



# **TROPICAL PARADISE RESORT**

## **CAIRNS**

**INITIAL ADVICE STATEMENT TO THE  
QUEENSLAND COORDINATOR GENERAL TO AID IN ASSESSMENT FOR  
PROJECT OF STATE SIGNIFICANCE STATUS**



# TROPICAL PARADISE RESORT

## A Vision

*A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,  
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread and Thou  
Beside me singing in the Wilderness  
O, Wilderness where Paradise is now!*

From Omar Khayyam

We all have our own vision of paradise. For Adam & Eve it was Eden, for some it is freedom from the relentless pressures of life; for others a desert isle far from the turmoil of clashing ideologies and social conflict, but for most it is a momentary sojourn in a blissful tropical enclave surrounded by nature's legacy for all that share this wondrous planet.

It is here amongst intensely beautiful flora and fauna, cascading falls and iridescent pools that visitors discover a paradise designed to fulfil every visitor's fantasy and transcend their expectations. Nestled within the tropical landscape are a US branded theme park, film studio complex, thrilling water rides, an interactive undersea laboratory embraced by a sea aquarium theatre, intelligent gardens, , both formal and informal performance venues, restaurants, cafes and a variety of cutting edge diversions that appeal to the young and the young at heart.

Visitors to one of our three individually themed entertainment and tourist precincts are immediately aware that something magical has happened from the moment they are conveyed through the entrance portal. Like the unforgettable transition in The Wizard of Oz, they leave the black and white world behind and encounter one bursting with colour. The intense ambient heat becomes moderated; the moisture cleansed and dried; the aroma of the day perfumed by incense and spices, the incessant drone of industry and transportation replaced by natural sounds, music and song.

So well arranged are the experiences that lie ahead that the visitor is unaware that they are at all contrived and captive within a completely self-contained environment. In fact, each precinct is encompassed by a series of faceted, transparent surfaces that create a protective enclosure. No worries about the time of year or day, seasons or climatic conditions. Within each precinct's tropical paradise everything is always perfect!

The aboriginal hosts that welcome the arriving visitors with personal greetings, direct them to interactive kiosks where they pay their entrance fee and acquire their interactive passports that may be used for all the available events and venues within the three precincts. The digital screens that flank the kiosks and reappear throughout the themed precincts in surprising and non-intrusive settings, display the contents and schedule of the permanent venues and the day's special events. Reservations for all and any of the precincts attractions can be made directly on the screens.

Once fully briefed, visitors are invited to choose their own paths and plan their tour as their time and interests suggest. The average tourist is likely to spend between three and five hours at each precinct on any given day or multiple days, and residents within the area, using their annual passports will visit the precincts frequently as events and performances change. Whether tourist or resident, the Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts will become magnets for visitation from every Australian State and port of entry and for those who make the journey, the experience will resonate long after they return to their own reality.

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## **Executive Summary**

*'tropical paradise' ... what vision does that create in your imagination?  
Water, water, water... fresh air, sparkling sunshine.... Misty mountain vistas... palm trees, vines, orchids....  
Butterflies and birds.. warm weather all year round...  
Access to World Heritage Great Barrier Reef, Wet Tropics Rainforest and 'the Outback' all within ½ a day...  
for the best and rest of your life...  
This 'paradise' all within ½ an hour of an international airport, great restaurants and shopping...  
it exists!!! And we have found it for you.*

Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts Development proposal is a fully master planned world class, environmentally friendly leisure, entertainment, tourism, commercial, retail, sporting, and predominantly short stay living community that compliments the City of Cairns, the Great Barrier Reef, and the Daintree Wet Tropics Rainforest and be the jewel in the crown of the tropical lifestyle of Far North Queensland and the South Pacific.

The three themed Precincts are located approximately 18km south of Cairns City, immediately to the east of the township of Edmonton and 4 km north of the township of Gordonvale, in an area currently zoned R1 and utilized for growing sugar cane on a gently undulating alluvial floodplain nestled between the MacAlister Range (west) and Murray-Prior Ranges (east).

The Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts will be a unique experience in Australia. Nestled within the tropical landscape are a major US theme park and studio; thrilling water rides and undersea experience, resort hotels, village centre, golf academy and driving range, entertainment precincts and other themed entertainment and themed living, all wrapped around a network of lakes and tropical landscaping. The resort's three precincts are integrated within an area of working cane farms which will reduce the impact on the area and add to the authenticity of the FNQ experience for visitors.

Special care will be given to restoring the area's ecology and tropical forests, preservation of the natural estuary systems, and integrating these natural amenities into the development.

Waterways, lagoons and white sand beaches wind through the entire tropical resort precincts. Tropical foliage will cover each resort precinct to provide a rich green contrast to the clear blue skies above, stunning mist covered mountains, and sunsets never to be forgotten.

The Hollywood style studios and theme Park are truly the center piece of this project. This would take the region into a new world stage (no pun) and add a critical component to the tourist plans for the area. By providing more visitor activities the entire region would benefit but extending the stay of those who come to see the wonders of nature in the area. It also provides activities which certain demographics are looking for as a part of a complete vacation package. The studio would allow for production in the region, regardless of weather conditions and where a controlled stage is required. Connected to the theme park it becomes a working studio for visitors to experience. The context and content of the theme park will be Australian and South Pacific based, appropriate for the region and reflective of the various cultures of the region of the greater Oceania area.

We would seek to establish the TPR Institute, a non-profit autonomous entity whose purpose would be to put forth the ideas of a sustainable and unique design approach appropriate to the region and in harmony with the thematic design of the development. This entity would evaluate all developments and would approve them if they meet the design guidelines and are of a quality of design and construction consistent with the intent of the project. This is similar to the Seaside Institute as established in Florida, USA. The institute would include members of the community, universities, government and the board of TPR. Leaders in design, environment, culture, planning, and engineering would be included to develop the guidelines.

Families can enjoy the natural beauty that has attracted millions of visitors for years: the beaches, sea-life, wildlife, wilderness tropical forests, and clean air.

It is expected that the development will be rolled out over a ten to fifteen year period.

The Project at its optimum will deliver the following:

### **Precinct 1- 262 acres (106 hectares)**

- US Branded Theme Park
- Film Studio & Backlot
- Entertainment Urban Entertainment Centre
- Themed retail & Restaurants
- Themed Hotel
- Parking
- Site infrastructure – power generation and water capture and treatment areas.

### **Precinct 2 - 264 acres (107 hectares)**

- Water Park
- Xtreme Sports complex
- Golf – 3 tiered driving & putting range
- Leisure Lake
- Themed Hotel
- Short Stay Living Village – Apartments/Flats/Timeshare/Units/Villas
- Themed Retail and community centre
- Parking
- Site infrastructure – power generation and water capture and treatment areas.

### **Precinct 3 - 200 acres (80 hectares)**

- Living Aquarium
- Multiplex Cinema Complex
- “City Walk” - Themed Restaurants, shops and clubs
- Themed Hotel & Spa complex
- Themed Discount Outlet Mall Complex
- Lake & themed entertainment & shopping pier area
- Village - Apartments/Flats/Timeshare accommodation/Villas/Units
- Commercial themed estate
- Parking
- Site infrastructure – power generation and water capture and treatment areas.

The project is to be developed by Tropical Resort Developments Pty. Ltd (TRD) on behalf of TRD Consortium Holdings Trust Pty Ltd. TRD operates through a Consortium whose members include: Paul Davies Film & Television Enterprises, Housing Industry Promotions, and Tom Blair.

The Consortium wish to consolidate the vision of a sustainable tourism industry in this region by providing significant inputs into the regional, state and national economy for the foreseeable future. The proposed Tropical Paradise Precinct Resort Development will be the basis for ensuring the ongoing sustainable growth of both the tourism and the regional Far North Queensland economy, by creating a world-famous iconic destination, which will complement and enhance what already exists.

Far North Queensland is recognized for the significance of its natural environment and tourism ventures that successfully complement, promote and protect the World Heritage listed Wet Tropics Rainforests and Great Barrier Reef. Although the area proposed for this project is currently used for sugar cane growing, Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will focus on re-establishing the local flora and fauna, protecting and enhancing the natural environment whilst providing a range of world-class tourist and community facilities for locals and visitors to the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas.

The utilization of leading edge sustainable technologies to generate the sites electricity, capture and treat all on-site water including all waste through the use of state of the art Bio-mass technology are essential components to the proposal. They will support ecosystem services re-establishment that will enhance vegetation complexity and provide for new wetlands whose purposes include: water supply, biodiversity retention, reduce wildlife habitat fragmentation, educational opportunities, scenic and aesthetic values, and

recreation. Many of these are unquantifiable in dollar terms at this stage but are still significant aspects of the project.

When considering the social benefits of increased employment in a community, it is also useful to see them in the context of the difficulties facing communities where employment opportunities are limited, seasonal or reducing. For example, issues such as social cohesion, community spirit and vibrancy, and the manifestation of these notions in community related social activities, involvement and participation are increasingly becoming apparent in rural and regional communities. One of this project's goals is to create a community where these values are maintained and enhanced.

## Strategic Significance of the Project

The Project is seeking declaration as 'significant project' under Section 26 of the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act) based on the information provided in this Initial Advice Statement (IAS). Declaration will require an Environmental Impact Statement under Part 4 of the SDPWO Act as the proponents feel the project meets all five criteria in the following manner.

The Coordinator-General can declare a project to be a 'significant project' based on one or more of the following criteria:

- **complex approval requirements, including local, State and Australian Government involvement**

The scale of this project is, in discussions with Cairns City Council Planning staff, beyond the resources of their staff to provide prompt and appropriate advice. In addition, the location of the project adjacent to the World Heritage Listed Wet Tropics Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef and the consideration of possible impacts on those values under the EPBC Act would require greater consideration than Local Government could resource.

- **a high level of investment in the State**

The estimated investment for the combined three themed Precincts will be between \$2 to \$3 billion dollars over the first 10 to 15 Year period, with an ongoing predicted entertainment and commercial visitation rate of 1.4 million people per year, in stabilised year 3 of operation will ensure that the tourism industry, which now forms the basis of the economy of Far North Queensland, is guaranteed into the foreseeable future.

- **potential effects on infrastructure and/or the environment**

The use of cutting edge technology to aid the site to be self-sustaining in terms of energy generation, waste treatment and minimisation; water capture, treatment and use; the use of low-impact materials for construction and operations; measures to reduce the impacts on scenic amenity in construction and operations are all likely to make this site an icon in the construction area. Alternative use of existing transport infrastructure, supporting measures to re-utilise the cane-rail network will require State consideration.

The environmental complexity of proposed improvements to the sites current environmental state will be of interest to local and state government agencies to ensure that it complies with strategic visions for protection and presentation of natural values and the surrounding strategically important agricultural land. They will also be significant in illustrating how a region can build resilience to potential impacts of climate change and peak oil issues by reducing its consumption of natural resources through its lifetime operations.

- **provision of substantial employment opportunities**

This project will create additional reasons to visit and stay in the area, not only without compromising the ecological and cultural values of the area, but enhancing them. The employment opportunities, both short and long-term are substantial, not only on-site but for the significant number of support industries that will ensue as a result of this project coming to fruition.

- **strategic significance to a locality, region or the State.**

The project will be an iconic tourist destination for Far North Queensland that rivals theme park developments internationally, therefore warranting State and Australian Government consideration of the potential impacts. The scale of investment and potential benefits will be felt beyond the local government sphere of influence, into the regional, state and national arena. This project will be an international example of how sustainable

tourism developments should be undertaken. It has significant implications from a FNQ 2025 Regional Plan framework.

When the tourism industry and the regional economy is considering the impacts of recent changes in QANTAS flights to the region, this project will provide much needed confirmation to the industry and region, of the ongoing value and commitment to the tourism industry and its long-term viability.

A number of sites have been investigated for the Project. A comparison of alternative sites is attachment 1. Based on current research and desktop studies it has been determined that the proposed sites are the most appropriate taking into account various terrain, planning, environmental and economic constraints. Therefore, the proponents believe this to be a 'significant project'

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background and Purpose**

The Consortium wish to consolidate the vision of a sustainable regional tourism industry by providing significant inputs into the regional, state and national economy for the foreseeable future. The Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will be the basis for ensuring the ongoing sustainable growth of both the tourism and the regional Far North Queensland economy, by creating a world-famous iconic destination which will supplement and enhance what already exists, while dramatically increasing long-term work and job training opportunities.

Far North Queensland is recognized for the significance of its natural environment and many successful tourism ventures utilise, promote and protect the World Heritage listed Wet Tropics Rainforests and the Great Barrier Reef that they operate in. Although the area proposed for this project is currently used for sugar cane growing, the Tropical Paradise Precinct Development will focus on re-establishing the local flora and fauna, protecting and enhancing the natural environment whilst providing a range of world-class tourist and community facilities for locals and visitors which complement the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Areas without impacting on them directly.

The purpose of this Initial Advice Statement is to provide all necessary information to the public and advisory agents at Local, State and Federal levels, as stated under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 (SDPWOA).

The contact for further information is:

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### **1.2 Consortium & Associated Project Companies**

The Tropical Paradise Resort Consortium includes, Paul Davies Film & Television Enterprises, Housing Industry Promotions, and Tom Blair.

**Mr Paul Davies – Project Coordinator** Paul's involvement in the Australian and international entertainment and leisure industry spans some thirty plus years and provides a unique background of experience in the film

and television production, leisure/retail and property development, development investment, sales, marketing, distribution, advertising, publicity and promotion.

