

Great Keppel Island Rejuvenation Pilot

Project Update

Edition 2, January 2019

Credit: Capricorn Enterprise

About the project

The Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development and the Commonwealth Games (DITID) is leading the Great Keppel Island (GKI) Rejuvenation Pilot. The project aims to facilitate the growth of tourism on GKI, and in the surrounding region, with the Queensland Government providing up to \$25 million towards mainland connected common-user water and electricity infrastructure to support existing tourism operators, residents, and future tourism development projects.

Scope

The project involves the installation of approximately 13.5km of power, water and telecommunications infrastructure via submarine connections from Emu Park across Keppel Bay to GKI.

Specifically the project includes:

- design, manufacture, supply and installation of submarine potable water pipeline and high voltage submarine cable complete with integrated fibre optic element. The services will be installed across Keppel Bay, buried two metres below the sea floor
- upgrades and connection to the mainland electrical network
- upgrades and connection to the potable water network.

The project scope also includes the supply and installation of supporting infrastructure including on-island reticulation, pumping stations, substations and a reservoir.

Project update

The project is now in the planning and design phase, which will run until June 2019.

Recent project activities include:

- continuing to work with agencies such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) around relevant approvals and conditions
- commencing marine and land-based survey and monitoring work
- preliminary electrical, hydraulic and civil design
- engaging with Traditional Owners regarding development of Cultural Heritage Management Plans and opportunities for employment and participation in the project
- continuing a program of stakeholder and community engagement
- providing investment attraction support for the GKI Resort investment, including supporting a meeting between the potential investors, residents and Traditional Owners on GKI in November 2018.

GBRMPA has approved a shorter services corridor which goes through less environmentally sensitive areas.

The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) worked closely with the GKI resort's current lessee to ensure demolition works were undertaken to prepare the resort site for future construction, and to assist parties involved in the planned sale and lease transfer process.



Great Keppel Island
Credit: Capricorn Enterprise

Environmental monitoring

Environmental specialists have been assisting in the development of a pre-construction environmental monitoring program.

This program will provide a baseline against which monitoring during the construction and operations phases can be compared, to ensure the project meets approval conditions of the Queensland and Australian Governments including GBRMPA.

Marine water quality monitoring commenced in November 2018. Remaining elements of the pre-construction survey program will commence following approval of these sections by relevant agencies.

The GKI Project team has engaged Traditional Owner representatives to provide cultural heritage advice where appropriate as part of the survey program.

Stakeholder engagement

Key stakeholder engagement activities include:

- engagement with the Woppaburra and Darumbal traditional owner groups in relation to work opportunities and development of Cultural Heritage Management Plans
- regular meetings with GKI residents and businesses
- Livingstone Shire Council's (LSC) GKI Community Meeting on 23 October 2018
- formation of a Stakeholder Advisory Group which includes representatives from DITID, Livingstone Shire Council, tourism bodies, tourism operators, GBRMPA, Traditional Owner groups and Energy Queensland.

A community information session is planned to be held at Yeppoon in early 2019.

Where to from here?

Work will continue on refining the project through the planning and design phase which runs to June 2019. This includes further technical design work, programming delivery, progressing monitoring and geotechnical investigations and continuing to engage with key stakeholders including State and Federal Government agencies. This includes pursuit of a Federal Government funding contribution.



Credit: Capricorn Enterprise

Stay informed

If you would like to receive future project updates, please subscribe to gkiproject@ditid.qld.gov.au

Further information

For more information on the GKI Rejuvenation Pilot (power and water connection) please contact:

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Questions and Answers

In order to assist stakeholders, this section provides information on a broad range of GKI matters. (Please note that these may not directly relate to the power and water project, or be the responsibility of DITID.)

Which key organisations have a role in management and development of GKI?

Organisation	Responsibilities
Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development and the Commonwealth Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GKI power and water project Tourism investment attraction Tourism industry development
Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lease transfer process Financial and Managerial Capability Assessment Management of leases Native Title
Livingstone Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with DITID to facilitate power and water infrastructure Responsibilities include water, waste, sewage and pest management Biosecurity management
Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry development Coordinated planning approvals (the Coordinator-General approved the GKI Resort Project subject to conditions in March 2013)
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Permits for pre and post construction and installation
Department of Environment and Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage Approvals for environmentally relevant activities, such as authorising sewerage treatment plants

Why is the Queensland Government not progressing renewable technology for the power and water?

The mainland connection was selected following detailed assessment of the technical, environmental, social and economic merits of a range of options including renewable and non-renewable alternatives. A renewable energy option for the initial stages of development was not considered feasible due to:

- environmental impacts, especially land clearing
- the capital and operational costs being significantly higher
- less resilience to cyclone or severe weather events.

While the mainland connection option is being progressed, there will be capability to incorporate renewable energy as part of the planned resort development to complement mainland power.

The mainland connection to GKI was considered as part of the original 2013 GKI Resort Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). DITID is now leading the project as part of the Queensland Government's 2017 election commitment to support the rejuvenation of GKI.

What is the footprint of leasehold land currently under discussion for transfer?

