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Media Release

Coral reefs at risk if GKI marina gets green light

Capricorn Conservation Council fears that the construction of the proposed marina at Putney Beach on Great Keppel Island will significantly affect corals at Passage Rocks, Halftide Rocks and the Middle Island green zone. Following the release of a study of coral diversity by CQU, it is now clear that nearby reefs may be threatened by the large scale dredging required to build the marina and the inevitable decline in water quality that will accompany it.

CCC spokesperson, Allan Briggs said, 'Corals are unable to cope with poor water quality and sediment which inhibits coral growth and the recruitment of coral juveniles.'

'Tower claim that the marina construction will solve the erosion problems at Putney Beach. However, the erosion may worsen as Putney Creek will need to be diverted to allow construction.' Furthermore, CCC believes that dredge spoil, including sand and sediment, could end up affecting the seagrass beds which currently support dugongs at Putney Beach.

Mr Briggs said that CCC are not supportive of the marina and other aspects of the development proposal which could irrevocably change the face of the iconic island destination. 'While we recognise that Putney Beach has been eroded over the past two years, this may be a natural process which will be reversed with time. Putney and Fisherman's beaches form one large sand spit and sand can shift from one side to the other over time. Solving the erosion problem can't be achieved by constructing a marina. In addition, dumping sand on the beach won't guarantee that it will remain there as king tides are likely to erode the dunes again with time, resulting in worsening of the current buildup in the bay.'

CCC have made a submission to the EPBC Act referral process concerning the development and encourages others to have their say on the development proposal.

For further information contact CCC on (07) 4927 8644