Paul's career in the Australian and international entertainment business includes the post of Director of Marketing for the South Australian Film Corporation where he was responsible for the national and international marketing, sales and promotion of numerous SAFC feature films such as "Breaker Morant" which he successfully sold to over 40 countries. Paul has established contacts with the major film and television distributors and independent production companies around the world.

In 1982 Paul formed his own production company and produced a number of Australian feature films, television mini-series and telemovies including BMX bandits, The Lancaster Miller Affair, Flair and Ebb Tide.

Paul was Chairman and founder of the Entertainment City Consortium from 1995 to 2000 which included Paramount Studios US as the major entertainment partner. Entertainment City was involved in a bid to develop a regional leisure, entertainment, theme park and film production complex at the Melbourne Docklands.

Currently Chairman and one of three founding directors of Entertainment Management Company, a diversified Australian entertainment investment and management company set up to provide a unique investment opportunity in entertainment and leisure areas.

**Mr Raymond de Weerd –General Manager Sales and Marketing** Ray has been involved in the Australian housing and land development industry since building his first home at the age of 19; and by the age of 27 Ray was the 11<sup>th</sup> largest home builder in Melbourne. In 1988 Ray sold the company and for the next 12 years held senior positions in some of Australia's largest planned community building companies such as A V Jennings, Simonds Homes and Devine Limited.

Ray is the Managing Director of a number of companies that develop land subdivisions, build integrated medium density developments and sell and build project homes from a network of display homes.

Ray's experience in land development, housing construction, and the sales and marketing thereof from concept to completion, is established.

Ray brings to the group his marketing, sales and leadership skills that will be required to design, market and sell the residential and communal aspects of T.P.R. project.

**Robert Wiederstein – Chief Financial Officer.** Before joining TRD Robert was a Director and Chief Financial Officer of the Simonds Homes Group in Melbourne; one of the top three residential builders in Victoria. Robert has been a member of the Simonds Board since joining Simonds in 1988 and has been responsible for the establishment of all financial and operational systems during that period.

He worked closely with Gary Simonds, the founder of Simonds Homes, for 17 years and has made a substantial contribution to the success of company. Robert holds a Bachelor of Business degree and is a Certified Practising Accountant.

**Tom Blair – Project Director** - is a member of the American Institute of Architects and holds his National Architectural Certification (NCARB), and also a member of the RAI. He has been published in a number of magazines and has had his articles published in newspapers in the USA.

Mr. Blair's most recent accomplishment was as the Senior Project Manager for the new Disney's Grand Californian Hotel in Anaheim, California. He has been responsible for numerous award-winning projects including significant custom home developments for some of the most respected CEO's and Presidents of Fortune 500 companies in the United States of America.

These projects span from the exclusive city of Boca Roton, Florida, to one of the most prestigious cities in the United States, Palos Verdes Estates, and California. Prior to the Disney's Grand Californian Hotel project, Mr. Blair has been the Project Director on Studio City in Melbourne, Australia with Viacom and Paramount Pictures as well as other international projects. Mr. Blair is now a resident of Australia.



**Allan Carlsson - Australian Project Manager.** Allan's involvement in the Australian housing and land development business spans some 25 years. Allan has come to TRD from Delfin Lend Lease, where he worked for 13 years in various roles including Project Director, Director of Realty Services and managing the development of Delfin's new housing products. Prior to Delfin Lend Lease Allan held management positions with major home building companies such as Bovis Homes, A V Jennings and Hooker Housing Group. Allan holds a Bachelor of Business degree in Property and Valuation and is a licensed Real Estate Agent and Member of the REIV.

***Associated Companies include:***

**MDR** - US urban design company with expertise in the planning and design of large scale mixed-use developments, high rise office towers, urban commercial/retail centers, high density community developments, resort hotels, and both resort and new town planning throughout the US and around the world. The companies experience has ranged worldwide to such locations as Korea, Hawaii, Turkey, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Saipan, New Zealand, the Caribbean, and the British Isles.

**Cunningham Group** – is a Leading US entertainment, urban and community architect and design firm which covers, Professional Services, Architecture, Interior Design, Urban Design, Master Planning, Visual Imaging, Building/Project Types, Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, High Schools, Pre-K, Post Secondary, Theme Parks, Hotels, Casinos, Parking Ramps, Convention Centers, Theaters, Corporate Headquarters, Offices, Restaurants, Retail, Museums, Discovery Centers, Zoo Exhibits, Housing, Mixed-Use Developments, Churches, Retreat Centers, Missions.

Cunningham Group include as their Entertainment & Leisure Clients:

- Disney,
- Universal,
- Paramount, and
- Warner Bros

**PeddleThorp Architects** - Peddle Thorp in Melbourne is an independent company, practicing in Architecture, Planning and Interior Design, with an office in China and the USA. It employs over 150 people and is a constituent member of Peddle Thorp Group of Offices which were founded in 1889 and which operates in the UK, USA and SE Asia as well as Australia

Peddle Thorp the architects for the internationally acclaimed Melbourne Park National Tennis Centre with its ground breaking open-able roof - the first of its kind! Our sports and aquatic projects range from large sporting complexes such as the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre, to multipurpose venues such as the Vodafone Arena and Alfred Deakin Centre in Mildura.

Peddle Thorp Architects clients include BHP, Baulderstone Hornibrook, Becton, Cannon, GE, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota Urban Land Corporation, Lend Lease, Melbourne Airport.

**Page Kirkland** - Quantity Surveyors, Financial Studies, Cost Estimating, Project Management Support Page Kirkland Group has 19 offices across 11 countries and staff numbers in excess of 300 people. Over recent years Page Kirkland Group have been associated with a wide range of projects, diverse in scale and type. These projects include many major airports, sporting facilities, entertainment centres, hospitals, and hotels, educational, residential and commercial projects in Australia, South East Asia, the South Pacific Region and the Middle East.

**Meinhardt** - Infrastructure, Engineering, Environmental and Building

The Meinhardt Group has over 1475 permanent staff located at 20 offices throughout Australia, Asia, the Pacific, the United Kingdom and the USA. As a leading multi-disciplinary engineering firm, Meinhardt provides the full spectrum of engineering, infrastructure and project management services. Meinhardt have undertaken more than 40,000 projects and clients have included government, major corporations, contractors and developers

**Tropical Consulting Services'** - Kim Forde, whose long experience and knowledge of the region is considered vital, will be on the ground in Cairns providing local environmental and community coordination. Her expertise includes the application of practices of environmental and conservation management, project management, and EM systems development and implementation; scientific and technical research,

assessment and mitigation of environmental impacts in natural resource management and eco-efficiency auditing and mitigation for a range of major infrastructure and tourism developments in Far North Queensland over the past 15 years.

## **2. The Project**

### **2.1. Location**

The three themed Precincts are located approximately 18km south of Cairns City, immediately to the east of the township of Edmonton and Mt Peter and 4 km north of the township of Gordonvale, in an area currently utilized for growing sugar cane on a gently undulating alluvial floodplain nestled between the MacAlister Range(west) and Murray-Prior Ranges (east).

The sites are held in freehold title. The Cairns Plan (2005) designates the land Rural 1 with community facilities included within the proposed area. It is located away from areas of high ecological significance. It is adjacent to, and supports the intent of the Edmonton Sub-regional Business and Industry Centre.

The FNQ2025 Plan desires that “The greatest proportion of growth to the region will occur in the Cairns area. While there will be significant growth in existing areas through infill and redevelopment, Mount Peter, between Edmonton and Gordonvale, will accommodate the majority of the new growth in Cairns.

Mount Peter represents some of the last remaining land in the Cairns area that has few natural constraints. It is important that development ensures the best outcomes with respect to:

- dwelling densities
- infrastructure
- public transport
- employment
- industry and commercial needs
- urban open space needs
- greenhouse gas emissions and peak oil.

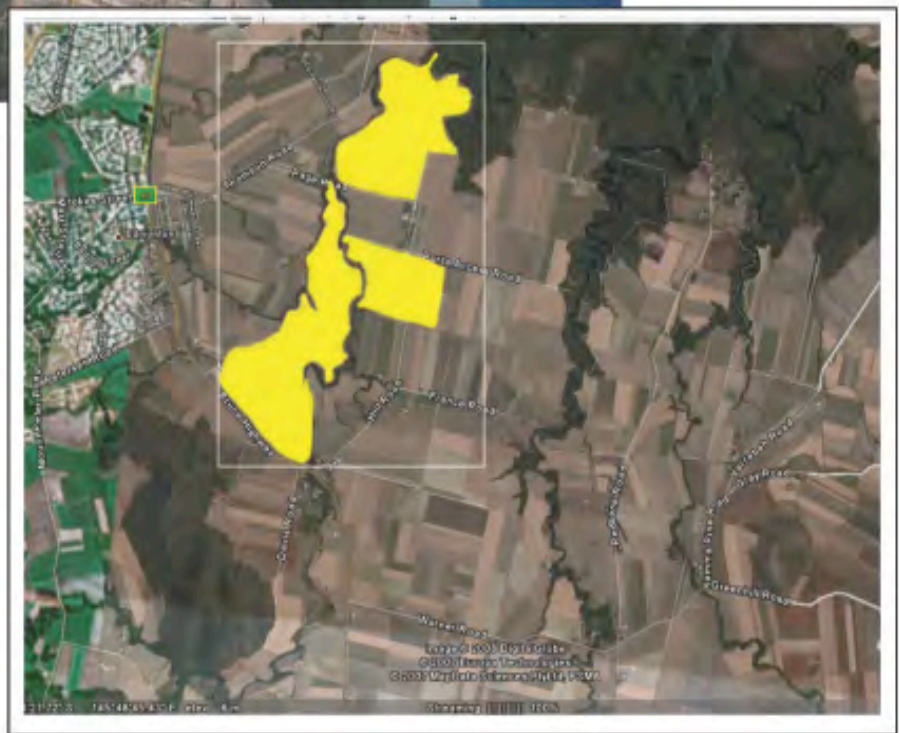
The planning and development of Mount Peter will take priority over any other new large green-field development proposed in the region. New development is expected to provide for a wide range and choice of housing types, location and densities to meet the needs of the community and to complement priority infrastructure investment, particularly for roads, public transport and the development of a new town centre.”

This proposal supports and adds viability to the proposed focus of development in the Mt Peter area by providing significantly increased opportunities for employment, additional and appropriate infrastructure, and public transport options in close proximity which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and dependence upon traditional fuel and energy generation sources and demand upon existing infrastructure.

It also supports the objective of maintaining and enhancing “FNQ’s international reputation as a world-class destination for nature-based and sustainable tourism” by managing through a precinct planning approach adjacent to the regional landscape and rural production area.” (FNQ 2025)

Tropical Paradise Resort – Initial Advice Statement

Photo 1: Aerial Views of site in regional context –



The area has been mostly cleared due to its current land use for sugar cane growing. Remaining native vegetation, primarily riparian vegetation along creek lines will be retained where possible and enhanced significantly with appropriate local native vegetation throughout the projects lifetime, as native vegetation shall be used for landscaping and rehabilitation to enhance the visitor's tropical experience, to provide habitat and connectivity corridors throughout the site for native fauna and as screening, to reduce site noise and visual impact.

## **2.2. Concept**

The Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development proposal is a fully master planned world class, environmentally friendly leisure, entertainment, tourism, commercial, retail, sporting, and living community that compliments the City of Cairns, the Great Barrier Reef, and the Daintree Wet Tropics Rainforest and be the jewel in the crown of the tropical lifestyle of Far North Queensland and the South Pacific.

The Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts will be a unique experience in Australia. Nestled within the tropical landscape are a major US theme park and studio; thrilling water rides and undersea experience, resort hotels, village centre, golf academy and driving range, entertainment precincts and other themed entertainment and themed living, all wrapped around a network of lakes and tropical areas.

The Three Individually Themed Precincts contain:

### **Precinct 1 - 262 acres (106 hectares)**

- US Branded Theme Park
- Film Studio & Backlot
- Entertainment Urban Entertainment Centre
- Themed retail & Restaurants
- Themed Hotel
- Parking
- Site infrastructure – power generation and water capture and treatment areas.

### **Precinct 2 - 264 acres (107 hectares)**

- Water Park
- Xtreme Sports complex
- Golf – 3 tiered driving & putting range
- Leisure Lake
- Themed Hotel
- Short Stay Living Village – Apartments/Flats/Timeshare accommodation/Villas/Units
- Themed Retail and community centre
- Parking
- Site infrastructure – power generation and water capture and treatment areas.

### **Precinct 3 - 200 acres (80 hectares)**

- Living Aquarium
- Multiplex Cinema Complex
- “City Walk” - Themed Restaurants, shops and clubs
- Themed Hotel & Spa complex
- Themed Discount Outlet Mall Complex
- Lake & themed entertainment & shopping pier area
- Village - Apartments/Flats/Timeshare accommodation/Villas/Units
- Commercial themed estate
- Parking
- Site infrastructure – power generation and water capture and treatment areas.

The visionaries of the development have travelled around the world and been involved in various similar scale developments. Several members of this team include dedicated Australians who respect the values of

their country as well as other world experts in architecture, engineering, and construction who have come to appreciate Australia in a similar if not even more passionate manner. All shared one vision, to bring the tropical areas back to their original beauty and integrate them into an ecologically sensitive community.

A large percentage of the land for each Tropical Paradise precinct is dedicated to open space and ecological preserve and a case-study in rejuvenation of nature. Special care will be given to restoring the natural ecological systems and tropical forests, preservation of the area's ecology and estuary support systems, and actually integrating these natural amenities into the development.

