



IMETT Group

Community Motorsport

Gold Coast

2013



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Introduction

For more than a century, community motorsport has played an essential role in binding both rural and urban communities.

Community motorsport clubs generally developed their own motorsport infrastructure and facilities, often with volunteer labour and the donation of equipment and services from the community in which they live.

Unlike many other community sporting clubs and associations, community motorsport clubs also maintained their motorsport facilities at minimal cost to the broader community or to local government.

Community motorsport contributes significantly to the community in other ways, especially by providing an economic stimulus.

This factor is often underappreciated because it usually involves everyday families and individuals getting on with life and without any fuss.

Whilst they quietly enjoy their motorsport, they are spending valuable dollars in the local community purchasing new or second hand karts or motocross bikes, protective race clothing, specialised racing parts and equipment, trailers to transport their racing equipment, fuels and oils for their racing machinery, and food and drink at the track or on the way home from race meetings, amongst others.

This direct expenditure is then re-circulated in the community to create further indirect expenditure, with the multiple establishing the economic impact.

There is no doubt that the flow on from the Council's decision to close the Reedy Creek Motocross Circuit, and to restrict the operations of the Gold Coast Motocross Club, the Albert & District Motorcycle Club, and the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club has had a significant financial impact on the many small businesses that serviced the participants and competitors who were members of the various community motorsport clubs.

Unfortunately there are no official measures to record the true impact.

The available anecdotal evidence, however, has suggested the economic impact to Gold Coast businesses conservatively represented a loss of between \$15 million and \$20 million per annum.

Community motorsport clubs and infrastructure also plays an important role in the development of responsible drivers and riders.

Community motorsport on the Gold Coast has been the starting point for a number of motorsport World Champions and other successful motorsport competitors who have represented themselves at the highest levels worldwide.

Well-structured community motorsport clubs offer entry level opportunities for young drivers and riders that encourage a responsible approach to driver and rider education and training at an early age.

It is often a factor that is forgotten by individuals, communities, and elected representatives in their desire to remove community motorsport clubs from long standing facilities due to the encroachment of residential development.

Community motorsport provides a venue for young drivers and riders to develop the cognitive, motivational, attitudinal and perceptual factors that influence driver and rider judgement, risk assessment and decision making in a controlled environment and under supervision.

IMETT has long expressed an interest in working with Gold Coast based community motorsport clubs with a view to having interested clubs co-locate to the IMETT precinct. This could include motocross, karting, speedway, and car clubs involved in gymkhana activities.

IMETT has also offered to work with community motorsport clubs to acquire suitable land, and to assist in the development of appropriate motorsport infrastructure for those clubs.

IMETT will also work with community motorsport clubs to explore opportunities for making those facilities available to casual drivers and riders, if possible.

This report has been developed, therefore, to provide an overview of IMETT's proposed relationship with community motorsport.

1 Existing Community Motorsport Clubs on Gold Coast

A number of community motorsport clubs operate on the Gold Coast.

The major clubs include the Gold Coast Kart Club, the Mike Hatcher Junior and Senior Motorcycle clubs, the Gold Coast Motocross Club and the Albert & District Motorcycle Club.

A detailed history of each of these four clubs may be found in Attachment A.

1.1 Gold Coast Kart Club

The Gold Coast Kart Club has operated since 1971 when racing commenced at the Day's Park Raceway located in Old Coach Road, Coomera.

Despite the sale of its original track in February 2008, and the current lack of its own karting facility, the Gold Coast Kart Club has remained active.

The Club is currently hiring other tracks for race events for its 200 members until a new facility can be established.

The Club is continuing to explore opportunities on the Gold Coast and further afield to re-establish a permanent track.

1.2 Mike Hatcher Junior and Senior Motorcycle Clubs

The Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club was founded in 1983 by Jim Pask, Jim McFarlane and Bo McFarlane.

Following a difficult period when the Club was closed down by the Gold Coast City Council in September 2009, the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club officially re-opened on Saturday 20th October 2012, by which time 120 members had re-joined the Club.

The Club has been operating successfully since that time, and continues to grow.

1.3 Gold Coast Motocross Club

The Gold Coast Motocross Club was established during the 1970's.

The Club subsequently developed the Reedy Creek Motocross Circuit in Old Coach Road, Reedy Creek in 1979 on land that was leased from the Gold Coast City Council however the track was closed down by the Council in May 2012.

The Club continues to offer junior riders a competition programme in conjunction with the Albert & District Motorcycle Club at Stanmore Park.

In the meantime, the Club continues to explore opportunities to re-introduce facilities for senior riders on the Gold Coast.

1.4 Albert & District Motorcycle Club

The Albert & District Motorcycle Club was established in the 1970's.

A motocross circuit was developed on 4.5ha (11 acres) of land at the corner of Stanmore Road and Sandy Creek Road, Yatala in 1979. However the track was closed down by the Gold Coast City Council in November 2011.

Following problems with the proposed replacement facility at Stapylton, Council had a change of heart, and provided resources to upgrade the facilities at Stanmore Park.

Council then prohibited senior riders from using the track but allowed it to re-open in January 2013 for junior riders from both the Albert & District Motorcycle Club and the Gold Coast Motocross Club.

Today some 200 junior riders use the Stanmore Park facility.

The Albert & District Motorcycle Club continues to explore opportunities for senior riders to return to the Gold Coast.

2 Community Support

There is no doubt the community has strongly supported community motorsport on the Gold Coast.

A young and rapidly growing population is often an active community participating in family based activities, and motorsport is one of Australia's larger community sports involving multiple generations within in the same family.

It is also not surprising, given that the Gold Coast has a long history of event tourism based on motorsports.

Some of the more significant motorsport events include the following:

1954	Australian Grand Prix conducted on a temporary street circuit at Southport.
1955	Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix conducted on a temporary street circuit at Southport.
1966	Surfers Paradise International Raceway motor racing circuit opened.
1968	Surfers Paradise Raceway hosted a round of the Tasman International Series for the first time. Featuring international Formula One Grand Prix drivers, rounds were conducted on an annual basis until 1975.
1969	Surfers Paradise International Raceway included drag racing and introduced the first Concours d'Elegance as part of the Speedweek motorsport festival.
1971	Surfers Paradise International Raceway land was sold although the Raceway continued operations.
1975	Australian Grand Prix was conducted at the Surfers Paradise International Raceway.
1975	Final event of the Tasman International Series.
1987	Surfers Paradise International Raceway closed.
1991	Inaugural Gold Coast Indy 300 event featuring the US based IndyCars was conducted on the streets of the Gold Coast – spectator attendance in excess of 150,000 over three days.
2008	Final Gold Coast Indy 300 event featuring IndyCars – spectator attendance of approx. 300,000 over four days.
2009	Combined V8 Supercars and A1 Grand prix event – A1 Grand Prix teams failed to arrive, and V8 Supercars expanded their programme of events to fill the void.
2010	Inaugural Gold Coast 600 V8 Supercar event conducted on the streets of the Gold Coast.

In addition, the Gold Coast has produced many international motorsport champions over the years, whilst others have relocated to the Gold Coast.

These riders and drivers provide inspiration, as well as mentoring, to emerging riders and drivers on the Gold Coast, enabling a new generation to learn from their heroes. These champions currently include the following:

Name	Principal Achievement	Link with Gold Coast
Sir Jack Brabham	World Formula One Drivers Champion 1959, 1960 & 1966 World Formula One Manufacturers Champion 1966 1967	Gold Coast resident
Geoff Brabham	Le Mans Winner 1993	Gold Coast resident
Mick Doohan	World 500cc Motorcycle Champion 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998	Gold Coast born resident
Casey Stoner	World MotoGP Champion 2007, 2011	Gold Coast resident
Jason Crump	World Speedway Champion 2004, 2006, 2009	Gold Coast resident
Ivan Mauger	World Speedway Champion 1968, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1977, 1979	Gold Coast resident
Troy Bayliss	World Superbike Champion 2001, 2006, 2008	Gold Coast resident
Chris Atkinson	World Rally Championship driver	Gold Coast born resident
Scott Dixon	Indianapolis 500 Winner 2008 Indy Car Series Champion 2003, 2008	Gold Coast born
Alan Jones	World Formula One Drivers Champion 1980	Gold Coast resident
Daryl Beattie	World MotoGP Grand Prix winner	Gold Coast resident
Darcy Ward	World Speedway Under 21 Champion 2009, 2010	Gold Coast born and raised

The community's continuing concern regarding the Gold Coast City Council's management of the community motorsport situation was regularly reflected in a substantial number of Letters to the Editor being published whenever the Gold Coast Bulletin carried a story regarding the future of community motorsport facilities.

Recognising that concern, two local businessmen, Terry Morris and Brett Murray, decided to mount a high profile campaign to try to force action from the city's politicians and bureaucrats.

Mr Morris suggested recent Gold Coast City Council decisions were a direct threat to the future of junior champions, and that he feared for the safety of the city's youth, predicting the road toll could jump if tracks were frozen out.

The *Place to Race* campaign was launched on 1st August 2009, and Terry Morris and Brett Murray donated \$10,000 to kick-start the campaign, which included a fighting fund, a website, a Twitter account and a Facebook page.

The two men called on all junior motorsports enthusiasts and their parents to visit the website and register their support.

Home-grown world champions Mick Doohan, Jason Crump, Wayne Gardner, Alan Jones and Sir Jack Brabham subsequently backed the cashed-up motorsports group fighting to save junior tracks on the Gold Coast.

More than 1,000 people ultimately signed up in support of the campaign that presented an ongoing series of feature stories as well as a number of photo opportunities with high profile motorsport personalities who spoke in support of the campaign.

The campaign did not ultimately achieve immediate success in its goals to retain community motorsport facilities on the Gold Coast but it did play a significant role in keeping the matter in focus.

It could be argued, however, that the subsequent change of heart by the Gold Coast City Council towards maintaining junior motorsport at both Mike Hatcher Park and Stanmore Park was heavily influenced by the *Place to Race* campaign

3 Value of Community Motorsport

3.1 Good Community Citizens

Community motorsport generally develops good community citizens.

The discipline involved in competing, whether through maintaining a competition car or motorcycle in top condition, developing and implementing race strategy or safety considerations, combine to develop good personal standards.

A good example of this discipline is demonstrated by 14 year old Troy Guenther who was awarded the 2012 Junior Achiever of the Year by Motorcycling Queensland.

His achievement was announced in the following statement.

20 December 2012

Guenther honoured as Queensland Junior Achiever of the Year

Teenage Road Racing ace Troy Guenther from Woodford on the Sunshine Coast hinterland has been named Motorcycling Queensland's 2012 Junior Achiever of the Year.

The announcement was made at Motorcycling Queensland's Awards night, held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on Friday 7th December 2012.

Fourteen year old Guenther had an outstanding 2012 season, breaking numerous lap records at tracks throughout Australia on his way to winning State and National titles.

Ironically, his 14th birthday coincided with the Queensland State Championships making him eligible to compete in open competition, and in his first race outside the junior ranks, Guenther clinched the 125/250 Mono State Championship.

