



GPC asks for more

Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC) wants the boundaries of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (WHA) to be redrawn to exclude Gladstone Harbour and presumably Curtis Island and the southern part of Keppel Bay. GPC has written to all state and federal MPs asking them to change the boundary of the World Heritage Area.

Capricorn Conservation Council is outraged at such a move.

“The all powerful GPC is not satisfied with their massive dredging project in Gladstone Harbour and the construction of LNG plants on Curtis Island. They also want to build huge coal export ports on the Fitzroy River delta at the southern end of Keppel Bay.” said CCC spokesman Ian Herbert.

By seeking this removal from the WHA, Gladstone Ports Corporation is finally admitting that they cannot build their projects without incurring massive environmental destruction. The rest of the community have known this for some time but, until now, GPC have been in a state of denial about the environmental devastation they are causing.

Building LNG plants on Curtis Island, dredging the harbour, and then asking for exclusion from the WHA are tactics reminiscent of Joh Bjelke-Peterson letting the Heritage listed Bellevue Hotel fall into disrepair so that he could claim he was justified in tearing it down.

GPC chief executive Leo Zussino has been quoted as saying that the GBR Marine Park has been put in place with a lot more science than the World Heritage Area. “This is absolute rubbish” said CCC spokesman Ian Herbert. “Those of us who were around when the GBR Marine Park boundaries were drawn, including Leo Zussino, know that there was enormous political pressure by the Bjelke-Peterson government to reduce the area of the GBR Marine Park at the time. It is the GBRMPA boundaries that are the result of political compromise.”

“We almost admire GPC for their new-found honesty in finally admitting that the values of the WHA and proposed industrialisation are incompatible, and that one of them has to go.” CCC believes that the WHA boundaries were drawn for good reason and should remain as they are.

“As a society we have to question whether short term economic gain is worth permanent destruction. Capricorn Coast residents should be very alarmed at this move by GPC and what it means for the future of Balaclava Island and the Fitzroy River Estuary, right on their doorstep.”