Waterways, lagoons and white sand beaches wind through two of the precincts . Tropical foliage will cover the resort precinct to provide a rich green contrast to the clear blue skies above and dramatic views of sunsets never to be forgotten. Families can enjoy the natural beauty that has attracted millions of visitors for years: the beaches, reef sea-life, wildlife, wilderness of tropical forests, and clean air in a safe, politically stable area.

An ecological centre would be an important focal point of the development, providing access to cultural heritage experience and providing a means to demonstrate the delicate balance between humankind and nature. Building on the unique history of the area, a narrow gauge sugar cane/light rail system would overlay the transport network as a distinctive way of moving between districts.

Specifically, the key themed Precinct elements of the overall development will deliver:

### **The Entertainment District (including Theme Park and Movie Studios)**

This is the cornerstone attraction for Tropical Paradise Resorts tourism drawing power, and provides the linchpin for our planned, and Orlando inspired, three entertainment precinct, strategy. It provides the high energy, noisy, action packed themed quarter. As with all districts, it would be separated by new growth tropical rainforests from other localities and uses.

Within the three entertainment precincts the following venues will be developed: theme park and studio, water-park, Urban Entertainment complex, living tropical aquarium, Xtreme sports facility, Megaplex cinema centre, hotel, concert amphitheatre, themed retail, night clubs, affordable family and backpacker short stay accommodation, themed hotels and spaa's, tiered golf academy and driving range.

The Hollywood style studios and theme park are truly the centre piece of this project. This would take the region into a new world stage (no pun) and add a critical component to the tourist plans for the area. By providing more visitor activities the entire region would benefit but extending the stay of those who come to see the wonders of nature in the area. It also provides activities which certain demographics are looking for as a part of a complete vacation package. The studio would allow for production in the region, regardless of weather conditions and where a controlled stage is required. Connected to the theme park it becomes a working studio for visitors to experience. The context and content of the theme park will be Australian and South Pacific based, appropriate for the region and reflective of the various cultures of the region of the greater Oceania area.

Complementing the entertainment venues will be themed retail, food and beverage areas and a themed discount Outlet Mall, designed to attract crowds day and night.

### **The Village Centre**

The village centre is the heart of the entire community. It provides the identity and "place" for the development. Within this nucleus the following may be developed: retail, apartments, offices, boutique hotel, cinemas, entertainment, restaurants, boardwalk and amusements.

Celebration will abound in this intended multicultural family destination, a place where imagination and innovation will meet to create a unique community and entertainment experience. There'll be activities for all ages with pavilions, exhibitions, a fun fair, and a variety of restaurants and cafes all set in relaxing, landscaped surroundings.

*"Being away in the tropical community is about family, friends and the pleasures of freedom and our values in the context of this wonderful backdrop of nature"*

## **Community Facilities and Services**

Community planning provides for numerous facilities to support the Precincts short stay and residents including multiple educational facilities along a Central Utility Compound that will be the hub for all infrastructure services.

Aged and Child-care facilities, convenience retail stores, postal and banking services, as well as places of worship will all be designed to provide the full spectrum of basic amenities to the developments living and working community.

## **The Lake**

There will be a network of lakes that provide private jetties for many of the entertainment and community districts. Bridges will connect areas to the overall area. The lakes will form part of the overall water management for the development. Electric power boats or hand and foot paddle boats only will be allowed. Water taxis may also be for hire to commute between all the districts and venues. Numerous, sandy, family swimming, and picnic beaches will be dotted around the lakes.

As part of the lake system there will be wetlands and estuaries to facilitate the re-introduction to the area of native birds, fish and animals.

## **Resort & Conference Hotels & Spa's**

The Consortium has already held talks about the possibility of a world's first "Cirque du Soleil" health and fitness complex as an encore attraction for the development. Designed to open with 500 rooms, with the ability to expand to 1,200 rooms. Occupancy will be supported by two primary markets:

- Tourists visiting the entertainment and themed retail areas
- Business conferences and meetings during the regular holiday shoulder seasons.

The hotel's dedicated conference and meeting areas will be capable of handling 500 to 600 person group meetings. Amenities will include an indoor/outdoor swimming pool, tennis, health club, jogging and bike trails and a 50 acre lake. The site also will include a 600-space caravan park and 30 acre campground.

## **Short stay, Timeshare and Accommodation Development**

The Development will offer a new concept in short stay, timeshare and community living and a gateway to an ecologically sensitive tropical lifestyle. All the development projects will have the right balance of quality community- based facilities, in addition to being connected (when desired) to the rest of the world.

Accommodations are a key part of the development as they pay for the theme park and studios which may require subsidies or other entitlements. The accommodations would be high quality themed developments based upon the time share models successfully used by Disney, Marriott and others. These are short stay full service developments that are integrated into the theme park and studio environments.

Some of the living environment concepts include:

- **Paradise Island:** Apartments and Villas ranging from 350 m<sup>2</sup> to 450 m<sup>2</sup>, each incorporating the latest technological devices for the ultimate in luxury.
- **Lagoona Keys:** Apartment and double-storied villas of five to seven rooms. These have built-up areas ranging between 250 m<sup>2</sup> and 350 m<sup>2</sup>, each surrounded by a garden.
- **Paradise Lakes:** Will comprise products to suit a range of accommodation needs including detached and semi-detached villas, townhouses and apartments, all set within carefully designed and integrated 'neighbourhoods' separated by water, green areas and parks. Paradise Lakes will include, walkways, cycling paths, Community Park, tree-lined streets and neighbourhood parks.
- **Tropical Park:** This will be the Central Park of Tropical Paradise Resort. Upscale downtown apartments will be set within lush tropical parklands. Nearby will be a Convention Hotel

*"All of our community shall respect our culture, our diversity, our environment, nature and the regional architecture that shall be reflective and respectful".*

Development guidelines shall be developed by TPR and enforced by the TPR Institute, a non-profit autonomous entity whose purpose is to put forth the ideas of a sustainable and unique design approach appropriate to the region and in harmony with the thematic design of the development. This entity would evaluate all developments and would approve them if they meet the design guidelines and are of a quality of design and construction consistent with the intent of the project. This is similar to the Seaside Institute as established in Florida, USA.

### 2.3. Access

**Road** - The themed Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts are located east of Edmonton, and serviced by the main North-South access route, the Bruce Highway, approximately 18 km south of Cairns City, at the intersection with and along Deppeller Road. The Queensland Dept of Main Roads (DMR) proposes to straighten the Bruce Highway and implement the Edmonton Bypass within 10 years which will further service this site.

**Rail** – The three Precincts are adjacent to the Cairns-Brisbane Rail line operated by the state GOC Queensland Rail (QR). As part of this project, it is proposed to connect to the Cairns International Airport and Seaport with a light-rail network, either adjacent to the existing QR rail-line or accessing the sugar-cane rail corridor to create a separate network. The option of 18hour/day rail access is a significant component in reducing congestion on local roads and reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport. Within the site, a light-rail network will service the main precincts.

**Sea** -The Cairns Seaport facility to provide facilities for major Cruise liner traffic. Cairns is currently Australia’s busiest cruise port with over 200 international and domestic cruise ship visits a year.

**Air** - Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts are a 25 minute drive from the Cairns International Airport, the fifth busiest airport in Australia for passenger traffic with 3 million users annually, and the primary means of access for international visitors to this region (130 000 aircraft movements per annum), which is second only behind Sydney in terms of inbound international tourist traffic to Australia. Operating 20 hours a day, Cairns International Airport also has twice daily flights to and from most capital cities in Australia (300 weekly) and 75 inbound scheduled international flights each week.

The following table identifies weekly frequency of inbound flights from major overseas ports to Cairns (Jan 08).

Origin of International Flights	No. of Flights per week	Origin of International Flights	No. of Flights per week
Tokyo, Japan	14	Hong Kong	7
Nagoya, Japan	7	Singapore (with connections to Europe /UK)	4
Kansai, Japan	7	Guam	3
Fukuoka, Japan	3	New Zealand	3
Chitose, Japan	2		

Tropical Paradise Resorts proposes to construct a helipad within the development to cater for VIP transfers from Cairns International Airport. The flying time from Cairns Airport to the site by helicopter will average 8 minutes.

### 2.4. Staging / Timing

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will be staged, and spread over a ten to fifteen year timeframe, depending on market conditions. The approval process once begun is expected to take up to two years. The development is forecast to begin between 2012 and 2013.

While detailed Precinct planning is still under development, it is envisaged that for each Precinct:

- Precinct 1 will be developed immediately and would contain the theme park and film studio, themed hotel, retail and restaurants. It would take three to five years to develop, depending on market conditions.
- Precinct 2 will depend on market conditions but is expected to commence after the opening of the theme park complex in Precinct. We expect Precinct 2 will take around four years to complete.

- Precinct 3, will begin almost simultaneously with Precinct 1 and will take over five to six years and provide all the remaining facilities including the final stages of the lake, entertainment, commercial, community, accommodation and retail development.

### **3. Infrastructure**

#### **3.1. Water & Sewerage**

Through integrated water resource management Tropical Paradise Resorts will ensure that all site water needs can be met without connecting to the reticulated water supply system or external sewerage system. This will occur through the utilization of leading edge sustainable technologies to generate the sites electricity, capture and treat all on-site water including all waste through:

- Collection, Storage, Purification and Recycling of Rainwater and Stormwater
- Treatment of waste water for reuse and irrigation
- Conversion of garbage, waste & sewage residues into energy

The key will be capture and separation of clean and potentially contaminated waters: Treatment and effective use and reuse of all water on the site, including for hotel and community pool, interconnecting waterways will be undertaken. All water that falls on-site (rooftops, paving and road runoff) will be collected via a series of collection facilities, including rainwater tanks, collection dams and vegetated swales and used for potable and non-potable purposes.

It is our proposal to incorporate within the development, a new technology on-site waste water treatment plant which will exceed current EPA and Cairns Regional Council specifications. The facility will have the capacity to handle sewage for 500,000 persons. The sewage system will link to the site biomass plant, so that all tertiary treated water will be utilized for toilet flushing, ponds and water features, site irrigation and watering needs of golf courses (as per the EPA standard for Safe Re-use of Recycled Water) and any generated waste matter will be fed as fuel into the biomass plant to generate site electricity.

#### **3.2. Roads, Rail, Sea and Public Transport**

The designers of this project will liaise with Dept of Main Roads and Cairns Regional Council to facilitate access and egress from the site through local roads to the Bruce Highway, the main road to Cairns. Because this facility will reverse the normal traffic flow at peak times on the Bruce Highway, it is not anticipated to place additional demands on the road network, in fact, it may reduce it by providing a large number of jobs locally, which would be accessed by road, bike ways and a proposed light-rail network, as is the desired outcome proposed in the draft 2025 Regional Plan

The project proposes to investigate whether Queensland Rail will provide access to their lines to provide a light-rail network to the Cairns Airport and Cairns City Centre. An option being considered is to purchase access to the 'cane-rail' network infrastructure and land and implement a modern light rail system for tourist and public access.

An alternative, though low-key method of accessing the site will be provided through a water taxi network, commuting between the site and Cairns Seaport facilities.

Internally within the site, public transport will include light rail network, electric shuttle buses and other electric vehicles, bikes and a series of walking trails (see 3.4).

This supports the proposed FNQ 2025 desired outcomes (p.9) of "Appropriate planning ensures that urban and regional communities are linked by an efficient and affordable transport network which gives people real choices about how they travel. These features encourage walking and cycling and minimise overall transport demand and climate change impacts."

#### **3.3. Public Facilities**

A feature of the Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts and village will be the creation of lagoon-style pools, most of which will be open to the general public. They will have a fully landscaped perimeter, with an emphasis on the provision of shaded areas and will include barbeque facilities and children's playground.



The public lagoons will act as a further attraction for tourists to visit Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts and will provide a safer, stinger free alternative to swimming, essential in this region.

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will comply with FNQ 2025's aligned policies for Tourist Development:

“5.5a Ecotourism infrastructure development and maintenance (such as visitor facilities) reflects best-practice minimal impact design and procedures appropriate to the setting and maximise presentation opportunities.

5.5b Safe, reliable and appropriate access to ecotourism attractions is provided.

5.5c The cumulative number, location and type of visitor sites is managed so that they do not adversely affect World Heritage values while maximising options for presenting the area.

5.5d Adequate and appropriate levels of private and public infrastructure are provided on a timely basis to support and enhance the ecologically sustainable development of the leisure and business tourism industry. “

### **3.4. Walking, Hiking and Cycle Trails**

Tropical Paradise Resorts will create a network of walking, hiking and bicycle trails that meander through the site and facilities, including the golf course and around the lagoons to supplement existing and proposed Cairns City Walking trails network. To minimize greenhouse gas emissions and encourage a healthier lifestyle, bicycles will be provided to access facilities for staff and guests.

The Consortium will also liaise with the Cairns Regional Council, the indigenous community, Wet Tropics Management Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency about providing the opportunity for walking and cycling access through the site and its enhanced remnant rainforest and riparian vegetation communities with appropriate interpretive material. This would allow residents, visitors and members of the general public to explore and learn about the site in an environmentally sensitive manner.

### **3.5. Telecommunications**

The telecommunications infrastructure at Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Developments will include broadband as well as the supplementation of the mobile phone network to the latest technology level. Base stations to facilitate satellite and mobile phone technologies and internet ‘café’ facilities for site visitors will be available throughout the site, with cable and network television provided to the resorts and hotel facilities and accessible for all other community living, and accommodation venues to connect to.