Earlier this year, at the age of 13, the talented teen made history when he became the youngest rider ever in the history of New Zealand Superbike racing to take the chequered flag in a GP race in that country. Also this year, Troy received an invitation from Red Bull to travel to Spain and was one of 50 riders world-wide to receive a second evaluation at the Red Bull Rookies Cup trials.

Troy first began riding at the age of 4. He spent many months going around the dirt track at his house until "finally" at the age of 5, he was allowed to race. He took to the dirt at Mike Hatcher's Raceway and never looked back.

As he moved up in age and in horsepower, Troy continued racing Dirt Track at club and national events held in his home state. One of his favourite tracks was Acton Park in Maryborough, Queensland – an oil-based surface at the time that tested the best and saw him clinch a series title as highest aggregate point scorer all ages/all bikes at the age of 8.

Also at the age of 8, Troy became the youngest ever recipient of the Sunshine Coast Advance Sports Rising Star Award. The promotion of young sports stars saw him spend time with radio disc jockeys, interviewed by media personalities, attend a black tie awards evening, and even have a horse race named after him – the Troy Guenther 1400m Handicap.

A little more than two years after his time on the turf, Troy took to the tarmac and began doing what he had dreamed of his whole life – Road Racing.

His first race was at Morgan Park in Queensland, a venue boasting a variety of track configurations which, during the next 3 years, would see Troy set multiple lap records on 70cc, 80cc and 250cc bikes. He also began travelling interstate, breaking lap records at Mac Park in South Australia, Broadford Motorcycling Complex Victoria and the Phillip Island Circuit in Victoria.

Along the way, Troy has accumulated numerous race wins, series titles and two junior Australian Road Racing Championships. Troy also continued racing dirt track, snatching a spot on the podium at the 2011 Australian Junior Dirt track titles – the first time he had contested the national event since winning Long and Dirt Track national championships four years prior.

The 2012 season began with Troy travelling overseas to race in the New Zealand Superbike Championships. His first ever race on a 125GP bike saw him finish second. This was followed by a race win which saw Troy rewrite the record books when, at the age of 13, he became the youngest rider in the history of the New Zealand Superbikes to win a GP race. He would go on to finish fifth overall in the 5 round New Zealand Superbike Series.

A few months later he turned 14. Troy's birthday coincided with the Queensland State Championships and he would be racing an NSF250 for the first time. He wrapped up the September 22nd weekend with lap records and the Queensland State Road Racing Championship in the 125/250 Mono division. What a birthday present, but little time for a party as a couple of weeks later he was off to Spain for the Red Bull Rookies Cup Selection Trials where he was one of 50 riders worldwide chosen for second evaluation.

Although Troy seems to spend more time on a motorcycle than he does in the classroom, he still maintains high outcomes in his studies.

He is an honour roll student in all subjects, testing in the top 10% nation-wide in mathematics. Troy is also a former school leader and sports captain, and has represented his school in swimming and cross country at the regional level. He is the recipient of numerous academic medals and awards from local service clubs, and has been recognised in an awards night hosted by a Federal Member of Parliament, Wyatt Roy, for outstanding sports achievement in regard to his motorcycle racing.

Certainly a deserving winner of Motorcycling Queensland's Junior Achiever of the Year Award, and a rider to keep a very close watch on in the future.

3.2 Driver and Rider Education

Community motorsport clubs and infrastructure play an important role in the development of responsible drivers and riders.

Importantly, well-structured community motorsport clubs offer entry level opportunities for young drivers and riders that encourage a responsible approach to driver and rider education and training at an early age.

It is often a factor that is forgotten by individuals, communities, and elected representatives in their desire to remove community motorsport clubs from long standing facilities due to the encroachment of residential development.

Community motorsport provides a venue for young drivers and riders to develop the cognitive, motivational, attitudinal and perceptual factors that influence driver and rider judgement, risk assessment and decision making in a controlled environment and under supervision.

In addition, community motorsport educates young drivers and riders regarding the importance of safety and discipline in maintaining their competition machines in good order.

Competition drivers and riders are obliged to meet exacting standards for safety equipment, whether it is a driver or riders clothing (approved race suit or leathers, crash helmet, race shoes or boots, etc.) or for their competition machines (seat belts, etc.)

Competition drivers and riders are also obliged to meet international and national standards for competition machines, and scrutineers at each race meeting are constantly monitoring race cars and motorcycles to ensure competitors meet the required standards for noise and mechanical performance.

More importantly, motorsport competitors are required to observe the rules of competition including racing safely, appropriate behaviour and attitude.

These skills assist in preparing young drivers and riders for the public roads when they are of an age to obtain a driver or riders licence.

Anecdotal evidence suggests young competition drivers and riders from a community motorsport background are less likely to be involved in road traffic accidents because their bravado and risk taking has been tempered through years of competition.

Years of competition experience can also provide young community motorsport drivers and riders with an important advantage when compared with the levels of inexperience of young drivers and riders in the general community at the time they qualify for their initial drivers or riders licence.

As an added incentive, community motorsport organisations are bound by conditions of all licenced road users and should they lose their road licence at any time, then that driver or rider also has his/her competition licence suspended. This rule makes motorsport unique in that it is the only sport where competitors are prohibited from competition when their road licence is suspended.

Motorsport also follows the rules of the road in another area, that being the prohibition of alcohol in the Pit Area and the random testing of competitors for alcohol and drugs.

Collectively these offer a great environment to educate and train young drivers and riders long before they are eligible to qualify for a drivers or riders licence for public roads.

3.3 Economic Impact

Community motorsport contributes significantly to the community in many ways, especially by providing an economic stimulus.

This factor is often underappreciated because it usually involves everyday families and individuals getting on with life without any fuss.

Whilst they quietly enjoy their motorsport, they are spending valuable dollars in the local community purchasing new or second hand karts or motocross bikes, protective race clothing, specialised racing parts and equipment, trailers to transport their racing equipment, fuels and oils for their racing machinery, and food and drink at the track or on the way home from race meetings, amongst others.

This direct expenditure is then re-circulated in the community to create further indirect expenditure, with the multiple establishing the economic impact.

Whilst this report does not intend to fully explore the full economic impact of community motorsport, it is easy to provide an understanding from the following tables relating to just karting and motocross. Speedway, circuit racing, rallying and drag racing of course add further layers of economic benefit

3.3.1 Economic Impact of Karting

Anecdotal evidence from a number of Gold Coast karting people has indicated that the number of karts purchased for use in kart club activities and events has dropped substantially since the Gold Coast Kart Club closed operations at the Days Road track.

New karting club members usually commenced with a second hand kart, before progressing to a brand new kart which was updated every few years.

Given the reduction in club membership (from 1,000 drivers to 200 drivers) this is not surprising. Not only has sales of new karts fallen, but so have the second hand values as a result of the reduced demand.

The following table provides an overview of the indicative costs involved in participating in club kart activities and events.

Item	Junior Driver	Senior Driver
Kart – new	\$3,400 - \$3,600	\$3,600 - \$5,600
Kart – second hand	\$1,600 - \$1,750	\$2,200 - \$2,500
Maintenance allowance pa	\$500 - \$1,500	\$1,000 - \$2,000
Racing suit	\$200 - \$655	\$200 - \$655
Helmet	\$180 - \$1,100	\$180 - \$1,100
Race helmet tear off	\$10 - \$25	\$10 - \$25
Gloves	\$50 - \$265	\$50 - \$265
Race footwear	\$135 - \$345	\$135 - \$345
Spare race tyres (each)	\$52 - \$75	\$52 - \$75
Race fuel and oil	\$30 - \$50	\$30 - \$50
Insurance	\$150	\$150
Box trailer	\$1,000 - \$2,500	\$1,000 - \$2,500
Club membership including Karting	\$90	\$110
Queensland registration		
Event travel – allowance	\$50	\$100
Championship event entry fees	\$225	\$225
Club event entry fees	\$65 - \$80	\$65 - \$80
Competition accommodation when away from home – indicative allowance	\$100	\$200
Food and beverage when away from home – indicative allowance	\$100	\$200
Food and beverage during and after home race meetings – indicative allowance	\$150	\$150

3.3.2 Economic Impact of Motocross

Former Gold Coast Motocross Club Treasurer John Urquhart once stated that community motorsport is a multi-million dollar sport that supports local businesses, from fast food outlets to trailer and car dealers.

"The average person with one child racing spends about \$15 to 20,000 each year, the guys that are serious spend \$50 - 80,000 a year no trouble at all."

Anecdotal evidence from a number of Gold Coast motorcycle industry has also indicated that the number of off road motorcycles used in motocross activities and events has dropped substantially since the Gold Coast Motocross Club and the Albert & District Motorcycle Club were forced to revert to a juniors only arrangement.

New motocross club members usually commenced with a second hand motocross bike, before progressing to a brand new motocross bike which was updated every few years.

Given the reduction in club membership (from a combined 2,000 senior and junior riders to 200 junior riders) this is not surprising. Not only has sales of new off road motorcycles fallen, but so have the second hand values as a result of the reduced demand.

The following table provides an overview of the indicative costs involved in participating in club motocross.

Item	Junior Rider	Senior Rider
Motocross bike – new	250cc \$10,700 80cc \$3,500	450cc \$11,700
Motocross bike – second hand,	250cc \$5,990 - \$7,990 80cc \$2,300 - \$2,500	450cc \$4,500 - \$8,500
Maintenance allowance pa	\$500 - \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,000
Race clothing set	\$90 - \$200	\$120 - \$260
Chest protector	\$120	\$140
Helmet	\$100 - \$300	\$300 - \$600
Race goggles	\$40 - \$60	\$60 - \$120
Gloves	\$20 - \$50	\$20 - \$50
Boots	\$180 - \$700	\$180 - \$700
Spare race tyres (1 set)	\$150	\$220
Race fuel and oil	\$50	\$50
Insurance	\$700	\$700
Box Trailer	\$1,000 - \$2,500	\$1,000 - \$2,500
Club membership including Motorcycling Queensland registration	\$60	\$80
Event travel – allowance	\$50	\$100
Championship event entry fee	\$170	\$190
Club event entry fee	\$40	\$50
Competition accommodation when away from home – indicative allowance	\$100	\$200
Food and beverage when away from home – indicative allowance	\$100	\$200

Item	Junior Rider	Senior Rider
Food and beverage during and after home race meetings – indicative allowance	\$150	\$150

3.3.3 Indicative Economic Impact on Gold Coast Businesses

There is no doubt that the flow on from the Council’s decision to close the Reedy Creek Motocross Circuit, and to restrict the operations of the Gold Coast Motocross Club, the Albert & District Motorcycle Club, and the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club has had a significant financial impact on the many small businesses that serviced the participants and competitors who were members of the various community motorsport clubs.

Unfortunately there are no official measures to record the true impact.

The available anecdotal evidence, however, has suggested the economic impact to Gold Coast businesses conservatively represented a loss of between \$15 million and \$20 million per annum.

Because that financial impact was not shared evenly, and the numbers in some cases were small on an individual basis, the true impact of their decision making was unfortunately not immediately evident to Council or individual Councillors.

