



20<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

## **Fact Sheet: Tower holdings Development Plan for Great Keppel Island**

### **Environmental History of Responsible Party (Extract from EPBC submission)**

Tower Holdings trading as GKI Resorts Pty Ltd quote the Queensland State Government Department of Natural Resources and Water (now Department of Environment and Resource Management) as stating that “they have no adverse finding with respect to condition of the land (Lot 21) and that the lease land is generally in good condition”. This is used by the party taking the action as evidence that they have “acted as a responsible environmental custodian”.

This information is at odds with claims on their web site

(<http://www.gkiresort.com.au/home.html>) that substantial parts of Lot 21 on Great Keppel Island are degraded as follows;

- Leekes Creek Area extensively cleared.
- Clam Bay Ridgeland Area extensively cleared and weed species evident.
- Wreck Beach Area extensively disturbed by feral goats. As a consequence, wind induced erosion shifts large volumes of sand.
- Putney Beach Dune protection works are required.
- Sandhills Beach Feral goat grazing resulted in land degradation and weed species present.

- Long Beach - Monkey Beach Grazing evident. Weed species evident. Dune protection works required.
- Clam Bay Beach Grossly disturbed by goats. Red Beach Vegetation largely destroyed by goats.

In the terms of the lease GKI Resorts Pty Ltd were required to develop a Land management Plan and this has never been completed. In addition they were required to control noxious plants and remove goats and by their own admission they have failed to do this.

The following terms of the lease require that the lessee;

“shall within six months (6) of the commencement of the term of the lease and to the satisfaction of the Minister administering the Land Act 1994, establish a Management Plan over the lease are covering the following issues; fires, soil, erosion, track management/construction/rehabilitation, waste disposal, signage, guided tours, recreational activities, environmental issues, noxious plants, removal of goats, heritage sites, indigenous and other cultural sites.”

In addition GKI Resorts Pty Ltd hold a permit from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to operate an underwater observatory at Middle Island. The terms of this lease stated that an Environment Management Plan should be developed but it has never eventuated.

In March of 2008 they closed the resort on Great Keppel Island that has been in mothballs ever since. The resort is on land leased by the Queensland Government and is on two leases, Lot 2 on LN2615 and Lot 8 on LN2382. The lease conditions require;

- The lessee shall thereafter provide and maintain on the leased land tourist accommodation and facilities of a standard satisfactory to the Minister and the Director General of Tourist Services.

This closure of the resort is in direct breach of these conditions and prompted Bill Ludwig, Councillor on Rockhampton Regional Council to be quoted in the Morning bulletin on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2009;

“Cr Ludwig said he thought Tower had to battle a huge credibility gap because of the way it had abandoned the resort.”

“My understanding is that the company is in breach of its lease if it is not running a resort,” he said.

We would submit that the environmental history of the party taking the action shows that it makes contradictory environmental statements that seem to depend upon the purpose for which it is making them, has not fulfilled its legal environmental responsibilities under lease arrangements that would testify to the fact that they do not have a satisfactory record of responsible environmental management.