### **3.6. Energy Resources**

The site runs adjacent to the eastern side of the Bruce Highway at the Deppeler Road intersection. The site is intersected by Powerlink 275kV transmission line for upgraded Innisfail-to-Cairns line, however, it is anticipated that the site will be able to more than meet its own electricity generation requirements by its proposed electricity generation mix of technologies.

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will provide the majority of its own power through solar and photovoltaic panels on the roofs of all its facilities including all living, short stay and timeshare accommodation, and the establishment of a biomass waste-plant adjoining the nearby Mulgrave Mill, potentially in partnership with Mill operators and Ergon Energy. The green (from the recyclable banana leaf products utilized across the site for packaging and disposable drink and eating utensils) and sewage waste generated from within the site will supplement the bagasse normally utilized for biomass plant generation (as per the Rocky Point Cogen Plant – with which the Consortium partners were involved in the operation). It is proposed to generate an initial target of 45MW, via 3 X 15MW plants of energy to power the site. Additional power will be fed into the state energy grid. All power throughout the site shall be undergrounded. A proposal is to be made to Powerlink to underground the 275Kv line which connects Cairns to Innisfail, as it passes through the site.

Design of facilities shall focus on reducing energy demand in the construction and operation of the site include passive energy generation and energy saving parameters including orientation to maximize natural ventilation and lighting; high ceilings; planting of vegetation to act as air-conditioning and climate buffers; the use of heat reflective surfaces and vents in ceilings and roofs to dissipate heat naturally. Low impact Street lighting including ‘black-sky technology’ shall be used throughout the site.

## **4. Planning Schemes and Policy Frameworks**

### **4.1. Cairns City Planning Scheme**

The Cairns Regional Plan sets a detailed framework for the management of growth and development within the City of Cairns as the major urban, tourist and economic centre in the region.

The Cairns Plan proposes development of a new urban growth corridor between Edmonton and Gordonvale west of the Bruce Highway; and establishment of major service centres near Smithfield and Edmonton and/or Gordonvale. A project of this magnitude will provide the impetus to the local community to facilitate these outcomes. The timeframes proposed for development will be only slightly ahead of the identified development sequence identified within the Cairns Plan.

“Economic development and employment opportunities are to be facilitated within urban growth centres to reduce commuter transport demands.” The proposed implementation of a light-rail network and the focus of this project in the Edmonton- Gordonvale corridor turn traffic flow in the opposite direction to the current transport direction and timing of travel to Cairns which will significantly reduce demands for upgrades of current transport infrastructure.

The Strategic Direction of the Cairns Plan states that “Sequenced development in the Edmonton to Gordonvale corridor may commence, depending on the level of housing demand and the available land supply in the southern corridor. Urban expansion into the corridor should initially be restricted to those areas adjacent to the established urban development nodes at Edmonton and Gordonvale.” This project supports that strategic desired outcome.

The Cairns Structure Plan defines the desired outcome for “an area situated on the eastern side of the Bruce Highway at Edmonton and bounded generally by the Bruce Highway, Thompson Road and Stoney Creek. This area forms part of the area identified for the Edmonton Business and Industry Centre. Development may or may not commence within this additional area identified for urban development in the life of this Planning Scheme, depending on the demand for commercial and industrial land, amongst other things. However, it is important that the area be identified because it is within the overall area identified for the Edmonton Business and Industry Centre. The area should not be alienated through the establishment of inappropriate land uses or by inappropriate subdivision.”

The proposed Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development concept will enhance the proposal for this area by providing some of the facilities and promoting the desired land use and business support process.

The Cairns Plan (1.4) states its intention that:

The development of the urban form identified on the Structure Plan and in the preferred Development Sequence will assist in:

- achieving the more efficient use of physical and social infrastructure within the identified urban area;
- providing the opportunity for master planning of the Edmonton-Gordonvale urban corridor;
- maintaining the viability of agriculture (particularly the sugar industry) and minimising the loss of good quality agricultural land within the future Edmonton – Gordonvale urban corridor for the medium term.

The staging of this project will see the gradual reduction in the use of the land for sugar-cane growing, however, initiatives like utilizing part of the cane rail network for the establishment of the ‘light rail’ network; and the proposed partnership with the Mulgrave Mill to complement the existing Mill facilities with a Biomass Plant which will generate much of the electricity required for the project; re-invigorating the tourism component of the Sugar Mill tours as part of the project will all assist the Mill and the surrounding agricultural community to maintain viability through an alternative income stream.

“There is the potential for conflicts to occur between tourist accommodation, attractions and facilities and local communities resulting from differences in the nature and scale of buildings; the nature of activities; hours of operation; and the nature and extent of traffic movements. It is important that this potential for conflict is minimised.” (Desired Environmental Outcomes 2.3.3) This project aims to consider and protect the existing natural and social environment whilst supporting the intent of promoting the area as a longer term stay tourist destination. Ongoing consultation with the Council and the community will ensure that the Consortium is aware of, and addresses, any community concerns as early as possible for the long term.

“The natural areas, particularly in the southern part of the City, provide the opportunity for nature based recreation for both residents and tourists. These areas need to be used and managed on a sustainable basis to ensure that the natural values of these areas are protected and that future opportunities for the use of the resources within these areas are not lost.” The specific intent of this project is to enhance these desired outcomes for future use of the areas.

“**2.4.3 Sense of Community** - Villages, towns and suburbs have a distinctive and recognisable character and sense of place, which promote a strong social fabric and a strong sense of community and encourage community interaction and participation.” The project has as an integral desired outcome, the enhancement of a sense of community and aims to be achieved by the provision of employment, recreational and business opportunities as a result of the impetus provided to the economy by the benefits accrued as a result of the successful progression of the Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development to its full potential. This will be provided through the provision of a range of community and social facilities as a result of the project.

Table 2: Cairns City Plan: Rural Lands District – issues assessed:

Map Sheet	Zoning	Implications
Planning Areas North	Rural 1 and Community Facilities	Rezoning will be required to allow development to occur
Hillslopes Zoning North	nil	nil
Vegetation, Conservation and Waterway Significance North	Cat 3 and 4 waterways (small creeks and intermittent waterways)	No Wet Tropics, No areas of high Vegetation conservation significance
Connectivity Overlay North	Open Space links	Close by – high potential to link to proposed links. Intended goal of project
Heritage Areas Overlay North	nil	Nil identified within proposed zone
Acid Sulfate Soils Overlay North	<20m AHD	Need to be determined actually on site; considered when/where construction being proposed
Bushfire Risk Overlay North	No identified Fire risk hazard	
Q100 Flood overlay North	nil	Nil
Obstacle limitation Surface		At or beyond Obstacle Limitation line. May change if heliport approved
Primary Light Control Plan and Bird and Bat Strike overlay		Low light loom intensity currently identified at location due to distance from Cairns. Bird and Bat Strike zone limit is 13km south of Cairns.
Road Hierarchy Overlay North	Mix of state controlled roads and minor rural roads	
Pedestrian and Cycle Movement Overlay	Nil	Potential to link to identified Trunk route and Strategic corridor
Possible Public Transport Corridors Overlay North	Surrounded by existing Sugar Cane Railway	Proposal to link to and enhance sugar cane rail network with light rail network to Airport and City
Special Facilities Overlay North	None impacting on proposal	

The Cairns Plan, prepared under the Integrated Planning Act (IPA), defines that all development must seek to achieve ecological sustainability. IPA defines Ecological Sustainability as “a balance that integrates-

- (a) protection of ecological processes and natural systems at local, regional, State and wider levels; and
- (b) economic development; and
- (c) maintenance of the cultural, economic, physical and social well-being of people and communities.”

This project is committed to be a leading example of ecologically sustainable development by recognizing the triple bottom line within the IPA definition and design and operations to reduce its ecological footprint through design, technology and ongoing education of its staff and patrons.

### **The Edmonton Sub-Regional Business and Industry Centre**

Cairns Plan identifies: “The Edmonton Sub-Regional Business and Industry Centre is intended to play a key role in providing retail, community, business and industry facilities for the Southern Urban Corridor. While any significant development of the Sub-Regional Centre is unlikely in the short term, the Centre is identified to ensure that the detailed planning and development of sub-regional facilities and the development of a key employment node can be achieved in the medium and longer terms. The future development of the Centre is seen as critical to the development of the Southern Urban Corridor and in managing transport demand. It is envisaged that the Centre will incorporate a public transport interchange adjacent to the railway line. The provision of future road transport links is a key component of the Centre with the location of higher order roads and a future bypass of Edmonton being identified.”

This project supports the proposed location and range of transport facilities proposed and supplements it with the proposal for a light rail network, on the existing QR tenure or the cane rail network, either of which would significantly enhance the proposed transport hub proposed for the Gordonvale-Edmonton region.

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development provides the employment opportunities in the southern corridor envisaged and required in the Cairns Plan to justify and promote development in the FNQ Regional Plan for the southern Cairns region Edmonton – Gordonvale urban corridor and the Edmonton Business and Industry Centre, which forms the sites northern boundary.

Although the Cairns City Council current Planning Scheme and the FNQ2010 Plan does not contemplate a project of this type and scale within the Planning scheme timeframe, the planning intent for the City, which is to support the purpose of the IPA and the Desired Environmental Outcomes (DEOs) of the Planning Scheme and can be used as benchmark elements in the assessment for the project. A number of presentations have been made to the in-preparation FNQ 2025 Plan staff, to make them aware of the proposal and to allow for the potential of this project within its Plan. The proponents believe that it does. In addition, the Cairns City Council, the Office of State Development, the Dept of Local Government and Planning (and the previous Minister for Local Government and Planning and the Environment) has been briefed on the Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development Project and in principle have indicated their support. (Refer Desley Boyle letter - Attachment 2.)

## **4.2. Draft FNQ2025 Plan**

Under a statutory regional plan **all development and land use in the region will need to comply with the relevant regional plan. (p5)** The plan:

- identifies sufficient developable land to meet future growth
- ensures growth is provided for in a manner that protects and enhances the region’s natural environment, biodiversity and natural resources
- resolves conflicts between state and local planning policies at a regional level
- establishes sound urban development principles which support a compact, well-serviced and efficient urban form
- promotes the delivery of infrastructure in a timely, cost-effective manner that supports community and economic development
- maintains and enhances the quality of life for existing and future communities
- ensures the region’s growth addresses the possible impacts of climate change and peak oil
- **supports a viable and diverse economy with well-located employment opportunities and economic activity centres**

The FNQ 2025 regional plan (p12)

“will support tourism and rural production industries to ensure they are not adversely affected by its policies and regulatory provisions. The regional plan will also encourage the diversification of the economy and the raising of productivity through improved skills development. Greater support will be given to entrepreneurial thinking, clean technology industries and increased integration into the global economy.

The policy outcomes will be achieved through planning and designing mixed-use developments that foster collaboration and networks between business, industry and research institutions. This will

ensure the region is better able to create new jobs and accommodate future population projections with high levels of diversified employment opportunities.

Maintaining and enhancing the tropical character through land use planning and innovative design. Decreased development pressures on coastal areas will come from the combined effect of consolidating growth in the Cairns area and Mount Peter. This also provides good outcomes when considering the effects of climate change and sea level rise.”

The Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development is a tourism development which meets the provisions of this element of FNQ2025 by diversifying the tourism opportunities within the regional economy, and significantly increases the range of employment skills and opportunities available in the region. This mixed use development, incorporating entrepreneurial thinking, and clean technologies will focus on retaining and enhancing the tropical character and experience of both visitors and locals whilst minimising the potential impacts of climate change upon the regions ecosystems and economy.

This proposal supports entirely, the FNQ2025 development pattern hybrid scenario (p20) of:

“By 2025, around 70 000 of the region’s 100 000 new residents settle in Cairns, with the highest growth experienced west of the Bruce Highway in Mount Peter. A strong rapid transit system is operational, and the land use pattern supports this system. The CBD experiences strong residential growth while decreasing in importance for employment. Most new jobs are created in the Edmonton town centre and industrial estate.”

Precinct Planning is incorporated in the design of this project. The precinct plan will include all necessary information as determined by the FNQ Regional Precinct Planning Guideline, modelled on the rural precinct planning guidelines prepared for South East Queensland. Accordingly the allowance for alternative activities in rural production areas, “such as agricultural, tourism or Indigenous enterprises” allows for this proposed development. Precinct planning will include onsite residences for staff actively employed onsite within the development, “consistent with the scale and form of the tourism development and identifiable as staff residences. The intended purposes of providing local accommodation to staff actively working at the development should not be compromised by on-selling the staff residences to the broader population,” as per FNQ 2025 recommendations.

FNQ 2025 “recognised that some larger scale tourism developments may be appropriate within the regional landscape and rural production area, but these require more detailed assessment of the possible impacts of the development on the landscape values, and on neighbouring communities. The infrastructure requirements to service the development, such as roads, power and water also need to be considered. A precinct planning approach is proposed, to enable an integrated assessment by both local and state government.”

Whilst “integrated resorts which incorporate a short stay, timeshare, villa and unit component within each resort precinct complex are not considered consistent with the landscape values of the regional landscape and rural production area” because “these would undermine the intent of the preferred settlement pattern for the region” the proponents consider that incorporation of accommodation within and adjacent to the project is essential to provide localised, and as yet un-provided for, short- and medium-term stay accommodation for the resort, whilst minimising the transport, social impact and eco-footprint implications of location of these facilities remote from the site, or within currently identified residential areas.