3.3.4 Indicative Economic Impact on Government

The indirect loss to the Commonwealth, State and local government, however, was also significant because the closure of community motorsport facilities and/or restrictions on the operating conditions has a flow on effect, including:

- a loss of employment and/or reduced working hours across a wide range of small businesses.
- lower revenues from GST on sales and services related to community motorsport
- lower stamp duty revenues on certain transactions related to community motorsport

It is obvious, therefore, that the loss of community motorsport infrastructure impacts on far more than individual community motorsport members.

All levels of government need to plan longer term if they are to maximise the many benefits a well-considered community motorsport programme can bring to a local community.

3.4 Community Motorsport Volunteers

Community sporting and social clubs exist because volunteers make them happen. Volunteers donate their time, and sometimes their money, in order to make their community a better place to live.

Community motorsport is just one of many volunteer sectors, and in 2011 Motorsport NT conducted a survey of their affiliated motorsport clubs in the Northern Territory.

The following results demonstrated the significant commitment made by volunteers, many but not all being family and friends, in making community motorsport possible in the Northern Territory community.

It is believed that similar results could be demonstrated by community motorsport organisations in other locations.

3.4.1 Motorsport NT Survey 2011 Results

- Survey of 13 affiliated clubs
- Approx. 182,477 people spectated at motor sport events during the year – did not include the motorsport clubs not affiliated with Motorsports NT
- V8 Supercar and Finke Desert Race attracted approx. 65,000 spectators
- Approx. 117,477 people attended the various fortnightly club events throughout the season - did not include the motorsport clubs not affiliated with Motorsports NT
- Approx. 38,900 people attended major motorsport club events – this did not include the V8 Supercar and Finke Desert Race events
- Each fortnight approx. some 10,000 people attended affiliated motorsport events in the Northern Territory
- Motorsport clubs not affiliated with Motorsports NT anecdotally attracted approx. 15,000-20,000 spectators during the season
- On average, affiliated motorsport clubs conducted 12 events on a fortnightly basis per year
- Some 1,135 licensed competitors competed regularly in Motorsports NT affiliated motorsport events and activities
- Some 1,900 licensed competitors competed annually in Motorsports NT affiliated motorsport events and activities – each competitor had a vehicle related to the individual motorsport discipline and generally had a support crew of 2-3 people, equating to approx. 3,867 pit crew and competitors involved in competitive racing each fortnight

- Some 604 volunteers and officials were regularly involved in the conduct of Motorsports NT affiliated motorsport events and activities
- A total of some 62,500 man hours of voluntary labour was expended by club officials and volunteers in Motorsports NT affiliated clubs per annum
- An average of 7-10 people were on committees for the various clubs affiliated with Motorsports NT and met on a monthly basis for 3-4 hours – this would equate to another 4,000 man hours in committee time across affiliated clubs
- It took approx. 10 hours on average for a club race meeting – approx. 40,000 man hours were volunteered by club officials to conduct normal race meetings – a further 15,000 man hours could conservatively be expected to be expended on major motorsport events such as Northern Territory titles across clubs
- Club officials were also required to manage the day to day business of the individual motorsport discipline – this consisted of regular committee meetings, national meetings and peak body dealings
- A further significant amount of volunteer hours went into individual club working bees and maintenance and upgrades of facilities which was calculated at approx. 3,500 hours per annum (13 affiliated clubs, 25 people for 5 hours at 4 working bees per annum)

4 Gold Coast City Council and Community Motorsport

4.1 Historical Overview

The Gold Coast City Council (and its predecessor Councils) assisted community motorsport clubs enormously in the early years through the mid 1990's.

Strong growth in interstate migration to South East Queensland however increased demands for residential accommodation, and this necessitated the development of new housing subdivisions. Increasingly these moved closer to the previously isolated locations where land had been allocated to community motorsport clubs.

Inevitably conflicts would emerge between newly arrived residents living in close proximity to community motorsport facilities and those community motorsport clubs that been operating for long periods.

In hindsight Council could have better prepared for that eventuality by adopting some or all of the following measures:

- ensuring community motorsport facilities were formally recognised
- oblige proposed adjoining subdivisions to insert a caveat recognising the right of the community motorsport facilities to continue to operate in the same manner that applies to certain inner city night time entertainment districts
- providing buffer zones around existing community motorsport facilities
- re-locate the existing community motorsport clubs to a new "cluster" whereby the impact could be better managed (including the provision of a buffer zone).

The Gold Coast City Council, to its credit, did recognise the need to address the problem, and by the late 1990's and early 2000's had commenced exploring alternative sites within the Council boundaries where the community motorsport clubs could be relocated, thereby creating a "cluster".

Council staff considered a variety of locations (reported as being 52 potential sites between 2002 and 2008) but, regrettably, some Councillors preferred to politicise the issue, and adopted the "NIMBY" attitude with regards to suitable land within their individual Council Divisions.

As a result, the matter of relocating community motorsport clubs was continually deferred whilst at the same time, the list of potential areas suitable for relocation reduced as new subdivisions were approved.

The Gold Coast City Council subsequently established the Gold Coast Motor Sport Intergovernmental Working Group in early 2008 with the intention of identifying suitable land for future motor sport facilities.

The Working Group comprised representatives of Council, the Queensland Department of Sport and Recreation, and the Gold Coast Motor Sport Association.

The Gold Coast Motor Sport Association had been formed to represent the concerns of nine motor sport clubs on the Gold Coast, consisting of 3,500 members across motorcycle, motor car and karting clubs.

Soon afterwards, Mayor Ron Clarke also invited IMETT Group to join the Working Group in recognition of the significance of the proposed IMETT Project.

In August 2008, Council also appointed a Motorsport Project Officer to coordinate Council's communication and actions on a short term contract.

The Gold Coast Motor Sport Intergovernmental Working Group was subsequently disbanded in 2009.

4.2 State and Local Government Strategic Planning

According to the Gold Coast city Council's website, the *Gold Coast Planning Scheme* is a living document that guides the growth and development of the City of the Gold Coast. The document was developed in accordance with the Queensland Government's *Integrated Planning Act (IPA) 1997*.

The Planning Scheme guides the way new development occurs on the Gold Coast, and is a key tool to help Council manage the Gold Coast's ongoing growth in a sustainable manner. The Scheme sets out the preferred land use of every Gold Coast property and identifies what natural areas should be protected, where shops, industrial estates and public spaces should be located, and sets standards and criteria for buildings.

Given that the Planning Scheme is a living document, it is periodically reviewed and amended in accordance with State legislation relevant at the time.

The *Gold Coast Planning Scheme 2003 Version 1.2 Amended November 2011* is the current version of the Planning Scheme. It commenced on 14 November 2011.

The Gold Coast City Council has also undertaken action to introduce a new Planning Scheme, to be implemented in June 2015.

The following reports and studies, however, have offered some valuable insight into possible land options for community motorsport in the northern Gold Coast region.

4.2.1 North East Gold Coast Land Use and Infrastructure Strategy – Issues and Options Paper – August 2008

The Queensland Department of Infrastructure and Planning in association with the Gold Coast City Council and Logan City Council released its North East Gold Coast Land Use and Infrastructure Strategy Issues and Options Paper in August 2008.

In Section 5.8 Outdoor Recreation, the Paper quoted the following:

“The study area provides an opportunity to consider the growing need for suitable land for outdoor recreation. These needs include organised sports, tourism and casual recreational pursuits. While these pursuits may not be complementary to existing agricultural activities, the future rehabilitation of extractive industry sites or buffer areas for major developments may allow for the establishment of a significant integrated open space and outdoor recreation network within the study area over the long term. Provision of suitable land for outdoor recreation may also assist to relieve growing pressure on existing open space areas accessible for public recreation within the region.

Section 5.1 of the Gold Coast City Council Economic Development Strategy (EDS) identifies the sport industry as one of nine key industries with the opportunity to leverage off the city’s comparative advantages such as attractive year-round climate, strong sporting infrastructure and beaches and other natural attractions to make the Gold Coast a centre of sporting excellence. Appropriate land and facilities are required to support this industry.

Among the actions proposed in the EDS is the need to create a strategic plan for the motor sport industry. The rapid growth of the urban areas of the Gold Coast has led to increasing conflict between residential uses and some existing motor sports facilities. The main affected facilities include three existing off-road motorcycle racing clubs (Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club at Arundel, Gold Coast Junior Motorcycle Club at Reedy Creek and Albert & District MCC at Stanmore Park) and the Gold Coast Kart Club that ceased its operations at its former facility in Upper Coomera in February 2008. A number of other community motor sport clubs exist within the Gold Coast that either utilise private facilities or partake in activities in venues outside of the Gold Coast.

Loss of these facilities without adequate replacement facilities with long-term certainty of use in more suitable locations elsewhere would have detrimental economic impacts, and would also be likely to result in increased illegal off-road motorcycle activities, incrementally increasing noise nuisance and impacts on potential sensitive ecosystems.

Research into off-road motorcycling in South East Queensland (The Needs of Underage, Unlicensed and Unregistered Trail Bike Riders in South East Queensland, Hibbins R, School of Leisure Studies, Griffiths University, 2002) found that the major issue for riders was finding a safe, legal place to ride.

Generally off-road motorcycle riders (many of whom are under 17 years of age) also want these locations to be close to their place of residence. However, there is a fundamental incompatibility between motor sports activities and residential areas, particularly in relation to noise, dust and safety issues, meaning that this proximity is generally difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Alternative approaches such as providing transport from schools and/or residential areas to more remote motor sports facilities have been canvassed.

Gold Coast City Council has established an intergovernmental working group (IWG) to consider future motor sports facilities, and is seeking to move the three off-road motorcycle racing clubs mentioned into a single site somewhere on the Gold Coast. Due to the availability of large tracts of land, the North East Gold Coast study area is considered to provide some of the only remaining options for such a precinct. Should the IMETT development proposal proceed, there may be advantages in co-locating a community motor sports precinct either within or adjacent to the IMETT development. Other sites will continue to be investigated.

A report prepared for Gold Coast City Council (Planning Principles for Off-Road Motorcycles, Strategic Leisure Pty Ltd, July 2002) provides a checklist of 38 criteria for assessing sites for their suitability for use as an off-road motorcycle venue. It should be noted that these criteria can vary depending on the nature of the off-road motorcycling activity to be undertaken. The following summary of key criteria relates predominantly to three different types of off-road motorcycle racing activities – motocross, speedway and dirt track activities:

Site Characteristics

Disturbed lands (such as former quarries or landfills) are often well suited as the landform can be reshaped to meet use requirements

Surrounding land uses such as agriculture, industrial, commercial or open space are preferred to provide buffers to separate the use from incompatible uses such as residential. For track-based motorcycle sports a minimum 1 kilometre separation is preferred.

Easy access from the higher order road network is required and access should avoid use of residential streets.

Site Physical Characteristics

A minimum site size of 10 hectares is required for motocross, dirt track and speedway. However, the Gold Coast Motor Sports Club representative to the IWG indicated (notes of IWG meeting 22 January 2008) that the motocross clubs ideally need 150-200 hectares but can start with 50 hectares if the possibility to expand exists. A minimum site area of 50 hectares could be assumed, with a preference for a site that offers expansion potential beyond this.

