

Joel opts for fast link over terminal

CHIEF REPORTER

SHANNON WILLOUGHBY

willoughbys@goldcoast.com.au

REIGNING world surf champion Joel Parkinson (pictured) says high-speed ferries from the Port of Brisbane to the Gold Coast would be a better option than the development of a cruise ship terminal.

Speaking to the *Bulletin* before a surf trip to Fiji, the Gold Coast surf icon said he was concerned over what a cruise ship terminal would do to the beaches' tidal movements and sand banks.

"I am not against what it would do for the economy," he said.

"Having one here would be great for the tourism industry.



"I just worry what it would do to the sand movements over time.

"The Gold Coast is a coast – we are not a natural harbour like Sydney."

He said he believed there could be "huge implications" and that the bars were not deep or wide enough to allow large cruise ships through.

"Another idea would be to use speedboats from the Port of Brisbane to the Gold Coast to charter people to and from here for a day trip," he said.

Mayor Tom Tate welcomed new ideas, but said the proposal to build a terminal in the Broadwater would

only go ahead if it ticked all the environmental boxes.

"If we looked at (Mr Parkinson's) option, then I think we would be better off looking at something off-shore like they have in the Greek islands," said Cr Tate.

"But for something like that we would be subject to weather.

"I think we do it properly or we don't do it at all."

He said studies were being carried out and data was being examined which would see the experts come up with the best solution for the city.

"I am not going to do anything which will destroy the surf, or put something there that will harm the environment," he said.

Mr Parkinson is not the first well-known surfer to express concerns over the council and State Government's commitment to see a cruise ship terminal on the Gold Coast. Mick Fanning said a terminal would destroy the \$3 billion surfing industry – the comments sparking a war between Gold Coast City Council leaders and the surfing fraternity.

Gold Coast surfing identities Mark Richardson and Andrew McKinnon joined the chorus of wave riders opposing the terminal plans. Surfer Mark Occhilupo last year took to social media to help activist group Save our Spit, which has been rallying against any development north of Main Beach.