The proposed transfer of leasehold land on GKI includes all four leases on GKI currently held by Tower Holdings. The total development footprint for the GKI Resort is 162 hectares. These four leases are:

- Perpetual Lease (the old resort site)
- Marina Lease
- Airstrip Lease
- Clam Bay and Environmental Precinct Lease.

Tower Holdings also hold a lease over the underwater observatory on Middle Island which is not part of the lease transfer request.



Credit: Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy



Credit: Tower Holdings

What will be delivered under the GKI resort development plan?

The resort facility to be constructed on GKI and the development timeframes will be negotiated between the proposed purchaser of the leases and the Queensland Government.

The proposed development, as outlined in the 2013 EIS included:

- 250-room hotel
- 750 eco-tourism villas
- 300 eco-tourism apartments
- 18-hole championship golf course
- retail village
- relocation and extension of the airstrip
- yacht club and 250-berth marina.

As approved through the EIS, proposed development on Lot 21 includes an 18 hole golf course and associated facilities, up to 750 accommodation villas and an Environmental Protection Precinct which will be managed by the lessee to protect existing environmental and cultural values and support public access for recreation.

While the specifics of what the purchaser of the leases will deliver is still to be negotiated, details of the proposed development as approved in 2013, including artist impressions can be found at <http://www.gkiresort.com.au/>

Why does the development include a marina rather than a jetty?

The proposed marina precinct would include a 250-berth marina, up to 185 apartment style accommodation units and retail and other uses. The EIS found existing infrastructure levels would not be adequate for the proposed development due to the need for all-weather accessibility to the island, equitable access for the elderly or passengers with a disability, conflict with tourist and recreational activities on the beach, safety risks and potential for contamination of marine waters when moving materials.

The EIS concluded that the northern section of Putney Beach would be the most suitable location for a marina because of the relatively low energy wave climate, opportunity to minimise the length of the dredged access channel, lower conservation values than other feasible sites, and proximity and access to the resort precincts.

Alternatives to a marina such as a jetty were considered during the EIS. While a jetty would provide a reduced development footprint, it lacks many advantages of the marina—particularly marine-based tourism opportunities, emergency services berthing facilities and vessel sewage facilities.

Do turtles hatch where the marina is proposed to go?

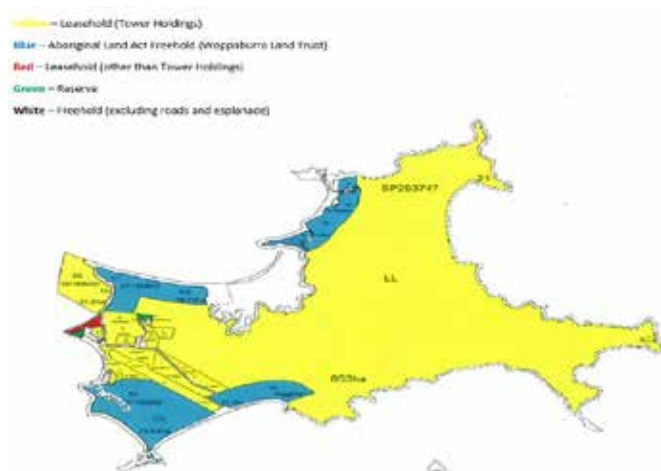
The Environmental Impact Statement undertaken for the proposed GKI resort in 2013 found most of the nesting on the island has been recorded in remote areas where there is no existing or proposed development. The project approval included a number of conditions to minimise impacts on marine turtles and other fauna such as low pressure sodium vapour external lighting, vegetation screening and positioning lights away from beaches.

Who are the potential lessees of the resort?

Wei Chao Pty Ltd is a private family business founded by CK and Isabella Wei. Mr and Mrs Wei are husband and wife property investors. Ms Candy Hsiao is Wei Chao's Taiwanese investment partner, with whom Mr and Mrs Wei have previously worked across numerous projects.

Wei Chao Pty Ltd has previously developed a number of real estate projects across China, as well as high rise residential and bungalow style projects in Taiwan. Before any transfer of the leases can be finalised, the Queensland Government, through DNRME, will undertake due diligence including a Financial and Managerial Capability Assessment to ensure the potential buyer will be able to meet the obligations under the lease conditions. This assessment is expected to be completed in the first half of 2019.

The leases also include milestones to enable DNRME to support and monitor the development.



GKI Land Tenure Map

Credit: Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy

How will pests such as goats be managed?

Concerns have been raised about the number of goats on GKI and the potential damage they can cause to the environment. A recent survey by Livingstone Shire Council suggests there are approximately 250 to 300 goats currently on GKI.

Management of goats on the island is a complex issue as goats also reduce bushfire risk by reducing fuel loads.

There are obligations for the management of feral animals under the terms of the GKI resort leases, and all landowners on the island have responsibilities for managing invasive species under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*.

Livingstone Shire Council is continuing to monitor the situation.

What is happening with the underwater observatory on Middle Island?

Tower Holdings is the current lessee of the area where the observatory is located and this is not part of the proposed sale of leases for the GKI Resort development.