Speedway and dirt track prefer fairly level sites and motocross can use flat and/or sloping land. Therefore preference is for a fairly level site. Off-road motorcycling facilities surrounded by steep slopes (hills or quarry walls) may reduce the size of noise buffers required.

Preference is to avoid flood prone sites, sites where drainage can be a problem and sites with numerous natural drainage lines due to potential environmental damage and a general preference for dry tracks and circuits.

Identifying the most appropriate site for these activities would require detailed examination of a wide range of issues including matters such as landowner support, security of tenure and tenure type, as well as a comprehensive environmental impact assessment.

A detailed site selection process is beyond the scope of this study, which is strategic in nature. However, it may be possible to identify areas of potential suitability for subsequent more detailed investigation based on the limited range of site and location criteria outlined above.

It should be noted that development of motor sport facilities for organised off-road motorcycle racing in the north-east corner of Gold Coast City may not help to address unauthorised trail bike riding problems elsewhere in the city.

The issues highlighted for recreational motor sports demonstrates some of the complexities associated with relocating and/or establishing suitable areas for outdoor recreation activities. The study area presents opportunities to provide for the long-term needs of the regional community for a range of outdoor recreation activities”.

4.2.2 North East Gold Coast Land Use, Economic and Infrastructure Strategy Report 2009

In 2009, the Queensland Department of Infrastructure and Planning subsequently released its “North East Gold Coast Land Use, Economic and Infrastructure Strategy” report that was developed in association with Gold Coast City Council and Logan City Council.

The Introduction noted that the strategy was intended to identify the optimum balance between competing land uses, values and constraints in the study area, and included an infrastructure strategy to support the preferred land-use pattern. Although the study area included some areas developed or designated for urban development, the focus of the strategy was on resolving development pressures on the rural areas and urban interface issues.

The strategy included the findings of a technical study prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff Australia Pty Ltd. The technical study included detailed site selection studies for specific land uses, infrastructure investigations and an evaluation of the likely social and economic impacts of the strategy.

The Strategy Report included a section (5.3.5 on page 21) on community motorsports that stated the following:

“Gold Coast City Council has identified a pressing need for a site to accommodate community motorsport activities that need to relocate from existing sites in proximity to residential areas.

An analysis of potential locations in the North East Gold Coast study area suggests the most suitable location for an outdoor motorsport facility is likely to be within, or adjacent to, the Yatala Enterprise Area expansion area. This area, called the Outdoor sports and Recreation Investigation Area, is shown on map 5.3. It has the following favourable characteristics:

- *Relatively remote from residential land uses*
- *A high ambient noise level associated with noise from the Pacific Motorway, rail corridor, the proposed IRTC and existing and future industry and extractive industries*
- *Undulating topography that can accommodate a variety of motorsport activities*
- *Buffering by topography, extractive industry and other existing and proposed industrial activities*
- *Good access from the M1, via Stapylton Jacobs well Road*
- *Possible long-term expansion into adjacent extractive industry sites to provide a major regional outdoor recreation facility*

Any proposed community motorsports facility should be located and designed to avoid conflict with current extractive industries during their operational life.

Recommendation 7:

Undertake a detailed site selection process to determine the site of the proposed community

Responsibility: Gold Coast City Council

Further in the report, section 5.4.2 Infrastructure Requirements for Specific Land Uses on page 27, it quoted:

Transport

The establishment of land and/or water-based motorsport activities would depend on the availability of land with good access to an existing major road or the use of an existing extractive industry lease. In both cases, access to an existing road transport system is essential. Neither the land nor water-based motorsport uses are expected to generate traffic volumes that would necessitate major road upgrades beyond those already anticipated in the priority infrastructure plan. Localised works may be required at intersections to improve road safety but these would be site-specific and could be resolved with detailed design.

Water Supply

Water supply is not considered to be a constraint on site selection for either type of motorsport use. Neither the land nor water-based motorsport uses are expected to be major water users. Rainwater should be adequate to service amenities in the short term. Water will be required for dust suppression for land-based motorsport activities. Ideally, these sites would be a minimum of 60 ha in size. It is recommended drainage channels be used to collect surface water in dams to provide water for dust suppression.

Class B recycled water could be used to augment dam water used for dust suppression. Sites in proximity to Stapylton WWTP/RWTP may be able to take advantage of Class B water supplied by either the Beenleigh WWTP (currently reticulated to the Rocky Point co-generation plant and sugar mill) or Stapylton WWTP/RWTP.

Wastewater

Community and recreational motorsports uses will not generate significant volumes of wastewater. Given the scale of amenities and area of land available, on-site treatment and disposal of wastewater is a viable and preferred option for motorsport activities”.

4.3 Leadership

It has been suggested by some within community motorsport clubs that the Gold Coast City Council has in recent years failed to provide the leadership that community motorsport could have expected.

If it is considered the Gold Coast had four very active and well managed community motorsport clubs with high quality facilities in early 2008, and that is compared to the current situation where the Gold Coast by May 2013 may be the largest local government area in Australia without any adult community motorsport facilities, then it is hard to disagree with the suggestion.

Some Councillors have also stated the need to maintain facilities for junior community motorsport, perhaps more as recognition of their “duty of care” as Councillors, although subsequent restrictions on the use of those facilities would appear to demonstrate some inconsistency.

As a young and growing community the Gold Coast City Council continues to approve new residential developments by major property groups that generally target first home buyers, with the many being young families.

Young families, however, have an expectation that appropriate community recreational infrastructure will be provided, and it is not hard to argue that the Gold Coast City Council has failed to meet that need for adults (and only marginally so for juniors) as far as community motorsport in concerned.

Council’s recent support, however, in assisting with resources to upgrade the Mike Hatcher Park and Stanmore Park facilities is encouraging, and it is hoped that Council will play a pro-active role in re-establishing facilities for senior community motorsport on the Gold Coast.

5 IMETT Project

IMETT Group has proposed the development of its flagship Project at Norwell on the Gold Coast.

The Project represents a private sector investment of AUD \$850 million in the first three year development phase, and comprises an international standard motor racing circuit and ancillary facilities, a world class theme park, hotels, education institute, and botanic garden.

IMETT will be the owner/operator of the major facilities. Additional project partners and co-locaters are expected to join IMETT at Norwell.

Designed with an initial 50 year life, the IMETT Project is expected to create some 2,000 jobs in the construction phase and a further 5,000 jobs in the operating phase.



6 IMETT and Community Motorsport

IMETT has long expressed an interest in working with Gold Coast based community motorsport clubs with a view to having interested clubs co-locate to the IMETT precinct. This could include motocross, karting, speedway, and car clubs involved in gymkhana activities.

IMETT has also offered to work with community motorsport clubs to acquire suitable land, and to assist in the development of appropriate motorsport infrastructure for those clubs.

Accordingly, IMETT has been in discussions with the following Gold Coast community motorsport clubs:

- Gold Coast Motocross Club
- Albert & District Motorcycle Club
- Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club
- Gold Coast Kart Club
- Gold Coast Tweed Motorsporting Club

Co-location by those community motorsport clubs could create a “motorsport cluster” whereby drivers and riders could progress through community motorsport to state based, national level and international level motorsport in the one location.

Those competitors who just want to have fun at a local level can do so at any age, but for those competitors who want to develop a national or international motorsport career can also do so by starting with community motorsport at the IMETT precinct.

Having established their careers at state or national level in Australia, those competitors can then base overseas if they then choose to compete at an international level, before returning home later to mentor the next generation.

Creating a multi-level “motorsport cluster” will also assist those small businesses who service the motorsport sector.

The larger potential market arising from a greater number of competitors in the one location offers those small businesses the opportunity to gain “critical mass” and to grow their business. This, in turn, would create a true “win/win” situation whereby those business operators can expand their range of motorsport products and services, develop and/or increase their technical capability and research, generate additional employment opportunities, and generally benefit the broader community through the payment of licence fees, GST, payroll, and taxes and stamp duties, just to name a few.

The benefit to IMETT arises from the ongoing development of a new generation of motorsport competitors at a state, national and international level (important when the IMETT motorsport facilities are being planned with an initial 50 year lifespan), as well as possibly creating an enthusiastic group of motorsport spectators for the various motorsport events that will be scheduled for the IMETT motor racing circuit.

The decision for community motorsport clubs to co-locate to the IMETT Project, however, ultimately rests with each of the community motorsport clubs on an individual basis.

IMETT is proud, however, to re-confirm its support for the community motorsport sector.

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7 References

Gold Coast Kart Club website

Gold Coast Motocross Club website

Mike Hatcher Park Junior Motorcycle Club website

Albert & District Motorcycle Club website

Motorsport NT website

Gold Coast City Council - website

Gold Coast Bulletin – newspapers and website

Motorcycling Queensland website

Inter-Governmental Working Group minutes

Discussions with selected Gold Coast businesses and individuals

Discussions with Gold Coast Kart Club

Discussions with Gold Coast Motocross Club

Discussions with Albert & District Motorcycle Club

Discussions with Mike Hatcher Park Junior and Senior Motorcycle Clubs

Discussions with Gold Coast Tweed Motorsporting Club

Discussions with Motorcycling Queensland

IMETT archives and correspondence

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9 Attachment A - History of the Major Community Motorsport Clubs in the Gold Coast Region

9.1 Gold Coast Kart Club

The Gold Coast Kart Club has operated since 1971 when racing commenced at the Day's Park Raceway located in Old Coach Road, Coomera.

By 1995 the Club began to experience community opposition to noise from the track, as residential expansion brought new housing subdivisions closer to the track.

In August 2007 the Club was approached to sell its Days Road site to Education Queensland, and a special meeting of the Club in September subsequently voted to approve the sale.

The Days Road Raceway subsequently closed in February 2008 when the land was resumed by the Queensland Government to build the Coomera Springs State School, and the Club was paid compensation of \$3.2 million. At the time Club membership stood at approx. 1,000 junior and senior members.

The Club packed up all that was usable from the Days Park Raceway and put it into long term storage whilst the Club explored alternative opportunities to develop a new raceway.

Prior to the closure of the Days Park Raceway, those opportunities included land at Claribaga that ultimately had too many constraints to development, land within the Bromelton State Development Area but was still in the planning phase, and privately owned land at Christmas Creek that was suitable but where the vendor was reluctant to sell.

By April 2008, the Gold Coast Kart Club had entered into discussions with IMETT to explore possible opportunities regarding co-location within the IMETT precinct. IMETT subsequently issued a letter of support to the Club.

Pressure from members for a speedy resolution to the lack of club racing facilities saw the club continue to explore a wide range of alternative options, both within the Gold Coast City Council boundaries and beyond.

By mid-2010, the Gold Coast Kart Club had identified a 70 acre parcel of land in an industrial buffer zone at Josephville, south west of Beaudesert on the Mount Lindsay Highway.

Apex Circuit Design Ltd of the United Kingdom was then commissioned to design a suitable circuit and facility. Comprising a series of smaller circuits that could be linked to form one larger competition circuit of 3.0kms, the estimated cost of the proposed development was some \$5 million.

