation for domestic and international priority source markets.

With the destination's long-term economic best interests in mind, it's paramount that we strike a balance between protecting environmental and community values and facilitating demand that drives critical development opportunities.

As such, on behalf of Destination Gold Coast, I would like to comment on the following aspects of the Spit Master Plan Bill:

(a) Streamline the process for the granting of particular interests in land and road closures in the master plan area to accelerate the site release program:

Time is of the essence to responsibly deliver catalytic and supporting projects that will meet or exceed the needs of visitors from our priority source markets. As a consumer led, experience focused marketing organisation, Destination Gold Coast advocates streamlining the process to undertake this significant project so long as best practice, responsible oversight is administered throughout planning and development.

(b) Expand the Gold Coast Waterways Authority's roles, scope and capabilities to enable it to deliver the capital works program:

Based on my direct interaction and former status as a Director of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority (GCWA) Board of Directors, I endorse the expansion of the GCWA's capacity to deliver the capital works program.

(b.1) Gold Coast Waterways Authority Board Composition

Based on the direct impact potential that the implementation of the Spit Master Plan will have on the local visitor economy, I strongly advocate for the inclusion of an Executive team member from Destination Gold Coast to be appointed to the Gold Coast Waterways Authority's Board of Directors.

Conclusion

The development of new tourism infrastructure has a direct tangible effect on Gold Coast's visitation and strength of the visitor economy. Globally, and against the Gold Coast's domestic competitor set

of Sydney, Melbourne Brisbane, Adelaide and Tasmania, tourism infrastructure investment continues at a formidable rate. There is significant risk to our local economy if the Gold Coast fails to match or exceed the pace of global tourism experience development. Through collaborative partnerships, a more determined and outcomes-focused step-change in the approach to delivering tourism infrastructure must be embraced, so that our economy continues to prosper. As a world-class leisure and business events destination, attracting investment and the delivery of sustainable destination development and marketing will ultimately define the effectiveness of Gold Coast's performance in the years to come.

The team and I at Destination Gold Coast are committed to building a better Gold Coast whilst delivering return on investment for the tourism sector and wider community for years to come.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide input for this important matter.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please don't hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] or via email: [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely



Annaliese Battista
Chief Executive Officer