

## Fact sheet

# A proposal to establish a 'major regional motorsport facility' in the Barrabool Hills

13 September 2009

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### What is the issue?

McAdam Park in the Barrabool Hills has long been the site of a 'low key' motorcycle track which has operated on around 30 acres on a property of a total size of 300 acres.

The 300 acre McAdam Park has now been sold and there is a plan to develop it into a major regional motorsports facility.

The Barrabool area is a working farming area, the character of which is likely to change forever if this development proceeds.

### What is proposed?

We don't know exactly, because the plans which have been developed by the club and shared with Surf Coast Shire, the City of Greater Geelong and State Government have not been shared with the community. We do know that there have been public reports of plans for the track to operate over four days per week and generate an annual profit of \$500,000. We also know that City of Greater Geelong documents (see minutes of meeting 25 August 2009) refer to a multi-stage project with a total project cost of \$7.9 million.

Plans and documents we have accessed on the internet suggest a major development, approximately 10 times the size of the current track and 60 times bigger than the MCG, with multiple tracks, accommodation and viewing facilities. We understand the facility would be the largest in Australia if it is developed in accordance with the plans.

We have been told that the plans are similar to but not the current plans, but in the absence of up-to-date information we have to work with what is available.

We believe that the plans demonstrate the club's vision to develop the site to the maximum extent possible, over time.

### Who is supporting the development?

State MP Michael Crutchfield has announced \$1.27 million of state government funding and has strongly supported the development of the facility. Surf Coast Shire has offered \$200,000 and has supported a business case for the development of a regional facility. The City of Greater Geelong has allocated \$660,000, **on condition that the McAdam Park Management entity commits to a significant "regional motor sports competition and education facility" on the site by 2012**. Motorcycling Australia has announced a contribution of \$1.1 million.

The Geelong Independent has reported that there is a business plan projecting an annual profit of \$500,000 from operating the track over four days per week (see <http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/story/77987>).

### **Are there any conditions on the allocation of public funds?**

As noted above, the City of Greater Geelong has allocated \$660,000 on a number of conditions including that the McAdam Park Management entity commits to a significant "regional motor sports competition and education facility" on the site by 2012.

We have been advised that Surf Coast Shire councillors agreed:

- to funding of \$100,000 in 2009/10;
- to refer funding of a further \$100,000 to the 2010/11 budget; and
- that the funds would not be paid until the outcome of the planning scheme amendment was known, but there is no Council resolution.

We have been unable to ascertain what conditions, if any, attach to the State Government contribution of \$1.27 million or to Motorcycling Australia's contribution of \$1.1 million.

We do not know which entity will own the land.

### **Who has been consulted?**

All of this has happened without any consultation with the communities of Ceres and Barrabool, which are likely to be seriously affected. Repeated approaches to Michael Crutchfield MP by residents seeking information and/or meetings have been unsuccessful.

### **What will be the impact on Ceres and Barrabool?**

Ceres is likely to suffer significant traffic disturbance. The Sporting Motorcycle Club newsletter (at <http://www.smcc.com.au/>) gives the following directions to the site:

***"Once on the ring road, look for the Ceres exit, once off the ring road drive through Ceres, approx. 6km from there is Haines Road...."***

As well as traffic concerns which will impact on the entire district, the Barrabool community anticipates noise, litter and dust. Even with the current lower level use of the track, these problems are causing significant difficulty for neighbours. An increase in activity (to up to 4 days per week, with much larger numbers of riders) will be disastrous for the affected communities, farming businesses and the environment.

### **What are the planning implications?**

The proposal is outside the current planning scheme. A rezoning will be required. A request for a planning scheme amendment has been lodged with Surf Coast Shire by the Sporting Motorcycle Club, seeking to rezone the land to a Special Use zone.

Residents are concerned that, with the level of financial support already committed by local and state governments, rezoning will be a 'done deal'.

### **Would you like to help?**

Contact us on 03 4201 0270.

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Barrabool residents/landowners, on behalf of  
the Barrabool Rural Protection Group