A Development Application was subsequently lodged with the Scenic Rim Regional Council and Club members were briefed at a special Club meeting on 03rd November 2010. The Development Application was subsequently allowed to lapse after Council sought a contribution in excess of \$2 million for road building and traffic levies – an additional fee the Club could not afford.

On 19th September 2011, Members had voted to approve a proposal to form a Company Limited by Guarantee, and this was duly executed.

Three new entities were subsequently created:

1. Gold Coast Kart Club Ltd
2. GCKC Pty Ltd (as Trustee for the Gold Coast Kart Club Trust)
3. Gold Coast Kart Club Trust

At a further meeting on 19th September 2012, Members voted to approve the transfer of the remaining assets of the Gold Coast Kart Club Inc to a new entity, The Gold Coast Kart Club Limited, and the liquidation of the former entity, Gold Coast Kart Club Inc. Those assets comprised the fittings from the former Days Road Raceway that were being held in storage in three shipping containers.

The new structure envisaged GCKC Pty Ltd would build and own the facility which would be held in Trust to protect the asset. The facility would then be leased to the Gold Coast Kart Club Limited at a nominal lease fee.

By late 2012 the Club reported it had investigated some 150 possible land areas in the Scenic Rim Regional Council area, without success. In addition the Club had investigated a further 15 sites in the Gold Coast City Council area, also without success.

The Club continued to explore any suitable land that was available on the market.

The local government elections in April 2012 had brought renewed hope of a development on the Gold Coast, with Mayor Tom Tate leading a more pro-development Gold Coast City Council.

A landowner in Pimpama/Jacobs Well with suitable land was identified in late 2012 and was a willing vendor. With assistance from the Gold Coast City Council, the Club once more explored the possibility for a new facility not far from the original Days Park Raceway.

Sadly, it resulted in yet another unsuccessful application, this time due to environmental issues at a State Government level. The Club, however, continues to explore all opportunities.

Despite the lack of its own karting facility, the Gold Coast Kart Club has remained active, and is currently hiring other tracks for race events for its 200 members until a new facility can be established.

9.2 Mike Hatcher Junior and Senior Motorcycle Clubs

The Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club was founded in 1983 by Jim Pask, Jim McFarlane and Bo McFarlane.

The track was originally located on an undeveloped land in Napper Road, Parkwood, and the club had a total of 12 members made up of both Junior and Senior riders.

Mike Hatcher had obtained the original land for the club where both a Motor-X Track and a Dirt Track were built however the land was sold soon afterwards to the Bartlett Group of Companies who subsequently developed the Parkwood Golf Course.

In 1985 Ivan Gibbs and Lester Hughers then negotiated with the Shire of Albert (amalgamated with the Gold Coast City Council in 1995) to obtain the present site in Captain Cook Drive, Labrador for what is now known as Mike Hatcher Park. The site adjoined the Suntown Landfill facility that had been established since 1979.

A Dirt Track was developed among the trees, and the first race day at Mike Hatcher Park consisted of 12 riders, an esky for a bar, and a barbecue for a canteen. The Shire then built the club house.

In 1987 the Senior riders approached Council to also use the complex, and subsequently built their own club house above the Juniors' club house

The track, on its current site, was built by Gary Issel, Peter Neil, Bo McFarlane and Mike Hatcher and the Club hosted the Junior Short Track Championships in 1986.

In 1987 the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club hosted the Australian Championships and then hosted further Australian Championship events in 1989, 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003 and again in 2007.

The Club was originally affiliated with the Queensland Junior Motor Cycle Association (from 1985 -1993) before affiliating with Motorcycle Queensland after the two organisations merged in 1994.

The Junior and Senior Clubs combined to develop a new track in 1996, complete with starting gates, increased spectator viewing areas, a new pit area with toilets, and a first aid room. The funding for the redevelopment was co-ordinated by Tony West, with assistance from Council, and volunteer labour was provided by Club members.

Council notified residents in 1997 that it intended to close the Suntown Landfill facility in July 2001 and, as a result, the Gold Coast City Council approved residential development in parts of Arundel in close proximity to the landfill site in 2000.

Houses were then constructed at the foot of the western side of the landfill site, whilst others overlooked the western batter. Before long, Arundel residents started lobbying Council to close the Mike Hatcher Park facility.

Council responded by applying acoustic restrictions to motorcycle activities at Mike Hatcher Park.

Perhaps surprisingly, Council minutes noted that even when conforming to the noise criteria, noise from the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club would still be audible at surrounding residences. If noise was required to be inaudible at residential locations, virtually no developments would be allowed including shops, childcare, commercial, industrial, sports and schools.

Noise monitoring was performed at the closest residential locations to the track in the north (Casa Bella Estate), west (Arun Drive north), south/west (Arun Drive south) and south/east (Fadden Close).

Noise monitoring was also performed at the track, with a reference location established and calibrated by an external acoustic consultant.

The lease for Mike Hatcher Park was scheduled to expire on 30th June 2009, and the Gold Coast City Council began actively exploring options to relocate the Club.

In late March 2009, it was then revealed that a key town planning report on the Mike Hatcher Raceway had not been made available to Councillors.

The 1987 planning approval clearly stated the controversial Arundel track could remain open until a new home was found, if the Club adhered to noise restrictions.

Southport Councillor Dawn Crichlow subsequently proposed a motion that supported an indefinite extension of the lease until a new track was built by the Gold Coast City Council.

In mid June 2009 the Gold Coast Bulletin reported that a proposed new super dump site at Burleigh Heads was expected to become the new home for riders from the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club.

Council had proposed purchasing land parcels adjoining existing council land at Burleigh Heads, with the Gold Coast City Council expecting to pay \$27.5 million to buy the site which was to be transformed into a major waste and recycling operation.

It was also proposed for the site to provide a temporary solution for the city's motorcycle riders, with plans to build facilities for all motorcycle clubs on the expanded site.

Following the expiry of the lease, the Gold Coast City Council allowed the Junior Club to operate for several months before it finally closed down all motorcycle activities at Mike Hatcher Park in September 2009.

One month later, Council resolved to discontinue normal landfill activity at the Suntown Landfill, effective from 31 December 2010.

The Mike Hatcher Senior Motorcycle Club was able to negotiate with the North Brisbane Motorcycle Club to use their facility at Northgate for interim competition purposes however the Council's decision to abandon the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club resulted in a strong community backlash.

In early December 2009, Mayor Ron Clarke used his casting vote to permanently shut down Mike Hatcher Park, in a move that evicted more than 80 junior riders from their home track.

The Gold Coast Bulletin reported that, for the first time, Councillors openly admitted that they did not want a flat track *'in their back yard'* and scrapped an officer recommendation for a new \$3.4 million facility at Stapylton.

The Bulletin also reported a deal had been developed that would see the Mike Hatcher site re-zoned as commercial and industrial land, then *'sliced up'* and sold to the highest bidder, with the most recent valuation on the site putting the going price at \$17 million.

Incoming Junior Club President Mike Findlay was determined that the Club should stay at Mike Hatcher Park and believed that the Club could comply with Council's acoustic requirements.

He also recognised that significant funding was required to fund the work necessary to achieve compliance however the Club was \$30,000 in debt.

Working with the local community, the Club subsequently raised some \$625,000 in cash, goods and services to prepare the facility to enable it to comply with the Council's requirements.

Grant applications were successfully lodged with a number of organisations, including the Queensland State Government (\$200,000), both the Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund and the Gambling Community Benefit Fund (\$57,000), and Councillor Dawn Crichlow contributed \$50,000 from Division 6 divisional funds even though the Mike Hatcher facility was outside of her Division.

Club President Mike Findlay also approached 28 private companies for assistance, with almost all meetings conducted onsite and, as a result, gained support to re-develop the facilities.

In addition to the construction works necessary to re-develop the facilities, operational aspects were also addressed. A new water truck was donated, new mowers and maintenance equipment provided, new kitchen equipment acquired, and spectator seating and shade barriers were upgraded.

Changes to the V8 Supercar event, the Gold Coast 600, in 2010 resulted in a shorter track being adopted. This decision also proved timely for the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club and, as a result, some 260 metres of surplus concrete barriers were acquired by the Club for use in the construction of earth mounds around the track.

The Gold Coast City Council, perhaps feeling the pressure from the community, subsequently recognised the need to become more actively involved in assisting the Club, and provided \$30,000 of noise testing equipment.

After some 9 months of construction activity, it was subsequently discovered in late 2010 that the Council had been working off incorrect noise criteria, necessitating further testing.

The Club conducted a simulated race day in June 2011 for testing purposes, and further monitoring of background noise levels was performed at the Council's noise monitoring locations in August 2011.

Council minutes noted the result indicated a background noise level of 43dB(A) at all residential locations. Applying relevant sections of the Environmental Protection (Noise) Policy 2008, Council's Licensing and Approvals section and an external acoustic consultant adopted noise criteria that protected the acoustic amenity at nearby residential dwellings.

Based on the background noise results (43dB(A)) and the adapted noise criteria (background + 5dB(A)), the noise criteria applied at residential locations was limited to 48dB(A).

As the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club was required to monitor all motorbike activity on the track, the acoustic consultant established and calibrated a noise limit at the track. When the noise level is 48dB(A) at the closest residential locations during worst case weather conditions, the noise level at the reference location at the track is 85dB(A).

After more than 30 meetings with the council, more than 6500 emails, 25 acoustic test sessions and 3500 hours spent by club president Mike Findlay, the Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club was finally granted a three-year lease by Council to hold meetings at the fully refurbished Mike Hatcher Park track in Labrador.

The Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club officially re-opened on Saturday 20th October 2012, by which time 120 members had re-joined the Club.

9.3 Gold Coast Motocross Club

The Gold Coast Motocross Club was established during the 1970's.

The Club subsequently developed the Reedy Creek Motocross Circuit in Old Coach Road, Reedy Creek in 1979 on land that was leased from the Gold Coast City Council.

Over time the club developed a high quality motocross facility that also incorporated night lighting, setting it apart from the vast majority of motocross facilities around Australia.

It was a club with vision, and relatively self-sufficient with the majority of infrastructure developed by club members along with valuable contributions from the business community.

With the Gold Coast region expanding rapidly through the migration of young families from interstate, it was no surprise that club membership grew strongly with race meetings often supported by generations of family members.

By 2002 however, the axe was hovering over the Reedy Creek track as suburbia began encroaching out into the Gold Coast countryside surrounding the Reedy Creek track that had operated for almost 25 years.

In June 2007, the Gold Coast City Council's health and community services committee voted 3-1 to relocate the Gold Coast Motocross Club from their Reedy Creek complex to an old quarry, located in Nerang between the M1 and the railway line.

The Council had conducted extensive noise testing at the quarry site and had been waiting for the results before the application was presented to the full Council.

The Gold Coast Bulletin reported that the Gold Coast Motocross Club had a fight on its hands however as the City Council's 'green sheriff', Councillor Peter Young, had attempted to hijack the parcel of land that had been earmarked for the Club's relocation for other purposes.

