

# Cairns Post

SE News  
HD **Delays, but Aquis still best option for Cairns**

BY Nick Dalton

WC 487 words

PD 5 December 2014

SN Cairns Post

SC CAIRPO

ED Cairns

PG 5

LA English

CY © 2014 News Limited. All rights reserved.

LP

Take a look inside Aquis see the full video at [cairnspost.com.au](http://cairnspost.com.au)

QUEENSLAND Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney is determined that the proposed \$8.15 billion Aquis integrated resort will succeed.

TD

He told The Cairns Post that, while he was considering a request to quarantine the Integrated Resort Development (IRD) licence for Cairns if Aquis does not proceed, he still wanted the venture to go ahead.

In other developments: ■ Aquis, the brainchild of **Hong Kong** billionaire Tony Fung and his son Justin, admits missing a government deadline to submit its IRD application on October 31.

■ The developer releases a stunning three-minute animated video of the proposed resort at Yorkeys Knob. Go to [www.cairnspost.com.au](http://www.cairnspost.com.au) to see it.

Mr Seeney said he met Member for Cairns Gavin King and Member for Barron River Michael Trout to discuss a call to ensure the IRD licence remained tied to Cairns.

"They made a compelling case on behalf of their community for an Integrated Resort Licence to be retained in Cairns," he said.

"I am considering their request, but it's important to understand that our government is continuing to work with Aquis to make their proposal a reality." Aquis will not comment on the call to quarantine the IRD licence for the Cairns region.

But a **company** briefing notes that Aquis "controls the only commercially viable **site** for a large scale integrated resort in Cairns and remains the most advanced of any integrated resort proposal in Queensland".

"Any other proposal would need to find a **site**, acquire it, design a project and go through an exhaustive Environmental Impact Statement process as well as a myriad of other complex local, state and federal red tape. Any other proposal would be at least three to four years behind where Aquis is." Mr Seeney confirmed that Aquis had missed the October 31 deadline but reiterated that the government would continue to work with the Fungs to make the project work.

An Aquis spokesman said the **company** had requested an extension to the IRD deadline due to the timing and importance of the failed Reef **Hotel** Casino **transaction** and completion of the Environmental Impact Statement.

He said the extension requested before the deadline was necessary to provide the government with a complete proposal.

"Now that we have overcome the Reef issue by shifting our focus to Canberra and with the EIS approval imminent we hope to lodge the detailed proposal as soon as possible," the spokesman said.

"In the context that the IRD process is scheduled to take up to two years and may not be finalised for another 12 months we do not anticipate this short delay will impact on the timing of the project." "With the EIS approval in place the Aquis proposal remains years ahead of any other IRD proposal so any short-term delays are immaterial."

**NS** gcat : Political/General News

**RE** austr : Australia | queensl : Queensland | apacz : Asia Pacific | ausnz : Australia/Oceania

**PUB** News Ltd.

**AN** Document CAIRPO0020141204eac50000f