### **4.3. State Planning Policies (SPP’s)**

In addition, the project is also required to be assessed against all relevant State Planning Policies. This will be undertaken in greater detail in the EIS process. The following are identified as significant:

- SPP 1/92 – Development and the Conservation of Agricultural Land
- SPP 1/02 –Development in the Vicinity of Certain Airport and Aviation Facilities
- SPP 2/02 – Planning and Managing Development Involving Acid Sulfate Soils
- SPP 1/03 – Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide.
  - State and Regional Coastal Management Plans – (see 4.5)

#### 4.4. Other planning regimes: Whole of Government Consultation

Although not located within or adjacent to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, the consortium recognizes that the environmental and planning significance of this area is paramount and therefore plans to conduct whole of government (WOG) consultation processes with all key stakeholders to provide briefings and identify areas of concern or potential conflict with existing priorities and planning. It is envisaged that the initial stakeholders for this group will comprise: (see also s. 5.1 Development Approval process)

- Queensland Environmental Protection Agency
- Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Wet Tropics Management Authority
- Queensland Dept of Local Government and Planning, Sport and Recreation
- Queensland Dept of Natural Resources and Water
- Queensland Dept of Fisheries – Northern Fisheries Centre
- Queensland Dept of Main Roads
- Queensland Dept of Transport
- Cairns Ports – Airport (when sold) and Seaport
- Powerlink
- Ergon Energy
- Cairns Water
- Mulgrave Mill
- Gas suppliers
- Telstra
- Queensland Rail

#### 4.5. Coastal Management Plans

The State Coastal Plan (SCP) and the Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan (WTCRCMP) are particularly relevant to this site and have the potential to have significant impacts on the project. Under the SCP the site has the following description:

“Tourism and sugar production are the region’s main economic activities. The tropical climate, relaxed lifestyle and varied opportunities for recreation and tourism draw a large number of domestic and international visitors to the region. Cairns, Palm Cove, Port Douglas, Cape Tribulation and Mission Beach are the most popular destinations. Cairns is the major port for fishing, reef tourism vessels and international cruise ships. Both the Port of Cairns and the Port of Mourilyan are important sugar terminals.”

**Relevant Key coastal management issues identified, include:**

- sustainable growth and development of the coastal region;
- protection of particularly high-value habitat and biodiversity;
- sustainable management of the waterways and protection of inshore reefs from urban and agricultural runoff;
- ecologically and culturally sustainable tourism and outdoor recreation, including consideration of impacts and capacity to contribute to the economy and quality of life;
- storm tide threat and cyclone impacts;
- conservation of coastal tropical lowlands, particularly protection of riparian vegetation, remnant rainforest, and freshwater and tidal wetlands;
- impacts of acid sulfate soils;
- incursion of exotic plants, animals and diseases;
- recognition of Aboriginal Council jurisdictions;
- ongoing involvement of Indigenous Traditional Owners in management, planning and development, particularly during processes affecting land tenure designation or redesignation, including coordination of mechanisms by relevant agencies for involving Indigenous Traditional Owners;
- ongoing recognition of Indigenous Traditional Owner traditions and continuing rights and interests in coastal management (e.g. management of fishing activities, coordination of and access to scientific and research information, repatriation of remains), including Indigenous Traditional Owner access to cultural resources (e.g. traditional food for ceremonial purposes);
- Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders with historical associations within the region may have aspirations to be involved in the management of cultural resources;

- preservation of Indigenous Traditional Owner cultural resources from inappropriate access or use, including appropriate management of Indigenous Traditional Owner knowledge and information;
- maintenance of Indigenous Traditional Owner cultural resources (values, places and items);
- identification and maintenance of cultural heritage resources (values, places and items); and
- coordination of management between relevant agencies, including Commonwealth, State, and local government agencies and Aboriginal councils.

All these issues will be addressed in detail in the EIS process, although many are dot pointed in Section 6.

#### **4.6. Vegetation Management Act (1999)**

No clearing of natural vegetation is expected during the project as most of the proposed area is already cleared for the existing use of sugar-cane farming. The intent of the project is to retain and enhance existing natural vegetation. Under the Vegetation Management Act (VMA), all vegetation in Queensland has been mapped. The Regional Ecosystem Database has been reviewed, (maps at 6.3.4) however, due to the site being principally cleared, no areas of vegetation significance have been identified. Site inspections by relevant vegetation experts will be conducted during the Environmental Impact Assessment to determine whether any retained vegetation is of regional significance and identify methods to protect and enhance that vegetation during construction and operation of the site.

A program of enhancing existing remnant vegetation and establishment of vegetation corridors throughout the site will be conducted utilising best-practice revegetation techniques proven in the Barron River Green Corridor Project. The multiple benefits of these revegetation works include but are not limited to: the re-establishment of wildlife corridors and habitat; the reduction in impacts upon visual amenity; the absorption of noise and the opportunity to sequester carbon to offset the carbon footprint of the site activities through activities which engage locals and tourists in community planting activities.

### **5. Development Approval Process**

#### **5.1. Summary Overview**

The Coordinator General's office has provided timelines and detail of the approval process. Below outlines the Agencies which the proponent understands may be involved in the approval process.

##### Local

- Cairns City Council
- Cairns City Planning Scheme
  - Planning Scheme Policies
  - Local Laws

##### State

- Dept of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation
- *Integrated Planning Act 1997*
  - FNQ 2025 Plan
- Environmental Protection Agency
- *Environmental Protection Act 1992*
    - Environmentally Relevant Activities
  - Wet Tropical Coastal Regional Coastal Plan
  - *Harbours Act 1993* (works on tidal land)
  - *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*
  - The Wet Tropics Management Authority - Conservation Strategy
- Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries
- *Fisheries Act 1994*(marine plants)
    - Fish Habitat zones
  - *Water Act 2000* (works in a watercourse)
  - State Planning Policy 1/92 – Development and the Conservation of Agricultural Land
- Department of Natural Resources and Water
- *Water Act 2000*
  - *Land Act 1994* (tenure issues)
  - State Planning Policy 2/02 – Planning and Management
  - Development Involving Acid Sulfate Soils

- *Vegetation Management Act 1999*
- Department of Main Roads
  - Access to current Main Roads network – Bruce Highway/ Cairns Southern Access Rd
  - Proposed upgrade of Bruce Highway
- Powerlink
  - 275 kVA line upgrade/ undergrounding
- Ergon Energy
  - Link to existing power network
  - Facilitating the development of biomass plant co-located at Mulgrave Mill
- Queensland Rail
  - Possible link/loop to existing north-south rail-line
  - Establishment of light rail network to Cairns City and Cairns Airport

Federal

- Dept. of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

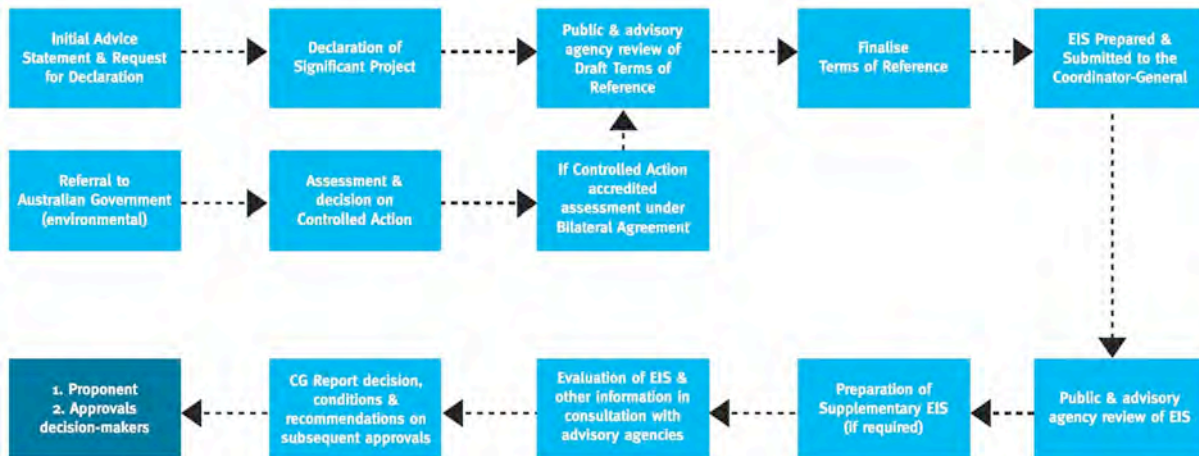
### 5.2. State /Local Level

The development approval process at State/Local Level is dependent upon whether:

- the project achieves Significant Project status under the SDPWOA; or
- is processed through the Integrated Development Assessment System (IDAS) under the *Integrated Planning Act (IPA) 1997*. If the project achieves Significant Project Status, there may be no Information and Referral Request Stage and no Notification Stage under IDAS. In any event, whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required under the SDPWOA or Referral Coordination (RC) is required under IPA, the involvement of State Agencies and the level of detail required to be submitted in support of the application will be similar, as defined below:

### The EIS Process

Under Part 4 of the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*



### 5.3. Federal Level

As soon as indicated by the State, a referral will be made to the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts for a decision on whether approval is required under Chapter 4 of the *Environment and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*. It is assumed that the DEWHA will respond that the action is a controlled action and therefore approval is needed under the Act before the action can proceed.

The Australian Government and Queensland Government have signed a bilateral agreement under Section 45 of the EPBC Act of certain State environmental assessment processes. The DEWHA has the option to write to the Queensland Minister for the Environment to seek advice on whether the proposal will be assessed under the bilateral agreement. Advice will be provided to the Consortium on how the assessment will be treated.



## 6. Environment & Other Issues

### 6.1. Overview

A review of the potential environmental and other impacts associated with the project has been undertaken, and the Consortium have identified opportunities for improving the environmental integrity of much of the area and mitigating strategies for any significant issues through planning, appropriate design and the effective implementation of an environmental management system across the site. The environmental impacts and aspects register has already been developed for the site construction and operation. It will be made available on request.

These reflect the FNQ2025 concerns (p.11) of “**Protecting regional landscape values** as FNQ is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and is likely to experience sea level increase, hotter dry seasons and wetter wet seasons under projected climate change scenarios. Petrol prices are also expected to dramatically increase as global oil supplies diminish. Such changes will adversely affect tourism, agriculture and the tropical lifestyle of the region. The impacts of climate change and peak oil must be addressed and planned for. The future growth of FNQ will ensure that greenhouse gas reductions are achieved in order to mitigate the impacts of climate change. “

### 6.2. Community Consultation

#### 6.2.1. Consultation Objectives

The Community consultation process will ensure that members of the local and regional community have the opportunity to voice their concerns or support for the project at a stage where those issues can be addressed during the planning and approvals process. The Consortium plans to conduct Whole of Government briefings to those agencies identified at 4.3 and 5.1 to ensure that all the potential environmental aspects have been captured and strategies defined and implemented.

#### 6.2.2. Consultation Process

The consultation process will entail (at minimum):

- Public displays at local shopping centres and Council Chambers to illustrate the scope and concept of the project
- Community meetings – the number and venues to be decided based on discussions with key players and expressions of interest or requests for briefings. It is anticipated that these will include local meetings at Gordonvale and Edmonton; Cairns Regional Council Chambers and Yarrabah Aboriginal community. Presentations to Local Members of Parliament, regulatory authorities have commenced and to major business groups like the Chambers of Commerce and Advance Cairns, TTNQ etc are proposed.
- Initial meetings have already been held with the then Minister for Environment and Local Government Planning and local Member for Cairns, Ms Desley Boyle; local Dept of Local Government and Planning representatives; Cairns City Council Planning staff, senior members of Council; Officers of the Office of State Development and the Coordinator-General.
- An 1800 number for community complaints and concerns will be established and maintained during the planning and construction phase of the project. An ongoing commitment to addressing community concerns will see it maintained as part of the Environment and Community Management System once the site is operational.

### 6.3. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT: Potential Impacts and Mitigation

#### 6.3.1. Land tenure

##### 6.3.1.1. Existing Environment

Tenure is freehold. Current land uses are predominantly for the growing of sugar cane.

The area is Zoned Rural 1/ Non-Urban under the current Cairns Plan.

The Cairns Plan defines “Rural 1 Planning Area Code - The purpose of this Code is to facilitate the achievement of the following desired development outcomes for the Rural 1 Planning Area:

- Areas currently utilised for primary production continue to be used for this purpose for as long as possible, at least for the life of this Planning Scheme, consistent with the indicative development sequence for future urban development established by the Regional Plan and this Planning Scheme;
- Rural character of the area and the visual qualities of the area are maintained.

- The Southern Corridor which is identified for future urban development is included in the Rural 2 Planning Area to ensure that new uses which are potentially incompatible with urban development are not established in locations where the existence of such uses would constrain the efficient expansion of urban development in the future.
- New uses which are potentially incompatible with the future development of the Edmonton Business and Industry Centre are not established in the area identified for the Edmonton Business and Industry Centre on the White Rock – Edmonton District Plan;
- An effective buffer is maintained between the identified Extractive Resources Precinct and extractive industry operations located in the area at the southern end of Mount Peter Road and the areas identified for future urban development on the Structure Plan;
- Land which has limited agricultural potential, but which is important to the scenic landscape of the City, is retained with a natural character;
- Uses identified as inconsistent uses in the Assessment Table dealing with material change of use for the respective Districts are not established in the Rural 1 Planning Area. “

#### **6.3.1.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

The proximity of the site to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the adjacent Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and the overarching reliance of the economy of the region upon tourism and the protection of natural values of the area are issues that regulators and the community will potentially be concerned by.

Although a small quantity of agricultural land which may be deemed “strategically important” the development will not compromise World Heritage values nor impact on any area deemed as a regional ecosystem of significance or the habitat of key species like the mahogany glider or the Southern Cassowary. The benefits it brings in terms of economic and social resilience, including opportunities to enhance diversity of income streams for the region and at Mulgrave Mill will outweigh the small amount of agricultural land to be impacted.