Fighting back, the Club noted that many famous riders visited the track including probably the most famous dirt bike rider in the world, Seth Enslow. The Club commented that people would be paying almost \$100 to see him when he attempted to break the world record at the Crusty Demons show in Melbourne the following week and that he could have been seen at the Club the previous night for nothing. *"He is just one of the many world-class riders we have at the track each week"*.

In January 2009 Gold Coast Motocross Club members attended a public rally outside Gold Coast City Council Chambers at Evandale to protest in an attempt to save the Reedy Creek track.

The Gold Coast Bulletin reported that, *“their bikes may have sat idle but you could not drown out the sound of the dirt bike riders who converged on the City Council Chambers this morning to protest the impending demise of the Gold Coast motocross track”*.

Chanting ‘save our track,’ everyone from families to local Crusty Demons stars marched on the steps of City Hall as they fought for a place to ride.

The lease on the Gold Coast Motocross Club's Reedy Creek track was scheduled to expire in April 2009 and the riders were rallying to force the Council to step in and save the track, which has been producing champions for more than 20 years.

From 8am to 10am more than 100 riders, many with their bikes loaded on trailers or in the back of utes, joined the public rally before they headed off to the Reedy Creek circuit for a ride.

The Gold Coast Bulletin reported, *“that it appeared their cries for help were heard as Council representatives at the rally had indicated they would be able to continue riding and racing at the Old Coach circuit until a new venue is found.*

The club members were joined by local Crusty Demons stars Steve Mini and Kain Saul who both ride at the Reedy Creek track. Saul was also the Australasian Freestyle Motocross Champion”.

On 23rd March, 2010 the Gold Coast Bulletin then announced a new home for Gold Coast motocross was to be developed in the northern Gold Coast region.

After years of debate, motocross tracks at Reedy Creek and Stanmore seemed certain to close with the Gold Coast City Council's endorsement of a new motocross club site at Stapylton.

The proposed new site was a former quarry bordered by rural property and industrial development.

The Gold Coast City Council had endorsed, unchanged, a proposal put forward by the Community and Cultural Development Committee to close the two Gold Coast clubs and to create a new venue for motocross riders in Stapylton, near Yatala.

Councillor Donna Gates suggested it was a good solution with the least impact and argued; *“as a city we really need to be mindful of our own ratepayers, their residential amenity and we also need to only contribute the dollars we can afford to this sport.”*

Gold Coast Motocross Club was however concerned at the size of the proposed track, whilst Councillor Gates admitted the new site wouldn't accommodate existing numbers of motocross riders.

“It will mean fewer participants will be able to be involved in the sport on the Gold Coast because I think at the moment there’s 3,000 members of those two clubs combined, but we cater for many riders from outside the city”.

The popular Reedy Creek track attracted more than just club members, and played its part in attracting tourists to the Gold Coast. Visitors to the Gold Coast often sought out the Reedy Creek track as part of their holiday, whilst hundreds of other visitors came specifically to participate in the biennial Pan Pacific Masters Games motocross events at the Reedy Creek track.

The Pan Pacific Masters Games is one of the Gold Coast’s more popular events, and is hosted every two years.

The Pan Pacific Master Games attracts in excess of 10,000 competitors to the Gold Coast from more than 20 countries as well as Australia, and offers a variety of events in a range of sports for men and women of all ages, with youngest being 25 years and the oldest often being in their 90’s.

One of the featured events for many years was vintage motocross, with the Gold Coast Motocross Club hosting the riders at the challenging Reedy Creek track. Competition was always fierce, and was made possible by the track’s night lighting that allowed more competitors to participate. The ability to extend competition into the night time also helped older riders, with the cooler conditions assisting aging and weary bodies.

The Reedy Creek track subsequently hosted its final Pan Pacific Masters Games motocross event in November 2010.

Although the application to develop a new motocross track at Stapylton had been passed by the Gold Coast City Council's planning committee, noise remained the most contentious issue, with 27 residences around the site, at Rossmanns Rd, which includes a house about 560m away.

There were also concerns with traffic, dust, parking, health concerns and the effect on a pet funeral business some 700m away.

Councillor Donna Gates, who represented the area, subsequently told the planning committee she opposed the track being built, despite originally suggesting the site.

The new motocross track was to be built on a 15-year lease from Allconnex, would open seven days a week, and was to be used by both the Gold Coast Motocross Club and the Albert & District Motorcycle Club. Their respective tracks were to be closed in April 2011.

Councillor Gates said there had been many changes from the original proposal and she was the only councillor to vote against the application, which still had to go to an ordinary council meeting.

"I'm not happy, who would be?" Cr Gates said. "This is definitely going to have an impact on the community."

Acknowledging that the application would be passed, Councillor Gates added a number of conditions which included club member or event registration for use of the track, the track being open 8am to 4pm Monday to Saturday and 9am to 4pm on Sunday.

Other conditions were three non-competitive special hire events per year, club events restricted to 30 bikes, state events restricted to 40 bikes and for all bikes to be noise tested.

On 4th May 2011, the Gold Coast City Council further extended the life of the club's Reedy Creek track until 30th November 2011, much to the delight of the Gold Coast Motocross Club's members, but the delight was short-lived.

On 28th November 2011, the Gold Coast City Council voted in a "closed meeting" to; (a) confirm that Stanmore Park would close on 30th November as previously directed; (b) that the Reedy Creek facility would close on 14th December; (c) that Council would hold another meeting on Monday 5th December to determine their position on the proposed Stapylton MX facility.

That outcome was, however, contrary to both Clubs' understanding from Council, being that neither motocross facility would be closed until a replacement facility was operational.

In a surprise announcement on 30th November 2011 the Gold Coast Bulletin reported that the Gold Coast City Council had begged a developer to stop taking legal action against the Gold Coast Motocross Club after embarrassingly failing to find a home for the Club's young riders.

The Council, which first knew of the closures in April, had left it until the end of November to find an alternative venue before approaching the developer, who held a court order, to guarantee the Reedy Creek track would remain open for another two weeks.

Councillor Donna Gates described the situation as *'the most disgraceful performance by the council administration'*, and said the administration had known about the closure for three years but had failed to find a solution.

The Council had expected to provide a new track at Stapylton but the project had faced cost blow-outs and delays.

The contractor hired to quarry the site in preparation for the track had been told to leave and that the project was *'indefinitely'* on hold.

Council Chief Executive, Dale Dickson subsequently apologised for the mistake.

Council had refused to reveal how much it had so far spent on the \$5.85 million Stapylton project, confirming only that it had upgraded a road intersection, installed power and water and completed undefined 'ground work'.

It had been supposed to be finished in April at a cost of \$4.4 million but the deadline had been pushed back to November because Council had to dig the track deeper to provide more noise protection.

By October, an updated Council report revealed another \$1.45 million would be needed to complete the track because extra rock needed to be quarried. The report also showed detailed plans had not been finalised, despite the completion date being November 30.

It was however only a temporary reprieve for the Gold Coast Motocross Club. The Gold Coast Bulletin newspaper subsequently reported on 04th December 2011 that the Gold Coast City Council had voted to close the Reedy Creek track on 17th December 2011.

Division Councillor and then Deputy Mayor Daphne McDonald advised the Gold Coast Motocross Club to lobby local and State Government to try and keep their track open, but suggested that closure was ultimately inevitable.

The Council had extended the closing date of the track on about five occasions, "buying time" until they find another track for riders and families.

Councillor McDonald said the club had been advised to get town planning approval some years earlier and had not, resulting in the court's decision to close down the track.

The Gold Coast City Council finally shut down night riding at the Reedy Creek track on 04th May 2012 prompting the Gold Coast Motocross Club to seek legal advice to try to keep the track open.

Unfortunately, it was a lost cause and the Reedy Creek track finally closed in late May 2012, having served the Club for some 33 years. It was a real disappointment to the Club's 1100 registered members.

Meanwhile, in a letter dated 19th December 2011 Council advised its meeting of 5th December 2011 had resolved that, due to the project risks and costs forcing the Stapylton Project to be discontinued, consideration had been given to the Stanmore Park motocross facility be upgraded and would be re-opened for motocross activities at the earliest opportunity.

It noted that relevant community and amenity based conditions and constraints would be applied to the operation at the upgraded facility, and with this in mind officers intended to consult with representatives of both Gold Coast clubs to resolve a scope of work, timelines and estimated costs in order to progress the project.

The facility would remain closed until the agreed works were completed however every opportunity would be made to prioritise works.

Following an extensive works programme at the Stanmore Park motocross track, the Gold Coast City Council then made the decision to prevent senior riders from riding at Stanmore motocross track indefinitely.

The decision effectively meant the end of the road for a club that had operated for more than 30 years catering for senior and junior motocross.

Council then issued an Expression of Interest on 3rd July 2012 calling for the establishment of a new Gold Coast club to operate the Stanmore Park motocross track, with a closing date of 16th July 2012.

Council intended to evaluate the Expressions of Interest on 20th July and to issue a Grant of Trustee permit to the successful applicant on 01st August 2012.

The Gold Coast City Council subsequently wrote to both the Albert & District Motorcycle Club and the Gold Coast Motocross Club on 27th July 2012 advising that the two clubs were the only organisations to lodge Expressions of Interest to operate the Stanmore Park motocross track and suggested a mediation meeting to establish a new entity on behalf of all junior riders.

On 16th October 2012 the Albert & District Motorcycle Club and the Gold Coast Motocross Club issued a combined notice to members advising that they would work together to retain motocross facilities for junior riders.

The Gold Coast Bulletin reported on 6th December 2012 that the Gold Coast City Council Community and Cultural Development Committee had endorsed several key outcomes for the Stanmore Park motocross facility that would allow the track to re-open.

These included a six-month license agreement with the Albert & District Motorcycle Club; approval for the club to undertake various on-site improvements to minimise noise; that Council would start other on-site improvements including a new entry point, irrigation and demountable relocations; and that Council would start the duplication of Stanmore Road, between Sandy Creek Road and Peachey Road from January 2013.

Divisional Councillor, Donna Gates, indicated that consultation with the community would be ongoing.

“The Albert and District Motorcycle Club had collaborated with Gold Coast Motocross Club to meet Council’s conditions regarding local amenity. The club is keen to work with the community to achieve a suitable outcome for residents and motocross enthusiasts,” she said.

The Reedy Creek motocross track may have closed however the Gold Coast Motocross Club was still very much alive and wanting motocross facilities for its senior members.

The Club continued to explore opportunities around Murwillumbah in northern New South Wales in conjunction with the Tweed Valley Junior Motorcycle Club.

A number of sites had been considered but all had been found to be unsuitable; however on 9th November 2012 the Tweed Daily News reported that a further move had been made to explore a lease on land at another landfill site, this time in Lundberg Road, South Murwillumbah.

Tweed Council officers had recommended a 5 year lease at \$250 per year that increased with the CPI each year, as the landfill site was contaminated land that would attract limited uses.

Tweed Council also noted that the Tweed Valley Junior Motorcycle Club would still need to lodge a Development Application with Council for public consultation and to secure funding for the project.

9.4 Albert & District Motorcycle Club

The Albert & District Motorcycle Club was established in the 1970's.

