

17 REASONS FOR SCRAPPING THE TOONDAH PDA OVER PROTECTED WETLANDS

Here are 17 reasons why the Toondah Harbour Priority Development Area (PDA) proposal is a bad idea and should be revoked by the Palaszczuk Government. That is more likely to happen if influential figures who have publicly supported the proposal, now publicly withdraw that support.

The 17 reasons include crucial environmental reasons, our international obligations, poor planning, and questions of democracy, transparency and the influence of “donations” on our politicians, bureaucrats and others.

1. Publicly owned foreshore land and protected Moreton Bay wetlands [should not be handed over to a property developer to generate private profit.](#)
2. Over 40 hectares/100 acres of tidal wetlands proposed to be “dredged and reclaimed” for high-rise units are part of the Moreton Bay Ramsar site, declared in 1993. See image below prepared for the property developer. It shows the extent of Ramsar wetlands and migratory bird habitat within and adjacent to the PDA.
3. [The science has already been done.](#) That’s why the Toondah wetlands were included in the Moreton Bay Ramsar site and protected under the world’s agreement to protect internationally important wetlands and shorebirds which inhabit them.
4. The Ramsar Agreement, signed by Australia, prohibits the reclamation of any part of a Ramsar site [unless for “urgent national interests”.](#) (clause 2.5 Ramsar Agreement)
5. The Toondah wetlands provide habitat for many marine and bird species, including the critically endangered Far Eastern Curlew and the Great Knot. Moreton Bay is one of their most important habitats. The likely significant impact on bird and marine species and on the ecological character of the Moreton Bay Ramsar site is even [admitted by the Walker Group/Corp](#) eg Section 5 of its Referral to the Federal Government.
6. Protecting the [Toondah wetlands was the driving force](#) for the Goss Labor Government causing the declaration of the Moreton Bay Ramsar site in 1993.
7. The Toondah PDA also incorporates historic parklands, areas of [indigenous cultural heritage value](#), mangrove forests, and seagrass beds.
8. [The Mayor of Redlands in particular has seriously misled the public](#) about the need for the Toondah Harbour ‘development’
9. The whole proposal is poor planning. An estimated population of 7,000 to 10,000 people living in 3,600 units would cause chaos on roads, public transport etc.
10. The proposal includes [handing over part of the ferry terminal area to the developer](#) and reducing the size of the terminal. This will eliminate competition and make getting to Straddie harder and probably more expensive.
11. Labor should repeal the Newman Government PDA legislation. [Labor previously strongly opposed the legislation](#), with Jackie Trad saying it was intended to line the pockets of the LNP’s “developer mates”. In power, she expanded the proposed number of units by 450%. Also, the [Toondah proposal is contrary to Labor policies.](#)
12. The chosen developer, Walker Corp/Group has a long history of making large political donations to both major parties - [\\$Millions in declared donations](#) over the last two decades, including [over \\$240,000 declared in 2016.](#)

13. Walker Group/Corp [paid ZERO income tax](#) over the last three corporate tax years on total earnings over \$1 Billion, including \$477 Million last year. It also has a [poor environmental history](#), with a number of offences committed.
14. The Toondah proposal to destroy protected areas for private profit would be a dangerous precedent for the exploitation of our protected areas.
15. The Ferry terminal, which is not within Ramsar wetlands, could be upgraded at a modest cost. For example, before the recent State election, Labor promised \$4 Million to construct a new Moreton Island [barge terminal at Scarborough](#).
16. [The Toondah Koalas are at risk](#) and probably would not survive 7,000 to 10,000 people, their vehicles etc living on their doorstep.
17. The indirect impact from dredge spoil and other pollution from the Toondah site on other areas of Moreton Bay, including its coral reefs, would likely be considerable. A [similar Walker proposal for tidal wetlands near Hobart](#) was knocked back because of risks of damage from current carried dredge spoil to Ramsar listed wetlands 12 KILOMETRES from the proposed dredging and 'reclamation' site.

If influential figures who have in the past publicly expressed support for the controversial and unpopular Toondah proposal publicly withdrew that support, this would go a long way to ending this irresponsible proposal. If the State Government revoked the Toondah Priority Development Area over protected wetlands, no court would award Walker Corp compensation. There are no "urgent national interests" which justify the Toondah plan, so it clearly breaches the Ramsar Agreement signed by Australia and should be withdrawn.