### **6.3.2. Topography, Geology and Soils**

#### **6.3.2.1. Existing Environment**

The existing environment is cleared paddocks in which sugar-cane farming is the predominant activity. The pre-existing environment was lowland rainforest which has been largely cleared from the region. Small patches of riparian vegetation still exist on the low rolling plain, which will be retained and enhanced.

There is potential for acid-sulfate soils (PASS) due to the proximity of the site to Trinity Inlet on areas of elevation below 20m ASL.

#### **6.3.2.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

There is potential for sediment and runoff from these sites from the current agricultural practices being undertaken. There is a risk that any water that runs off the site could be contaminated by chemical fertilizers and pesticides used in the sugar cane farming.

Due to the high rainfall experienced in the region, erosion and sediment control will be high priority during the construction of the site. Strategies including timing of works to avoid the ‘wet season’ where possible; erosion and sediment control training for all staff; staging of works to reduce the area of exposed soil; the implementation of immediate and appropriate revegetation on completion of works; site auditing to monitor sediment and erosion control devices as part of normal housekeeping routines.

A careful site investigation will be conducted to determine the presence or absence of Acid Sulfate soils. Initial review of the Cairns Plan indicates that the area is south of the identified risk area. Should acid-sulfate soils be identified they will be remediated through treatment on-site to reduce the risk of run-off to threatened waterways and fisheries nursery areas in Trinity Inlet.

### **6.3.3. Water**

#### **6.3.3.1. Existing Environment.**

A number of small creeks run through the site with the named one being Mackey Creek and its tributaries. The site comprises part of the floodplain for Trinity Inlet.

#### **6.3.3.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation.**

The integrity of existing creeks will be retained. There is a Low risk of flooding which will be mitigated by design processes including landscaping of the area into lakes to capture and contain sediment and runoff. Enhancement of the riparian corridors along existing waterways will act as filters to protect the water quality of natural and adjoining waterways. A series of lakes and waterways will be created to complement the existing waterways and provide additional water habitat and ponding opportunities on the site.

An ongoing water quality monitoring program will be implemented to ensure that all water leaving the site is free of potential sediment and pollutants that might be generated on-site. Investigations will be conducted to ensure there is no impact on any potential fish nursery areas in Trinity Inlet that may be within the influence of the project.

Site operational practices will include

- Capture, treat and Recycle all on-site water
- Design and construction for water use minimisation – rainwater tanks; minimum water- use gardens (not large expanses of lawn)
- Reduce impact of stormwater runoff; potential stormwater contamination; utilise on-site stormwater treatment to establish wetland facilities for the site.

### **6.3.4. Ecological Values – Vegetation and Habitat**

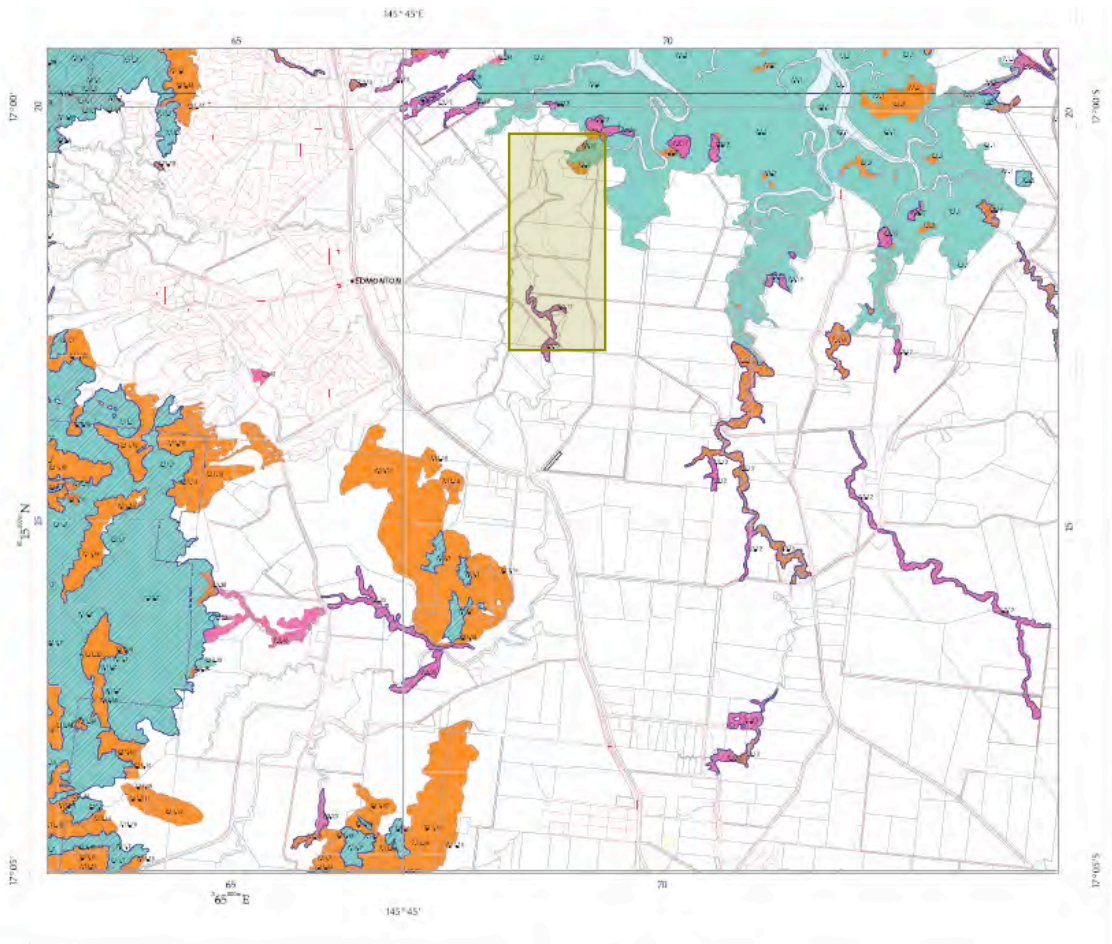
#### **6.3.4.1. Existing Environment**

Current site ecological values are almost nil due to clearing and existing use as sugar cane farms. Areas of significance, of both vegetation and habitat values are in the remnant vegetation adjacent to the small streams that run through or adjoining the properties. (See Regional Ecosystems maps below)

#### **6.3.4.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

The Consortium has committed to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the site by retaining the existing remnant vegetation and, with the guidance of its environmental consultants, to supplement the existing vegetation with site and regionally appropriate vegetation plantings which will both enhance the ecosystem values of the area and manage threatening processes associated with weeds, feral animals, fire and inappropriate activities adjacent to the vegetation which could compromise it due to high nutrients or differing maintenance regimes.

Issues of scenic amenity, habitat connectivity and provision of connection where possible to the northern end of the Wet Tropics Management Authority identified Cassowary Corridors for protection, in particular the Southern Cassowary (*Casuaris casuaris*), flora protection and conservation, access constraints, management of human impacts, tourism/visitor education and facilities, the generation of electricity and waste and the containment and treatment of water and potential run-off/impacts on coastal systems are identified by the Consortium with appropriate strategies to protect and enhance the natural values of the area and the tourism potential of the region.



**2003 REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM MAP**

Based on 2003 Landsat TM Imagery  
 Requested By: KIM.FORDE@EPONDC.COM  
 Date: 02 Jan 07 Time: 16:04:25

Centered on Lot on Plan:  
 1 RP719311

This is a copy of the certified regional ecosystem map defined by the map extent for the purpose of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*. Areas of property maps of assessable vegetation (PMAVs) are not shown on this map.



Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94)

Defined map areas are labeled with the regional ecosystem (RE) code along with the percentage breakdown if more than one RE occurs within the area. Detailed definitions of regional ecosystems are available from [www.epa.qld.gov.au/REDD](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/REDD). Defined map areas smaller than 5ha may not be labeled.

Regional ecosystem network has been compiled at a scale of 1:100 000, except in designated areas where a compilation scale of 1:50 000 is available. Linework should be used as a guide only. The positional accuracy of RE data mapped at a scale of 1:100 000 is +/-100 metres. The extent of remnant regional ecosystems as of 2003, depicted on this map is based on certified 2003 Landsat TM Imagery (supplied by SLATS, Department of Natural Resources and Water).

**Disclaimer:** While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this product, the Department of Natural Resources and Water, the Environmental Protection Agency and MapInfo Australia Pty Ltd. makes no representations or warranties about its accuracy, reliability, completeness or suitability for any particular purpose and disclaims all responsibility and liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages (including indirect or consequential damage) and costs which you might incur as a result of the product being inaccurate or incomplete in any way and for any reason.

All datasets are updated as they become available to provide the most current information as of the date shown on this map. Additional information is required for the purposes of land clearing or assessment of a regional ecosystem map or PMAV applications. For further information go to the web site [www.wild.gov.au/vegetation](http://www.wild.gov.au/vegetation) or contact the Department of Natural Resources and Water.

Digital regional ecosystem data is available in shapefile format, for Lot on Plans from [www.epa.qld.gov.au/REDATA](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/REDATA) or from the Queensland Herbarium for larger areas.  
 Email: [regionalecosystem@epa.qld.gov.au](mailto:regionalecosystem@epa.qld.gov.au)

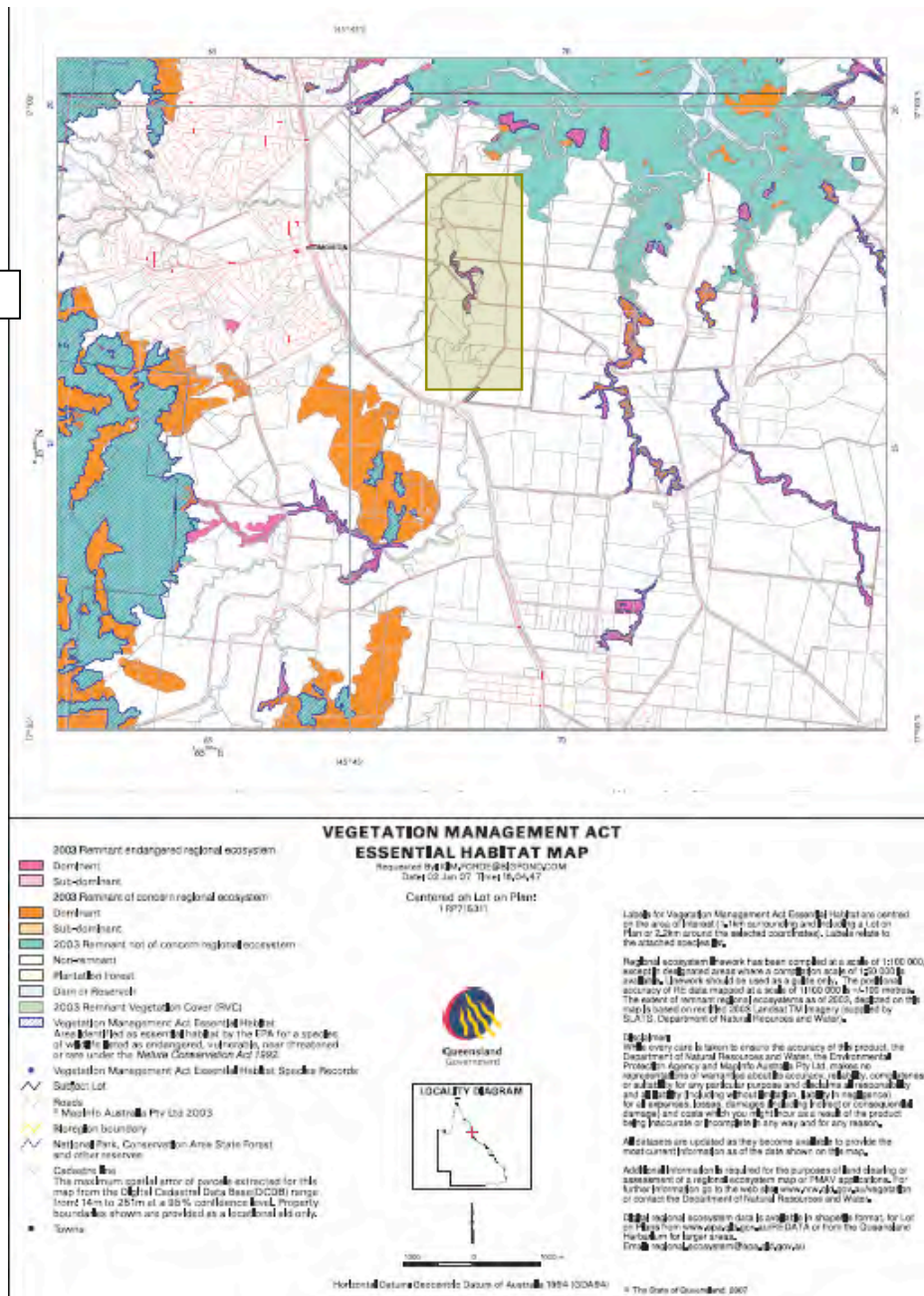
© The State of Queensland, 2007

- 2003 Remnant endangered regional ecosystem
- Dominant
- Sub-dominant
- 2003 Remnant of concern regional ecosystem
- Dominant
- Sub-dominant
- 2003 Remnant not of concern regional ecosystem
- Non-remnant
- Plantation Forest
- Dam or Reservoir
- 2003 Remnant Vegetation Cover (RVC)
- Vegetation Management Act Essential Habitat Area identified as essential habitat by the EPA for a species of wildlife listed as endangered, vulnerable, near threatened or rare under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. For further information on VMA Essential Habitat, please see the attached VMA Essential Habitat map.
- Subject Lot
- Certified Map Amendment area
- Roads
- MapInfo Australia Pty Ltd 2003
- Shire/region boundary
- National Park, Conservation Area State Forest and other reserves
- Cadastral line
- The maximum spatial error of parcels extracted for this map from the Digital Cadastral Data Base (DCDB) range from 14m to 251m at a 95% confidence level. Property boundaries shown are provided as a locational aid only.
- Towns

indicative site



indicative site



### 6.3.5. Noise

#### 6.3.5.1. Existing Environment

Current background noise levels would be anticipated to be quite low due to the semi-rural environment that exists. Over the past 15 years, background noise levels would have gradually increased as the nature of the surrounding communities changed from rural to urban and to increases in road use on the Southern Access-Bruce Highway and aircraft use of the southern approaches to Cairns when weather conditions dictate.