A motocross circuit was developed on 4.5ha (11 acres) of land at the corner of Stanmore Road and Sandy Creek Road, Yatala in 1979 on land owned by the Queensland State Government but vested in the Shire of Albert (amalgamated with the Gold Coast City Council in 1995).

The Stanmore Motocross circuit was a fast, open flowing track approximately 1.45kms in length, with a surface a mixture of hard pack, thick loam and sandy patches.

The circuit was an exciting venue for spectators, however the variable elevation, interesting mix of technical and high-speed corners, ensured the track catered for every class of rider: from the novice, through to the experienced competitor.

Set amongst natural bushland, Stanmore was a true test of endurance and skill with 11 jumps of varying length and difficulty.

To ensure it maintained its wide appeal, substantial modifications to the track had been made in recent times. These included two new table tops immediately following the first corner (removing a notoriously treacherous chicane), as well as other general improvements to overall track quality.

Self-penalising, backward or rearward falling, mechanically actuated starting gates provided a seamless start to every race meet; with 40 gates available for events.

In the Club's newsletter for February 2006, it noted that the Club race format that had been operating for some years would not change in the short term but the Club was operating under time constraints due to neighbours and Council.

One club member wrote to Judy Spence MP, Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport dated 31st March 2008, advising, *“that the club was facing closure due to the Gold Coast City Council possibly not renewing the club’s lease in October 2008. The reason quoted for the non-renewal of the lease was because of noise and dust complaints from local residents”*.

In the letter, the member noted, *“that the club had been at the current location in excess of 30 years and provided and maintained a motocross track for approx. 800 members and visiting riders from other clubs.*

The land that the track is built on was state owned recreational land but administered by the Gold Coast City Council. The club conducted practice on weekends for approx. 220 riders and generally once a month conducted a race meeting with an average of 190 riders attending.

The Club provided a family friendly and safe environment to pursue their chosen sport, and on club days it was common to see 3 generations of a family there supporting family members.

The track was well established well before residents moved into the area, and a large proportion of the adjoining area was commercial land. It was the member’s belief that new residents would have known the track was there prior to purchasing their properties and suggested that it was a bit late to complain about the location of the track.

If the club was to close, it would leave a large number of riders with nowhere to ride legally in the local area. The member suggested that Council was well aware of the number of off road motorbike accidents that had happened in illegal and unsupervised riding areas.

As a sporting facility within the Gold Coast City Council area, it did not cost the Council anything to run or maintain the facility because the Club had borne the cost of building the infrastructure to support the running of the club.

Compare this to the Council’s cost to maintain football and other sporting facilities within the council and also Council’s commitment to provide \$3.7 million for youth facilities like a skate village and BMX park within the council area.

The club considered it provided a vital sporting facility within the Gold Coast City Council area”.

Confirming the member’s concerns, the Gold Coast Bulletin subsequently reported on 14th May 2008 that the Stanmore Motocross Park lease was not expected to be renewed when the Gold Coast City Council reviewed the track’s operations the following month.

Division 1 Councillor Donna Gates suggested people must put themselves in the shoes of residents who lived near tracks. *"There were five property owners near the proposed application and they would have been heavily affected by the track,"* said Councillor Gates.

"There were noise and dust issues and, more importantly, serious environmental issues which were not addressed."

In its April 2009 newsletter, the Club reported that Council had conducted noise testing during the last race day. The results were out and there had been a marked improvement in some directions and limited improvement in others.

It was imperative that the Club continued to do its utmost to ensure that bikes were muffled properly, continue with noise testing and to operate only within the times that the club was allocated.

The Club was appreciative of the work the Council had put into the Club over the past year which included acoustic barriers and the work done on access roads and pit paddock areas. This showed that they were committed to helping the Club to be compliant and hopefully allow it to remain at the venue into the future.

The November 2009 newsletter noted the club now had 923 members, and that the club hoped to have approval to expand the number of starting gates from 30 to 40 by the start of the 2010 season. The Club also commented that it was getting more noise complaints from the neighbours and suggested that noise testing was expected to remain an ongoing procedure that was here to stay.

The January 2010 newsletter reported the Club had finished the previous year with 940 members making Stanmore, along with the Gold Coast Motocross Club, the two largest clubs in Queensland by nearly double – managing 160 riders on any given practice day and race numbers were around the 240 mark early in the year reducing to 160-180 later on.

Motocross was definitely alive and well.

To top the year off, Albert & District Motorcycle Club was awarded third place in Motorcycling Queensland's "Club of the Year" award. To put this in perspective, there were nearly 100 affiliated clubs, over 300 venues and over 7,000 licence holders in Queensland.

Although there had been a lot of debate and decision making going on within the Gold Coast City Council regarding motocross clubs and venues on the coast, the Club had been given verbal assurance that it would be open for the next 12 months.

On 23rd March, 2010 the Gold Coast Bulletin announced a new home for Gold Coast motocross was to be developed in the northern Gold Coast region.

The proposed new site at Stapylton was a former quarry bordered by rural property and industrial development.

After years of debate, motocross clubs at Reedy Creek and Stanmore Park were certain to close with Gold Coast City Council's endorsement of the new site. Riders were however concerned the new site wasn't big enough for both clubs and that losing a track on the southern Gold Coast would force riders into the bush.

Councillor Donna Gates suggested it was a good solution with the least impact and argued; *"as a city we really need to be mindful of our own ratepayers, their residential amenity and we also need to only contribute the dollars we can afford to this sport."*

Councillor Gates admitted the new site wouldn't accommodate existing numbers of motocross riders.

"It will mean fewer participants will be able to be involved in the sport on the Gold Coast because I think at the moment there's 3,000 members of those two clubs combined, but we cater for many riders from outside the city".

This Council has worked extremely hard to identify a site within the city that would be appropriate," Councillor Gates stated.

The application to develop the Stapylton track was passed by the Gold Coast City Council's planning committee however noise remained the most contentious issue, with 27 residences around the site, at Rossmanns Rd, which includes a house about 560m away.

There are also concerns with traffic, dust, parking, health concerns and the effect on a funeral business 700m away.

Councillor Donna Gates, who represented the area, told the planning committee she opposed the track being built, despite originally suggesting the site.

The track was to be built on a 15-year lease from Allconnex, would be open seven days a week, and be used by both the Gold Coast Motocross Club and the Albert & District Motorcycle Club which were to have their tracks closed in April 2011.

Councillor Gates said there had been many changes from the original proposal and she was the only councillor to vote against the application, which will go to an ordinary council meeting.

"I'm not happy, who would be?" Councillor Gates said. *"This is definitely going to have an impact on the community."*

Acknowledging that the application would be passed, Councillor Gates added a number of conditions which included club member or event registration for use of the track, the track being open 8am-4pm Monday to Saturday and 9am to 4pm on Sunday.

Other conditions were three non-competitive special hire events, club events would be restricted to 30 bikes, state events would be restricted to 40 bikes, and for all bikes to be noise tested.

On 29th November 2011, the Club advised Members in a lease update via its website that Gold Coast City Council had voted in a “closed meeting” on Monday 28th November to; (a) confirm that Stanmore Park will close on 30th November as previously directed; (b) that the Reedy Creek facility will close on 14 December; (c) that Council will hold another meeting on Monday 5th December to determine their position on the proposed Stapylton MX facility.

That outcome was contrary to the Club’s genuine understanding from Council, that neither facility would be closed until a replacement facility was operational, and the Albert & District Motorcycle Club had been working through available options for the continued use of Stanmore Park until that occurred.

The Committee reminded Members that if they were Gold Coast residents (in particular Division1 residents) that, *“now was the time to contact your local Councillor and to complain about the poor and unjust treatment dealt out to members of the Club; and the motocross community in general. Let them know you’re a voter and motocross rider ahead of the Council elections scheduled for March 2012”*.

In a shock announcement however, the Gold Coast Bulletin reported on December 1st, 2011 that the \$6 million track at Stapylton had been mothballed.

It had been supposed to be finished in April 2011 for \$4.4 million but the deadline had been pushed back to November 2011 because Council had to dig the track deeper to provide more noise protection.

By October 2011, a further Council report revealed another \$1.45 million would be needed to complete the track. The report also showed detailed plans had not been finalised, despite the completion date being 30th November 2011.

Cr Donna Gates said the problem was far worse than the \$1.45 million blowout flagged in October 2011. *“There’s no doubt someone has to be held accountable for this absolute debacle,”* she said. *“This organisation had three years to get an alternative solution and it hasn’t occurred.”*

The contractor hired to quarry the site in preparation for the track had been told to leave and that the project was ‘indefinitely’ on hold,

The Council refused to reveal how much it had spent on the \$5.85 million Stapylton project, confirming only that it had upgraded a road intersection, installed power and water and completed undefined ‘ground work’. There were fears the debacle could leave the city with an expensive white elephant.

A letter from Council dated 19th December 2011 to the Albert & District Motorcycle Club, advised that Council at its meeting of 5th December 2011 resolved that, due to the project risks and costs forcing the Stapylton Project to be discontinued, consideration had been given to the Stanmore Park motocross facility being upgraded and for it to be re-opened for motocross activities at the earliest opportunity.

It noted that relevant community and amenity based conditions and constraints would be applied to the operation at then upgraded facility, and with this in mind officers would consult with representatives of both Gold Coast clubs over coming days in order to resolve a scope of work, timelines and estimated costs in order to progress the project.

The Stanmore Park facility would remain closed until the agreed works were completed however every opportunity would be made to prioritise works.

On 10th January 2012 the Club advised Members the Management Committee had met with Council Representatives on 21st December 2011 to discuss the necessary work required to be able to re-open the facility. This would be achieved in 2 stages and progress in line with the Council's set timetable.

The Management Committee again met with Council Representatives on 9th January 2012 and agreed to draft track plans, before meeting again on 23rd January to formalise Stage 1 track plans and timetable for completion (rain/weather permitting).

On 8th February the Management Committee met again with Council Representatives, signed off Stage 1 plans, and agreed to the extent of the new noise barrier that will be part of Stage 2. Council contractors then commenced excavation works on Monday 13th February in order to lower the track in front of the canteen area. This work was scheduled to take 2 weeks, and when completed, the Club was required to re-instate the track and irrigation lines through the excavated area.

Stage 1 necessitated a temporary track reconfiguration in areas that were deemed to cause too much noise to escape from the facility. When these works were completed, it was expected that Council would allow the Club to recommence practice days – but not competition race days.

Stage 2 necessitated a comprehensive track configuration, including the relocation of the start gates and score tower (and maybe other structures). When these works were completed, it was expected that Council would allow the Club to recommence competition racing.

Interestingly, the letter gave no indication to the Club that senior riders would not be permitted to use the re-opened facility despite Council requesting the Club to re-instate certain facilities (effectively requiring volunteer labour from senior riders).

On 07th March 2012, the Club advised Members that Stage 1 was nearing completion, that excavation works had been completed by Council, and the Club was currently re-instating the track. The next step was to conduct a Noise Test ride day.

The Gold Coast City Council subsequently conducted noise testing on the Stanmore Park Motocross facility on 17th March 2012.

