Site inspection notes

10.30am: Sea World

Description

Sea World is one of the Village Roadshow theme parks, which collectively enjoy around 5 million guests per year.

Sea World opened in 1971 and covers 25 hectares (55 acres) of land. As well as the theme park, there is a 402-room resort and water park, and the conference facilities we are using today.

Sea World has a special lease for their premises. Sea World also has a permit to occupy for car parking over the land to the south which we will see towards the end of the site tour.

10.35am: Muriel Henchman Park

Description

This area has The Spit pontoon and The Spit boat ramp, which are GCCC-managed boating facilities available for commercial vessel/vehicle use.

On our left is the Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) headquarters which is manned 24/7 and undertakes over 900 rescues each year. VMR also conducts 500 training activations per annum, and it is the busiest Volunteer Marine Rescue Squadron in Australia. VMR has 4 specialised Rescue vessels. VMR has a term lease over this land.

10.40am: Phillip Park

Description

We are standing in the carpark of Phillip Park, from which access can be gained to a patrolled beach. Before we head up and have a look at the beach, it is worth noting the southern end of Federation Walk. Incidentally, the park is named after Prince Phillip. The track we cross over on our way to the beach runs past Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort to the south.

10.50am: Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort

Description

This stop is to show you what The Spit offers that is unique in comparison with the remainder of the Gold Coast. The Sheraton is a five-star resort originally built by Christopher Skase in 1987. It occupies 6 hectares and features 295 rooms and suites. It is the only beachfront resort on the Gold Coast and is unusually low rise in its design. It is currently owned by The Star Entertainment Group. This was where the
dignitaries stayed during the Commonwealth Games. Adjacent to the Sheraton is the Golden Door Health Club and Spa.

10.55am: Main Beach/ Tedder Avenue

Description
As we approach the end of The Spit and soon on our left, you can see some of Main Beach. Main Beach forms the backdrop at the southern end of The Spit. In the 2011 census, there were around 3500 residents in Main Beach, with a median age of 47 years. This has been increasing over many years and was 51 in 2016.

Main Beach Pavilion on the left is listed on the State Heritage Register and dates from 1934. Tedder Avenue is the main commercial and retail street in Main Beach, hosting boutiques and restaurants. Tedder Avenue was one of the Gold coast’s first comprehensive streetscaping projects and the streetscape is therefore highly attractive and provides an excellent setting for the dining and boutique retailing that takes place here.

11.00am: Southport Yacht Club

Description
We are now pulling in to the Southport Yacht Club. Brett James will be giving a short talk about the yacht club. Please make your way to the front of the building and Brett will escort you onto the premises.

11.20am: TS Tyalgum/ GCWA Headquarters

Description
On the left is TS Tyalgum. TS Tyalgum Navy Cadets has been operating for over 55 years and on the Spit for over 50 years. They train naval cadets between the ages of 13 and 19 in a range of skills, including teamwork, rigging, knot tying and navigational skills.

There is also a Naval Memorial Park to the south of TS Tyalgum. There is a parcel of USL to the north of GCWA buildings.

Mariner’s Cove

Description
On our left is the Mariner’s Cove marina, which is where Sunland proposed 44 storey mixed use residential/hotel towers. The application was withdrawn in 2016.

Currently the site offers leases to a range of businesses, many of which rely on the unique land/water interface that The Spit offers. This includes jet boating, diving, sports fishing, whale watching, cruises and other support industries such as restaurants. There is also a 100-berth marina for vessels up to 30 metres in length.

Marina Mirage

Description
Here we are in Marina Mirage, a shopping centre and marina which includes 97 tenants and 73 yacht berths. On Saturdays, Marina Mirage is host to popular Farmers Market which run from 7.00am to 12.00pm. Commercial operators including helitours, fishing, jet boats and cruises operate from the marina.
Palazzo Versace

Description
Palazzo Versace Gold Coast opened in September 2000 and was the world’s first fashion-branded hotel. Versace has 200 accommodation rooms, 72 condominium apartments, restaurants, meeting and event facilities, and an 89-berth marina. It is on a perpetual lease.

Peters Fish Market/Fishermen’s Co-op

Description
Then you can see Peters fish market, next door to which is the Fisherman’s Co-op where the fishing boats sell their fresh catch directly to the public. On weekends Peter’s Fish market does a roaring trade in fresh fish and chips, turning over 100 orders in half an hour.

Former ASF site

Description
This is the site of the former ASF development proposal, another area of unallocated State land. In August 2015, the Queensland Government identified five hectares adjacent to Sea World on The Spit as the location for a possible Integrated Resort Development. The proposal by ASF included five and six-star hotels, signature restaurants, a world-class casino, theatres, entertainment, luxury and boutique retail precincts, serviced residences and meeting and conference facilities.

The proposal was terminated in August 2017 with the announcement of the master plan. Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said the decision was based on ensuring the best long-term solution for the Gold Coast.