#### 6.3.5.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation

Construction noise will be limited to daylight hours as defined in construction guidelines

It is anticipated that background noise will increase as a result of the change of land use of the site from rural to principally tourist/urban development. This will be mitigated by design to absorb and minimise noise; planting of vegetation as screening and buffer zones between precincts of the site; minimisation of transport within the complex to shuttle, light rail; pedestrian or cycling traffic with parking areas outside the main facilities where possible. Within sites, foot traffic will be catered for.

Higher noise activities will be co-located with appropriate mitigation through product choices with lower noise standards (on plant and machinery); operation during daylight hours where possible; vegetation and other design buffering; community consultation when high noise activities are scheduled to take place – i.e.: feature events.

The community consultation process will inform the community of likely changes to noise levels and address issues of concern prior to the commencement of construction so that realistic expectations are created and confirmed by monitoring results, which will be publicly available on request.

### **6.3.6. Air Quality**

#### **6.3.6.1. Existing Environment**

Current air quality impacts are from emissions from Sugar Mill during crushing season; and from a small number of farmers who do not currently use the 'green trash blanket' method and who still burn their cane trash. Impacts on health due to increased asthma and other breathing difficulties; visual amenity impacts of smoke, burned paddocks and haze which is exacerbated by tropical climate of high humidity and low winds during the cutting season; increased risk of bushfires on adjoining hillsides and properties; small increased risk of vehicle accidents on Bruce Highway and supporting road network.

#### **6.3.6.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

The practice of burning cane trash would immediately cease for those landholders embraced by the project. Pressure placed on recalcitrant landholders to cease inappropriate land management practices. Liaison with regulatory and land management authorities to encourage the practice to cease for other landholders.

Generation of electricity from the biomass plant would have limited additional impacts on air quality as reduced emissions design; capture and re-cycling of heat and water vapour from stack are to be incorporated in the design. This would lead to reduced emissions from the existing sugar mill operations due to incorporation of latest technology associated with the biomass plant. Monitoring of emissions would be undertaken as part of normal operations. It is anticipated that a licence to operate will define acceptable emissions limits in terms of CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and SO<sub>x</sub> from the biomass plant. This will be negotiated with the EPA as part of the approvals process.

### **6.3.7. Waste Generation and Disposal**

#### **6.3.7.1. Existing Environment**

A small amount of waste is generated through the sugar cane production process. The current methods of waste disposal is a mix of 'trash blanketing' using the sugar cane waste as an erosion and sediment control and weed control measure on the new crop; on some sites, the 'trash' (dried sugar cane leaves) is burned prior to harvesting to increase the sugar content of the crop or burned on the ground to create an ash bed fertiliser for the new crop. Small quantities of biomass (green waste from the sugar cane process) are burned in the sugar mill to run the boiler at the mill.

No sewerage system is currently available in this area. Current sewage treatment plant has limited capacity for increase.

#### **6.3.7.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

The project will generate a significant increase in waste products due to the change of use at the site, however, careful consideration of how to reduce, recycle and reuse waste generated on the site to reduce off-site impacts to levels less than current situation has been undertaken by the proponents.

Already identified strategies include:

- Discussions with Mulgrave Mill and Ergon on co-locating a biomass plant on the site to generate electricity, sufficient to run the site, from the green waste generated in the sugar cane process.
- Collection of all waste from the site for separation into potential fodder for the biomass plant
- Potential to discuss with Cairns City Council to take the green waste generated by the City of Cairns and currently superfluous to the needs of the Bedminster system for use in the biomass plant

- Use of locally produced recyclable banana leaf products – cups, plates and cutlery – for all take-away facilities within the theme parks and community facilities. (which can be used as biomass fuel or mulched)
- Implementation of a site sewerage treatment system which will not only treat all site sewage but will create another form of waste as potential fuel for the biomass plant.

### **6.3.8. Climate Change**

#### **6.3.8.1 Existing Environment**

The area's science and business community is significantly aware of the potential of impacts of climate change, with world's leading tropical scientists identifying what is likely to be the impacts of changes on the natural and social values of the area. Predicted impacts area not having significant impacts on the area yet, however a number of initiatives have been implemented to increase awareness of the need to reduce demand on non-renewable resources and increase eco-efficiency, including TTNQ's Planet Safe Program and Kleinhardt's Going Green Biz program. Members of this consortium are involved in implementing both these programs.

#### **6.3.8.2 Potential Impacts and Mitigation**

FNQ2025 (p 30), supported by latest scientific research available from MTSRF research suggests that 'Climate change will have significant impact on the region. The tourism industry is reliant on healthy reef and rainforest environments. Coral reefs are particularly sensitive to temperature increase and climate change induced increases in temperature could cause widespread coral bleaching, with a subsequent impact on specific tourist destinations.

Increased temperatures, reduction in rainfall, and increased frequency or severity of cyclones could also impact severely on the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, with cyclone-damaged rainforests, loss of biodiversity, and reduction in attractiveness to tourists.

Given the community's growing energy consumption and dependence on vehicular transport, the reliance of the region's economy on tourism and agriculture, and the possible severity of impact on these industries from climate change or peak oil issues, it was imperative they be addressed in the regional plan."

This project addresses the potential impacts of climate change, by having chosen a location that has had its natural values compromised by current land use and proposing to reinstate the vegetative natural values of the area. It is located to the extreme south-west of the impact area of likely tidal surges and landscaping and site preparation will ensure minimal impact to the site and surrounding areas of any potential tidal surge. Building and facility design will be best-practice engineering to withstand the impacts of likely increased severity cyclones. Emergency evacuation planning and response will be integral to operational regimes implemented at the site. In addition, the utilisation of alternative locally generated energy, and closed circuit water and waste systems, and the provision of a range of public transport mechanisms will reduce the operational carbon footprint and reliance upon peak oil of the Tropical Paradise Resort.

It also will provide additional and alternative tourism activities for visitors to the area, reducing the pressure and potential impact on susceptible natural environments, particularly as they adapt to or recover from the possible impacts of climate change.

### **6.3.9. Natural Disaster**

#### **6.3.9.1 Existing Environment**

The proposed site is adjacent to the Trinity Inlet Floodplain, though above the 1:100yr flood line and in proximity to the Trinity Inlet. The Cairns Emergency Response Plan identifies the area's proximity to the Cairns Crocodile Farm as a high risk due to the risk that the large number of crocodiles housed at the site could escape in the event of a flood or cyclone.

Fire risk is low due to the tropical location and will be reduced due to the proposed land-use and management change.

#### **6.3.9.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation:**

In the event of an impending natural disaster: Flood, Tsunami or Cyclone, Evacuation Plans with designated routes and vehicles to offer options for visitors to evacuate – either to Cairns Airport, the south of Cairns or up the Gillies Highway to the Tablelands will be implemented. The Council Tsunami evacuation guide (2007) identifies the northern end of the Project site as potentially inundated by a 6m tidal surge, however, it is at the upper end of the risk zone; in close proximity to the evacuation route of the Bruce Highway and the western side of the highway is identified as beyond the risk zone. The Consortium has undertaken to review its natural disaster evacuation plan annually to incorporate the latest Council and Emergency Services advice.

All building designs are to meet the Australian Standard for Cyclone Rating

The Consortium suggests there is only a minor risk that in a cyclone or flood situation, crocodiles could escape from the Cairns Crocodile Farm and expose clients and staff to increased risk from crocodile predation.

### **6.3.10. Social Environment**

#### **6.3.10.1. Existing Environment**

Sugar Cane industry is volatile, emerging from depression over past 10 years but with no clear potential for future growth due to limitation of areas suitable for cane growing; international competition; increasing urban pressure, failure to invest in new technology at regional Sugar Mills (Mulgrave Mill is approx 80yrs old). Reduced numbers of farmers are prepared to enter the industry and the families of existing farmers are less inclined to follow the family 'tradition' than previous generations.

The southern end of Cairns currently has few tourism opportunities in that region to support investment in additional infrastructure. High urban growth areas with limited opportunities for employment close by – requiring transport into Cairns (increasing pressure on already overstretched road infrastructure)

#### **6.3.10.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

This project offers significant employment and business opportunities for those who choose to live and work in the Cairns southern corridor and throughout the region. The increased infrastructure and community facilities provided as part of the project proposal would significantly add to the social value and social and community infrastructure of this region.

Current landholders will be encouraged to stay on the land and manage it on behalf of the Consortium until it can be utilised along the project development timeline. This will give time for suitable alternative accommodation arrangements to be made.

- Provision of accommodation for initial influx of construction workers.

Whilst a proportion of the construction workforce will include existing City residents, and those that commute from neighbouring shires, a proportion of the workforce will move into the region temporarily which, without some forward planning, has the potential to displace those in the lower socio-economic sector at a time when rental properties are already at a premium. The project will ramp up slowly over the first three years, allowing time for the supply of accommodation to expand. In addition, it is anticipated that many of the local residents could be trained and employed in the project's construction and ongoing workforce.

### **6.3.11. Transport and Infrastructure**

#### **6.3.11.1. Existing Environment**

Current vehicular access and parking arrangements are limited which necessitates the investigation of alternative vehicular routes and transport mechanisms, including a light-rail network, assessment of the timing of upgrades to existing transport routes in light of road safety, community expectations and impacts.

The area is currently served by the dual carriageway Bruce Highway which is the main southern access road to Cairns City. The Queensland Dept of Main Roads has proposed to upgrade by duplication the current road within 15 years. The housing boom in the southern corridor of Cairns over the past 20 years is anticipated to continue and has therefore been incorporated in the regional planning process. The current road is under congestion pressure in peak periods as a significant proportion of the City population attempts to travel to work in the city during the morning peak. Minor accidents can cause hold ups of up to an hour.



The site is adjacent to the proposed realigned Powerlink 132kVA powerline between Cairns and Innisfail.

Site is beneath southern flight path of Cairns International Airport – which is only utilised when wind direction is from north – usually less than 2 weeks per year.

#### **6.3.11.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

▪ **The provision of basic services and infrastructure ahead of the proposed planning framework.**  
The Consortium is investigating the opportunities for providing infrastructure and services to the site where minimal services currently exist and where the scale and type of project necessitates ‘state of the art’ infrastructure and service provision, including proposal to generate electricity for the site from a biomass plant aligned with the nearby Mulgrave Mill; capture and treatment of site water to meet all needs; treatment of waste on-site.

This project will provide a number of potential benefits in terms of transport and infrastructure for Cairns. This development will provide a significant alternative employment source for the Cairns community, particularly the southern residents, so will reduce the demand on road access and public transport to Cairns City during peak times in the morning. It could reverse the traffic direction trend for that period, reducing pressure on inner-city parking and pollutants associated with road use. This could overall reduce the short term road congestion and the demand for duplication of the Highway for a number of years.

The Consortium intends to implement a light rail network from the site to the Cairns Airport via the City which will provide an alternative public transport methodology to reduce demand for vehicular access, reducing emissions from vehicles and upgrading the options for public transport facilities to the high-growth southern access corridor.

Negotiations will commence immediately with Powerlink to underground the Cairns to Innisfail line through the site. Should costs be reasonable, the potential benefits in terms of visual amenity, protection of the electricity asset from cyclonic impacts is estimated to be significant.

### **6.3.12. Cultural Environment and Native Title**

#### **6.3.12.1. Existing Environment**

Because the sites are freehold, native title will have been extinguished on the site. Clearing of the sites in the distant past will not have had a priority of identifying and protecting cultural heritage, either Indigenous or since European settlement. No current opportunities exist on the site for the promotion of cultural heritage values.

It is not known whether there is any significant indigenous employment under the current land use regime exists but it is considered unlikely.

There are limited employment opportunities for all social groups in the direct area. Most employment is generated in the Cairns City area. Employment associated with the sugar industry is mainly confined to farms operated by family groups; however, many have to have off-farm employment to generate sufficient income. Other farms are operated by managers with contracted mobile and seasonal labour.

The current urban area south of Cairns is a mix of socio-economic groups, ranging from those with higher incomes, usually those living on the hillslopes, to the lowest of socio-economic groups in the higher density subdivisions associated with White Rock and Edmonton to Gordonvale. The rapid growth of the urban corridor has led to rapid population by predominantly family groups in the region. Little local employment is available within 5km of the area except in the retail centres. Focus of the Cairns Plan is to create an industrial and commercial centre adjacent to the Edmonton township (and just to the north of this proposed project) to generate other economic opportunities in the area.

#### **6.3.12.2. Potential Effects and Mitigation**

The Consortium acknowledge both the significance of the region to Rainforest Aboriginal peoples and the limitations for employment and the presentation of cultural heritage information in the southern corridor of Cairns. The Consortium proposes to enter into discussions with the Yarrabah community (the Yidingi people) to provide input into the appropriate presentation of cultural heritage information within the facility by the Yidingi people through an employment and training program which enhances opportunities for long-term employment and involvement in the project.