The results showed a high of 56dB while senior riders were on the track, which was 4dB under the current DA town planning limit of 60dB. This demonstrated the facility was compliant while approx. 25 senior riders were on the track.

Following a meeting between Albert & District Motorcycle Club and Gold Coast City Council on 3rd April 2012, the Club wrote to Council advising that the proposed operating days/hours was unworkable for the club.

The Club had not been consulted in determining the operating days and hours, which significantly changed the manner in which the Club could operate for its members. The Club also pointed out that motocross was like most other sports and recreational activities in that it was a weekend pursuit.

In a further meeting between the Gold Coast City Council and the Club on 13th April 2012, Council advised that while the Club had passed the recent Noise Testing (56dB against a limit of 60dB); Council had directed that only 6 senior 450cc bikes may be on the track at any one time.

The Albert & District Motorcycle Club subsequently noted on its website that, *"the reason for this in Council's opinion; is to make sure noise levels in the suburb meet current standards which are background noise + 5dB.*

Interestingly the current background noise is 44-49dB therefore 49+5 =54dB. We are only 2dB off the current standard, and fully compliant with the old standard that we must legally be measured against. Additional noise reduction measures will surely allow us to come in at 54dB".

The Management Committee met at a special meeting, and determined that the Club would not agree to Council's directions. The reasoning was if the Club agreed to this, then after the three month trial Council would say that's the way the Club must operate from then onwards. The Committee would have allowed the Club to be restricted to Saturday operations and 6 x 450cc motorcycles per time.

Any Member that had attended or ridden at Stanmore Park on the weekends would know that it would be impossible to squeeze everyone into one day's use, and to restrict 450cc's to 6 on the track at a time. On practice weekends, the Club averaged 200 riders over both days. On race days, the Club averaged 165-200 competitors.

It was the Committee's view that Council was trying to manoeuvre the Club for its own political outcome; with no regard to how the sport of motocross was conducted, or the financial viability of the club.

The Management Committee advised it would continue to fight for a fair and equitable outcome for members and the Stanmore Park facility; and would not sell the Club short on substandard operating conditions.

The advice also suggested that interesting times lay ahead with the Council Election on 28th April 2012, commenting that if a change of Councillors and/or Mayor, then logically thinking, there may be a change of sentiment towards the Club and facility.

The Management Committee then suggested Members and Gold Coast residents who were to vote in the Election should consider the following:

- *You may like to note who moved and seconded the Resolutions that so severely restricted the Club's operations - (Gold Coast City Council Resolution G12.0330.001 moved by Councillor Donna Gates and Seconded by Councillor Peter Young proposed to limit the Albert & District Motorcycle Club to a maximum of 6 riders on the track at any one time, and also restricted the days the track could be used.)*
- *You may like to ponder the logic of Council spending at least \$200,000 on noise reduction measures at Stanmore Park, then strangling the Club's ability to operate appropriately and viably.*
- *You may like to ponder Council spending copious amounts of money on the failed Stapylton facility, despite the Albert & District Motorcycle Club and Motorcycling Queensland continuously advising Council that Stapylton was not viable.*
- *You may like to ponder that your Club has co-operated with Council since December 2011 with these noise reduction measures, and spent over \$20,000 of Members funds in the process.*
- *You may like to ponder the underhanded way that Council changed our operating conditions without consultation; despite the good faith the Club had extended to them in this project, as well as money, resources and labour.*

On 21st May 2012, the Club advised its Members that it had requested a meeting with new Gold Coast Mayor, Tom Tate; Federal Member for Forde, Bert van Manen; State Member for Albert, Mark Boothman; State Minister for Sport, Recreation National Parks and Racing, Steve Dickson; to determine a workable/common-sense solution for the current 'stalemate' that will allow the Club to operate appropriately and sustainably.

The Gold Coast Bulletin subsequently reported on 17th June 2012 that Council wanted to re-open Stanmore Park at Yatala but only for junior riders because their smaller bikes made less noise.

The Council decision left senior riders with only the Wyaralong trail riding facility past Beaudesert – a facility that was clearly not a motocross facility.

It angered both motocross Clubs who advised they would not be financially viable without senior riders.

Councillor Donna Gates said she was trying to find a compromise between giving riders a venue and keeping noise down for residents.

“We have a responsibility to junior riders to have a safe and supervised facility”, Councillor Gates said. “I have no confidence that residents won’t be affected if we open it up to other levels of racing”.

But Councillor Daphne McDonald said leaving senior riders without a place to ride within city limits would create more chaos in the suburbs.

Wyaralong is a completely different track, it’s for recreational use only and it’s already over utilised she said. If we don’t provide a facility they will be riding in the parks, the bush, and the noise will still be there.

At its meeting dated 22nd June 2012, the Gold Coast City Council resolved to rescind a previous Resolution granting the Albert & District Motorcycle Club a Trustee Permit to operate the Stanmore Motocross track and in place Council would call for Expressions of Interest for the formation of a Gold Coast Junior Motocross Club (250cc or less) to operate the track.

On 3rd July 2012 the Gold Coast City Council wrote to the Albert & District Motorcycle Club regarding the future of the Stanmore Park Motocross Track, and advising, “Recent issues with noise emanating from the track has led to a reduced scale of use being approved in line with current EPA regulations.”

The letter noted that Council had resolved in March 2012 to re-open the Stanmore Park on a restricted basis until further noise attenuation measures could be undertaken however the Club refused to agree to the terms and conditions of that approval and the facility has remained closed.

As a result, Council at its meeting of 22nd June 2012 resolved as follows:

- 1. That the report/attachment be deemed non-confidential except for those parts deemed by the Chief Executive Officer to remain confidential in accordance with sections 171(3) and 200(9) of the Local Government Act 2009.*
- 2. That Council approves the re-opening of the Stanmore Park Motocross Facility subject to all use being compliant with the background plus 5dB(A) criteria.*

3. *That the previous Resolution granting the Albert & District Motorcycle Club a Trustee Permit to operate the Stanmore Motocross Track be rescinded and in place Council calls for Expressions of Interest for the formation of a Gold Coast junior Motocross Club (250cc or less), to operate for a period of 6 months commencing 1st July 2012 on the following basis:*
 - A. *Monday: closed*
 - B. *Tuesday: 2pm to 6pm*
 - C. *Wednesday and Thursday: 9am to 6 pm*
 - D. *Friday: closed*
 - E. *Saturday: 9am to 4 pm (including one race day per month)*
 - F. *Sunday: closed*
 - G. *Public Holidays: closed*
4. *That public consultation occurs during and following this period with a report to be brought to Council in December 2012 to consider the future operation of the facility.*
5. *That Council advise it is its expectation that any new entity be established providing priority to Gold Coast residents in both the formation of the committee and club membership.*
6. *That an automated noise monitoring system with warning light indicator is installed at the track to record the average noise levels during use and store the information onto a computer for Council's review.*
7. *That the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Divisional Councillor, be given delegated authority to monitor, condition and alter the permit conditions regarding use of the Stanmore Motocross facility including the use of noise attenuating muffler systems on the appropriate motorcycles.*
8. *That the Mayor, through the Council of Mayors, investigate the provision of club facilities at Wyaralong, through the transfer to this project of \$1 million in state government grant funding previously allocated towards the development of the Stapylton track.*
9. *That the Gold Coast Motocross Club be encouraged to investigate town planning approval for the potential use of the Reedy Creek site for all bike classes compliant with the current noise criteria.*
10. *That the duplication of Stanmore Road between Sandy Creek Road and Peachey Road be deferred until December 2012.*

The letter invited the club to lodge an Expression of Interest, but also advised that in the event the club decided to not do so, any and all chattels needed to be removed no later than 27th July 2012.

Accordingly, the Gold Coast City Council issued an Expression of Interest that same day (3rd July 2012) calling for the establishment of a new Gold Coast club to operate the Stanmore Park Motocross Circuit, with a closing date of 16th July 2012.

Council intended to evaluate the Expressions of Interest on 20th July and to issue a Grant of Trustee permit to the successful applicant on 01st August 2012.

The Club sought legal advice before responding.

On 9th July 2012, the Club's Management Committee advised members via the Club's website that it continued to hold the opinion that Council was discriminating against members over 16 years of age; and had failed to follow due and proper process in determining its current position and directions to the club.

The Management Committee re-affirmed its intent to continue to work forward for all members (seniors and juniors); and was still investigating legal options.

On 14th July 2012 the Club's Management Committee posted a further update to members on the Club's website advising that the Club had received legal advice, and determined that it was better for the Club to accept the Council's current operating conditions.

The reason was simple; if there wasn't a facility then the Club didn't have anything.

The Management Committee had fought hard to retain senior riding at the track, and sincerely regretted that they had been unsuccessful.

More importantly, the advice to members made a very telling observation, commenting on the fact that whilst junior members were the future of the sport, it was the senior riders who were the backbone of the Club – paying the bills, doing officials duties, repairing and maintaining the facility and equipment, and driving the kids to and from the track.

The Gold Coast City Council subsequently wrote to both the Albert & District Motorcycle Club and the Gold Coast Motocross Club on 27th July 2012 advising that the two clubs were the only organisations to lodge Expressions of Interest to operate the Stanmore Park Motocross Circuit and suggested a mediation meeting to establish a new entity on behalf of all junior riders.

On 6th August 2012 the Albert & District Motorcycle Club replied to the Gold Coast City Council, advising that its preferred position was to retain the management in its own right due to 35 year+ tenure, strong membership base, sound financial position, ongoing compliance with council conditions, endorsement by the sport's governing body (Motorcycling Queensland) as the preferred operator of the facility, and successful long term management of the safe/compliant MX track.

The Club indicated it had approached the Gold Coast Motocross Club management committee and offered a compromise solution, however they did not agree with (rejected) this compromise solution.

The existing committee then decided to step down and allow a new committee to be elected from parents of junior members to continue working with Council towards re-opening Stanmore Park.

An early Annual General Meeting was subsequently conducted on 22nd August 2012 to elect a new Club committee.

On 16th October 2012 the Albert & District Motorcycle Club and the Gold Coast Motocross Club issued a combined notice to members indicating the two clubs would work together, offering reciprocating membership for the remainder of the year, and that any events and practice sessions held by either club would be open to members of both clubs..

The Gold Coast Bulletin reported on 6th December 2012 that the Gold Coast City Council Community and Cultural Development Committee had endorsed several key outcomes for the Stanmore Park Motocross facility that would allow the track to re-open.

These included a six-month license agreement with the Albert & District Motorcycle Club; approval for the club to undertake various on-site improvements to minimise noise; that Council would start other on-site improvements including a new entry point, irrigation and demountable relocations; and that Council would start the duplication of Stanmore Road, between Sandy Creek Road and Peachey Road from January 2013.

Divisional Councillor, Donna Gates, said consultation with the community would be ongoing.

“The Albert and District Motorcycle Club had collaborated with Gold Coast Motocross Club to meet Council’s conditions regarding local amenity. The club is keen to work with the community to achieve a suitable outcome for residents and motocross enthusiasts,” she said.