



WHITSUNDAY CONSERVATION COUNCIL

Caring for the future is in our nature

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ABN 12179856680 ACNC Registered Charity
Council Secretary 0407 207 441

To: Shaun.Cawood@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au

1 June 2023

Dear Shaun,

RE: PROPOSED CRUISE SHIP ANCHORAGE – adjacent to SHUTE HARBOUR

Thank you for accepting Whitsunday Conservation Council's (WCC) initial concerns on this very important environmental matter. Obviously, these will require further investigation and consultation before a more detailed submission to GBRMPA and WRC can be made.

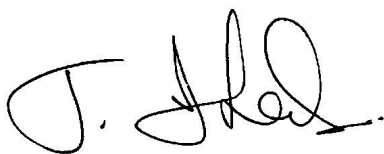
- If approved, the new location should replace the existing one near Long Island. It should not result in an additional anchorage, as this could enable 3 ships to visit at once. This would put excessive strain on local infrastructure and be detrimental to visitor experience. *See photo below* -22 November 2022, the first arrival of "Quantum of the Seas" to Whitsunday;
- On this day, members of WCC observed the long, slow moving queues of passengers waiting, sometimes in the tropical sun, for their tender back to the ship. It was assumed the vessel was anchored behind Shute Island as the crane of the ships observation capsule could be seen moving above the island ridgeline.



While we appreciate the benefits of cruise ship visitation to our local economy, it is essential that excessive numbers of visitors coming ashore at one time doesn't result in a less than enjoyable or an unacceptably inconvenient or unpleasant experience for our visitors.

- If 'dynamic anchoring' is to be used in this anchorage, why does the vessel need to lower the anchor at all?
- The proposed location is subject to strong currents and winds from Long Island Sound. This will require more fuel to be burned as the ship uses its engines to hold its position. The emissions from ship's bunker fuel are notoriously high in sulphur and emit high levels of sulphur oxides which are known to be harmful to health. Bunker fuel emits 2000 times more oxides than regular diesel fuel.
- A single large cruise ship emits more than 5 tonnes of NOX and 450kg of ultrafine particles a day. These are the kind that penetrate deep into the lungs and cause permanent damage.
- As the prevailing winds are easterly/ south easterly, it is highly likely that residents of Shute Harbour and Airlie/ Mandalay/ Jubilee Pocket will have these emissions blown their way.
- If, as suggested, the seabed in the proposed location is rubble/ sand, it is possible that conventional anchoring would be better in that only the generators need to run, and not the ships main engines, meaning less air pollution.
- If the choice of dynamic anchoring, is because the proposed anchorage lacks the swing room for a large ship to anchor there, then Council would be better representing the welfare of the community who live in the air pollution footprint of the proposed anchorage e.g.
- It is legally required for ships in Sydney Harbour, and in many ports around Europe to burn lower emissions fuel whilst they are at anchor, although this is still much worse than the required standards for vehicles on the roads.
- At the very least, Council should be modelling the air pollution impacts of the proposal as part of the EIS and making the results public.
- Although visitation is currently only a small number of ships per year, this can be expected to increase, so we should be looking at the effects on local air quality as well as other environmental issues.

Regards,



Jacquie Sheils
President
0420 747 959



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