



5<sup>th</sup> July 2010

## **GREAT KEPPEL ISLAND RESORT A STEP CLOSER!**

Today's announcement by Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett to allow Tower Holdings to proceed with an application for an EIS has been applauded by the region's peak tourism and economic development organisation, Capricorn Tourism & Economic Development Ltd.

Chairman Grant Cassidy said "Declaration of the controlled action means the commencement of the rigorous EIS process. While it doesn't mean an approval for development, it potentially demonstrates Minister Garret's acknowledgment of the importance of job creation and the tourism industry on the Capricorn Coast."

"It is important to note that the EIS will include significant community consultation to ensure input from all interested parties ranging from residents to conservation groups and the government." he said

CEO Mary Carroll said "We are incredibly buoyed by this positive news as the Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Plan will bring significant economic benefits to our region. The EIS process is rigorous and independent and will result in the best possible decision regarding future development on this magnificent island". she said

### **FAST FACTS:**

Following Minister Garrett's decision in October, 2009 to reject the previous proposal, Tower Holdings have worked very closely with the Department to revise the plans.

As a result, the Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Plan has now been significantly scaled back and has incorporated a range of environmental initiatives to address the Minister's previous concerns.

The key changes to the Revitalisation Plan include:

- A reduction in the overall project scale by 75% from the initial proposal (this includes a 50% reduction from the 2008 proposal and now a further 50% reduction from the 2009 proposal);
- The total building and road footprint has been reduced to less than 4% of the Island;
- The marina size has been reduced by approximately 55% and will only impact on less than 2.4% of the Island's coastline;
- The number of eco-tourism villas has been reduced by approximately 56%;
- The establishment of 545 hectares of Environmental Protection Areas will be provided on Lot 21 (equivalent to 62% of Lot 21);
- Very significant setbacks to the wetland areas to ensure NO adverse runoff into the marine park;
- Provision of buffer zones to ensure protection of habitat and provide fauna corridors;
- The establishment of the Great Keppel Island Research Centre which will be the first specialized research facility in the Keppels; and



Capricorn **Tourism** and  
**Economic** Development



- An ambitious target of creating a 'carbon positive' island resort with a major use of rooftop solar power. This will involve the resort producing more clean, renewable energy from solar than will actually be used by the resort. This is a new benchmark in sustainable development which will attract a lot of interest from around the country.

By incorporating the above initiatives, the proposed new resort on Great Keppel Island is aiming to deliver a truly environmentally focused tourism resort within the Great Barrier Reef. Tower Holdings is hopeful that by delivering this vision, the resort will be a success and will be able to be enjoyed by the community of Central Queensland and the rest of Australia.

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