

Vision Needed for Airport Master Plan

Maroochy Shire Council's ownership of Maroochy Airport provides a unique opportunity for the Council to provide leadership and vision for the future of the airport and its role in the development of the Sunshine Coast. The draft Master Plan for the airport fails to reflect any vision.

The Mayor and Councillors should determine that they (on behalf of the people) want the airport to meet the tourist and business needs for the Sunshine Coast while minimising adverse impacts on the people of the Sunshine Coast. We do not need the costs and infrastructure (customs, immigration, quarantine etc) for an international airport with Brisbane International Airport so close. Also, we do not need the people of Marcoola further adversely impacted by a runway extension and properties devalued by their inclusion within the northern Public Safety Zone.

The Council should reject the draft Master Plan. They should direct that the East / West runway be included in a new Master Plan as an immediate planning priority so that the Sunshine Coast tourist industry can continue to grow at recent high growth rates, with aircraft using a safe (wider, longer) East /West runway, preferably with that runway positioned for landings and take-offs maximised over water and with no residential properties included within the mandatory Public Safety Zones.

Ownership of the airport provides unique responsibilities and opportunities for Council. Ratepayers will support the Council if it makes courageous and far-sighted decisions that enable the airport to meet the needs of all stakeholders. It should not be deferred any longer. The East / West runway should become a priority project for the Airport Master Plan.

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