11.30am: Moondarewa Spit, Broadwater & Marine Stadium

Description
Moondarewa Spit (previously known as the Spit Finger) reopened in 2017 following the completion of a $2 million facelift at Doug Jennings Park. This includes a new road along the Moondarewa Spit and parking that now allows for 150 vehicles. You can also see the Marine Stadium (also known as Bums Bay), which was constructed in 1987 when the dredge material from the seaway was used to make the smaller spit. It was originally intended to be a location for water activities and events however it largely provides anchorage for boats, and calm waters for passive recreation, swimming, etc. Anchoring and mooring in the Broadwater, Marine Stadium and in the Seaway is restricted to a maximum of 7 consecutive days in any 60 day period at one or more locations, and an infringement notice can be issued if overstaying. In recent years there has been greater enforcement of these timeframes.

11.40am: Doug Jennings Park and the Seaway

Description
Here we are at Doug Jennings Park. It is a reserve for port and harbour, with Gold Coast Waterways Authority as trustee.

Doug Jennings Park is used by tourists and locals for recreation including diving, surfing, fishing and swimming, as well as picnicking, walking and relaxing with the family. Previously, it has been used to host events such as music festivals and Polo by The Sea. It is about 30 ha in size.
Recently, the GCWA spent approximately $4.55 million on providing the community with Seaway Emergency Access Stairs, amenities block, extra beach showers, upgrades to the Seaway Kiosk and the rehabilitation of Moondarewa Spit.

The park is closed to vehicles every night at 8pm and reopens at 6pm. A model by-law helps GCWA address issues such as camping, littering and driving off-road.

**Wavebreak Island**

**Description**

Across the seaway, you can see Wavebreak Island. Wavebreak Island was created in 1985 as part of the Gold Coast Seaway construction to protect the western foreshore of the Broadwater from waves that might penetrate the new, permanently stabilised entrance.

GCWA has a navigation channel dredging and beach nourishment program to ensure beaches in and around the Broadwater are nourished to protect infrastructure. The beaches and rock walls of Wavebreak Island benefit from these works to ensure the island continues to act as a buffer from the ingress of wave action through the seaway entrance. GCWA regularly dredge the navigation channels around Wavebreak Island and use the sand to replenish the island to ensure its effectiveness.

Due to its close proximity to the Gold Coast community and the general boating public, the island is a popular location for day visitors.

**South Stradbroke Island**

**Description**

From here you can also see the southern end of South Stradbroke Island. South Stradbroke Island is a 21-km long, relatively narrow island between Jumpinpin Inlet and the training walls of the Gold Coast Seaway. South Stradbroke Island is the smaller one of the two Stradbroke Islands and lies very close to the mainland.

South Stradbroke Island is a popular day trip for those who travel by private boat, charter boat, ferry or water taxi from several departure points along the Gold Coast. Importantly, it is accessible from The Spit for surfing and is used by independent surfers and surf schools. There is a surf ferry service that carries surfers and their boards across the Seaway and back again.

**Emergency access stairs**

**Description**

The first dive platform was installed in 2016, with a second platform planned/built to the west. It is formally used as emergency access stairs but frequently used by divers and snorkelers.

**11.50am: Offshore Release**

**Description**

An officer from City of Gold Coast will provide a description of the operations of the sewer outfall at the Seaway. The outfall releases treated sewerage into the Seaway on the outgoing tide from the storage ponds at Bundall. The system is operating at capacity and there are plans to upgrade the system and extend the outfall to discharge three kilometres out to sea off the southern end of South Stradbroke Island. The design of the system upgrade will be included in the City of Gold Coast’s presentation in the afternoon session of the workshop.
12.00pm: The seaway

Description

The seaway was established in 1986 to provide safe passage from the Broadwater to the ocean. It is bounded by The Spit, and you can see the bottom end of South Stradbroke Island to the north. The dredge material from the construction of the seaway was used to construct Wavebreak Island, and Moondarewa Spit to create the Marine Stadium.

Sand pumping jetty (bypass system)

Description

You can see here a steel framed jetty which is part of the sand bypass system. The jetty extends 500m out to sea and houses ten jet pumps at 30m intervals submerged to 11m below mean sea level. This operates to deliver 500,000 cubic metres of sand from The Spit to South Stradbroke Island each year (500 cubic metres per hour). This provides for safe transit for vessels between the Broadwater and the ocean, as well as flood relief. It was the world’s first permanent sand bypassing system. It is operated by the GCWA.

Prior to its installation, around 500,000 cubic metres of sand was moved along the coast each year, causing the Nerang River mouth to move northwards by up to 60m each year. When the plans for the Seaway were prepared, the sand bypass system was provided for as an integral part of the seaway.

Dog off-leash area

Description

Here is one of the popular dog off-leash areas on The Spit, the other being on The Spit facing Moondarewa Spit in the marine stadium.

12.15pm: Federation Walk Coastal Reserve

Description

Here marks the northern end of Federation Walk in the Federation Walk Coastal Reserve. The Federation Walk Coastal Reserve comprises 93 hectares of coastal dunes. It is a reserve for park, environmental, beach protection and coastal protection.

Federation Walk is a designated pathway through the coastal reserve from the Seaway to Phillip Park used for hiking, jogging, cycling and birdwatching. It was officially launched in 2000 and the first stage of the walk was opened in 2001.

Seaway Kiosk and amenities block

Description

In terms of facilities for visitors to the northern end of The Spit and Doug Jennings Park, this is the only permanent place to buy food.

12.25pm: Return to Sea World arriving at 12.30pm