

Decision on Tipplers closer

THE fate of Tipplers on South Stradbroke Island could be decided this month with Gold Coast City Council's expressions of interest deadline expiring.

Marine Queensland is considered to be the frontrunner for the project though at least three other organisations are pitching on the former boatie hotspot.

CCIQ director Tom Tate, says the process could have been much easier for council had it not postponed a meeting with MAG 'several times'.

"This concept is fantastic, I can't believe why council has not been in closer consultation with the Marine Action Group, it would have prevented a lot of community anger over council's poor handling of the issue," says Tate.

"Council have got it wrong from start to finish, once they see this concept there should be a couple of councillors offering a public apology."

Council's purchase of the landmark last year for around \$7 million caused controversy and public uproar gathered momentum following council's closure of the site for a proposed eco-friendly redevelopment.

The Marine Action Group (MAG) was established to represent the interests of the general boating public and has been working closely with Marine Queensland on its proposed redevelopment plan.

MAG spokesman Keith Douglas told *Gold Coast Business News* that the priority is to bring the destination back to life.

"The key issue is that Tipplers is a very important boating destination. There are not many destinations on the Broadwater and research has shown since Tipplers' closure boat traffic has congested badly towards the southern end of the Broadwater," says Douglas.

"Many businesses in the area heavily rely on people getting out on to the water and feedback has indicated a slowing of the marine and tourism industries in the region since Tipplers was closed to the public."

Despite public backlash, Douglas says in a phone call to council CEO Dale Dickson he made it clear that MAG 'wanted consultation not confrontation'.

"Our official position has always been that we can't change the past so let's look to the future in terms of Tipplers' potential," he says.



"We have the core of a proposal that will benefit ratepayers, tourism, the marine industry and the boating public. This concept if implemented would see Tipplers once again become an important destination and an asset to our tourism industry."

A meeting last month between Marine Queensland, MAG, the Gold Coast Combined Chamber and the Chamber Of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ) assessed the redevelopment concept.

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