This project recognises the opportunity to protect and promote the Indigenous cultural heritage values and roles in management of the region and has identified as a significant desired outcome the creation of both a cultural heritage centre and the considerable involvement of the local Indigenous peoples in the determination of content of cultural heritage messages and management regimes to be implemented over time. This is to be undertaken through both consultation and employment of indigenous peoples in the project from its approval. (The Consortium does not wish to initiate this process too early in order not to build expectations that cannot be fulfilled for local Indigenous peoples. As soon as a clear understanding of what is possible is achieved, the involvement of the local Yidingi community in the process will commence.)

When considering the social benefits of increased employment in a community, it is also useful to see them in the context of the difficulties facing communities where employment opportunities are limited, seasonal or reducing. For example, issues such as social cohesion, community spirit and vibrancy, and the manifestation of these notions in community related social activities, involvement and participation are increasingly becoming apparent in rural and regional communities. One of this project's goals is to create a community where these values are maintained and enhanced.

### **6.3.12. Visual Amenity**

#### **6.3.12.1 Existing Environment**

The current land use is sugar cane production, which is perceived by some elements of the community as having no impact on visual amenity, or a positive perception associated with 'rural activities'. Others perceive the sugar cane farming as being "green desert" inappropriate in the Wet Tropics environment and the activity of 'trash burning' is acknowledged as being inappropriate due to the smoke haze which often permeates the area, the risk of bushfire from wind-blown sparks associated with the practice (The hillslopes on either side of the Mulgrave valley show scars from previous escaped cane farm fires) and the negative health impacts of the smoke, particularly increased asthma and hay-fever attacks, felt in the residential subdivisions adjacent to the Bruce Highway.

#### **6.3.12.2 Potential Effects and Mitigation**

The Consortium is aware of Visual amenity concerns raised in the Cairns Plan, the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* and the Wet Tropical Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan 2003. The proximity of the site to the main North-South road and rail network and the Cairns Scenic Rim designation of the surrounding hillslopes are potential issues acknowledged as requiring consideration during the planning, design, construction and operation of the project. The Consortium proposes to limit the height of the development to 3 storeys; to design the buildings along a 'tropical theme' to enhance the potential for natural light and air movement throughout the site and to enhance the existing vegetation with significant replanting of appropriate native vegetation to provide visual screening between the various precincts of the proposed development, effectively providing a vegetated backdrop across the development.

The proposal to link the various precincts with lakes and waterways that are accompanied by tree-lined walking and cycling tracks, the limitation of traffic within the precincts and the use of appropriate low-intensity colours, non-reflective glass and "black-sky lighting" throughout the site are a number of measures identified to mitigate visual amenity concerns.

## **6.4 Environmental, Workplace Health and Safety Management**

An integrated Environment, Health and Safety management system compliant to ISO14001 and with ISO 4804 will be implemented from the commencement of the planning process. Initial components of its generation have already been undertaken with the collation of an aspect and impacts register for the construction and operation of the project.(available on request)

An Environment and Community Consultant is part of the project planning process and will be retained as part of the ongoing management and operation of the site with appropriate resourcing and support from the Board to ensure that the environmental values of the surrounding area, and principles of the development, are effectively implemented and continuously improve over time.

A detailed assessment of all these issues will be undertaken during the preparation of any EIS or any response to an Information Request under any Referral Co-ordination process. Site staff will be inducted in the requirements of the Environment, Workplace Health and Safety System, both during the construction and operational phase of project.

## 7. Costs and Benefits

### 7.1. Overview

FNQ 2025 (p.74) identifies the risk of “This relatively narrow economic base of the region, however, places it in a vulnerable situation. Tourism, mining and to a lesser extent primary industries, are susceptible to external influences such as international trends and commodity markets. The region’s economic base needs to diversify in order to develop greater robustness. This will provide a wider range of employment and economic opportunities for the community.”

The Tropical Paradise Development represents a unique opportunity for the State of Queensland to support projects which will generate real economic benefit for the future generations of Queenslanders in that it will significantly diversify the tourism and employment opportunities available in the region.

As part of the process of seeking significant projects status, the Consortium will commission a report on the economic impact of the proposed Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development. The report, when completed, will examine the likely increase in direct and indirect employment, expected resident population, benefits to the community and tourism industry and taxation contributions to all levels of Government. The analysis is expected to provide an indication of the significant positive impacts of the development both during construction and its subsequent operation, with particular focus on the contribution expected to be made by the project in the Cairns City and Tropical North Queensland region. It will include the economic indicators: capital, revenue, exports, contribution to regional, state and national economies, as well as an attempt to quantify the significant anticipated benefits to the Natural and Social economies of the region.

Based on earlier studies of similar related projects it is anticipated Economic benefits will include:

- An estimated Precinct 1 development value of \$2.2 billion dollars over ten years
- Around 620 full-time jobs and 1,200 part-time/casual jobs
- Wages and salaries of \$350 million for the construction workforce
- An ongoing net annual benefit of \$268 million annually from increased tourism and induced film production
- An additional 4,500 people permanently living in the Region.
- Increased “length of stay” of visitors by two nights
- Increased “Per cap” spending
- Major new tourism attractions and retail experiences
- A major upgrading of tourism infrastructure
- New and increased tax revenues to both the State and Local Government. In addition, the “once off” economic benefits arising solely from the construction and development phase of the project are anticipated to be around \$580 million.

Ecosystem services that project ecological restoration will provide include: improved water supply and water quality; enhanced biodiversity and wildlife habitat, increased educational and recreational opportunities; protected and enhanced scenic and aesthetic values. Many of these are unquantifiable at this stage but are still significant aspects of the project.

### 7.2. Employment

The Cairns City region has an estimated labour force, comprising a little over 100,000 permanent and casuals, with an unemployment rate of 3.5%. Jobs created by the Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development project will occur in two parts: construction jobs which will have a finite life and operational jobs that will be ongoing.

Many of the jobs within the new businesses of Tropical Paradise Development will be for young people and students. These are opportunities for businesses and skills which currently do not exist within the region. This project offers substantial direct employment opportunities but its greatest potential regional benefit will be its requirement for support industries – food, maintenance, transport and others, which will also aid the viability of businesses both within and supporting the existing tourism industry. Further information will be available in the forthcoming economic impact study.

### **7.3. Skills & Training**

Tropical Resort Precinct Developments will implement youth training schemes, delivering valuable experience in the film, tourism and leisure sector.

In addition, there will be a wide range of live performers required for the themed areas, for live performances, stunt shows, pre-ride shows and roaming characters. This will provide a valuable boost to the local performing arts industry in Cairns and Queensland. In its negotiations with international operators, the Consortium is acutely aware of the need to ensure the availability of a skilled workforce to work at the resorts and theme parks, as well as the associated facilities.

Initial discussions with the Cairns campus of Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE and the Cairns Region Group Training, regarding training, indicates a keenness to partner with the Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct project to boost the role of these training providers in providing accredited training programs particularly for trades and hospitality workers.

The inclusion of Indigenous representatives as stakeholders in the project could provide educational and training opportunities for Indigenous groups. It may also open up avenues for the provision of training by Indigenous groups to schools, tourists, and to Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct project employees in the area of aboriginal cultural heritage. If there were sites of significant aboriginal heritage value on the project, education on these could form part of any program of activities for visitors to the site.

FNQ 2025 identifies: “Sustainable economic development and employment have been identified by the Queensland Government as a priority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities including:

- assisting Indigenous people to increase their economic independence and employment opportunities
- improving their quality of life by building local and regional business capacity.

An Indigenous Business Development Grant Scheme has been established for this purpose. “ This project will provide opportunities for indigenous employment and economic independence through provision of those opportunities close to where larger populations live, in Yarrabah and the southern suburbs of Cairns.

Having access to greater training opportunities, and subsequent jobs at the end of it, will lead to fewer young people migrating out of the region and this will improve the stability of the local population and the population mix.

### **7.4. Resident Population**

Latest census statistics show that the Cairns region has a population of 123,760 (ABS estimate) concentrated in the suburbs surrounding the city, along the Marlin Coast and along the southern suburbs growth corridor. The region's population growth rate is 2.5 per cent per annum, well above the State and national averages. This means the city will grow by approximately 100 000 by 2025. It is estimated in the 2025 Plan that from 2006, the growth rate will increase from around 3000 new residents per year to approximately 4500 to 5000 people every year over the next 20 years, as people migrate to the region in search of new lifestyles – the sea change, tree change or more importantly ‘water change’.

FNQ2025 states: “The FNQ region is one of Australia’s most popular tourist destinations, and tourists comprise approximately 18 per cent of the population in the region at any one time. This is nearly twice the state average. The main tourist focus is coastal areas, particularly Cairns and Port Douglas.

While the tourist population is not included in the residential population figures, the region needs to ensure it has sufficient capacity to accommodate it, generally in hotel and apartment style accommodation.”

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will provide a range of accommodation types as part of its facilities to meet this identified shortfall.

### **7.5. Tourism Benefits**

Tropical North Queensland (TNQ) currently welcomes over 2.3million visitors annually (1.6 million holiday visitors)

- Industry value - \$2.45 billion

- 47% of TNQ's regional export earnings.
- Approx 30 000 direct or indirect jobs
- Australia's second most popular destination for international holiday visitors after Sydney.
- 5<sup>th</sup> busiest airport in Australia
- 600+ tours and attractions

#### **7.5.1 Visitor Numbers - (to the year ending June 2006)**

- International Visitors – 868 100 (up 5.6%)
- Total international visitor nights – 6 511 094 (up 6.9%)
  
- Domestic visitors – 1 471 000 (up 7%)
- Total domestic visitor nights – 7 304 000 (steady) (almost 70% domestic visitors fly to FNQ)
  
- Business tourism – 33 800 business visitors generating \$250 000 million for the regional economy
- Youth Adventure – 219 000 backpacker visitors – generating \$200 000 million for the regional economy

#### **7.5.2 Support of Regional Tourism Products**

The Draft FNQ2025 states (p80):

“The region's tourism industry is predominantly based on natural and cultural features. Tourist activities are primarily concentrated between Cairns and Cape Tribulation along the coast, and those areas of the Great Barrier Reef with direct access from Cairns, Port Douglas and Mission Beach. Key visitor attractions include the Great Barrier Reef, the Wet Tropics Rainforest, scenic landscapes and natural areas and a tropical climate. Protection of the natural attractions and character of the region is important to the sustainability of the tourism industry in the region.

Although the tourism industry is looking to diversify into areas such as cultural and business tourism, nature-based activities are expected to remain the major draw card and promotional product for the region. Sustainable opportunities must be identified and developed to cater for nature-based tourism needs over the long-term. Future opportunities in the tourism sector lie in:

- the potential to increase the region's business tourism market
- ecotourism with the presence of two World Heritage listed sites side by side in the region
- the expansion of cultural tourism. “

The Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts project will provide a major new focal point to showcase the natural values of the Tropical North Queensland region and will greatly contribute to injecting new family and international tourism into the area, and support, the consolidation of a range of existing tourism products in the local region and the Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ)'s “Change your Latitude” program.

The Tropical Paradise Resort Precincts project sits at the northern end of The Great Green Way, an area of outstanding natural beauty spanning from Townsville to Cairns. The Great Green Way was an initiative of the Development Bureau of Hinchinbrook, the Cardwell Shire and the Cassowary Coast Development Bureau and was funded by the Federal Department of Industry, Science and Tourism. Upon completion, Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will not only provide the signature tourism destination within The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area for Tourism Tropical North Queensland, and the Great Green Way, but will bring major operators into the region that will provide much needed additional funds.

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development would directly contribute to the commercial viability of many other established or proposed tourist attractions through the generation of extra stay nights to the region, through the critical mass of entertainment and tourism elements contained within its three Precincts vision, targeted at the family, youth and international tourism markets.

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development would, through its entertainment and tourism critical mass, stimulate and add both national and international airline pressure for flying into Cairns as a primary holiday destination.

The Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development Consortium will be seeking to work with the Department of Tourism and its Minister, the Hon. Desley Boyle in opening discussion with both domestic and international airlines for increased and new schedule flights into Cairns, and also will explore the possibility of Asian discount airlines considering Cairns as a possible Australian headquarters, given its position as part of the Australian tourism triangle, which includes Uluru and Sydney.

Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will also result in visitations to the natural attractions, hence increasing awareness of the natural beauty of the region. The natural attractions include, but are not limited to:

- The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area
- The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area
- Eubenangee Wetlands
- Josephine and Barron Falls; Millaa Millaa Falls and Lookout and Waterfall Circuit Drive
- Lake Eacham and Lake Barrine Crater Lakes, Malanda and Millaa Millaa Crater Lakes District
- The Boulders, Babinda
- Mt Bartle Frere – Queensland’s highest mountain
- State Forests and National Parks across the region

### **7.5.3 Relieving Pressure on the Daintree**

There has been much debate over the years amongst the tourism industry about the need to provide an alternative to the Daintree Rainforest experience. Over the past 20 years the Daintree has achieved an iconic status, to the point that visitation levels threaten to “kill the goose that laid the golden egg”. This venue provides alternative location which will promote the ecological and natural values of the region, without compromising them. This ties into the Wet Tropics Management Authority’s Tourism Strategy desired outcomes.

### **7.6 Environmental and Carbon offsets from travel to the site:**

Careful calculation of eco-footprint of the site has been, and will continue to be undertaken. Review of technology and ‘best practice’ will guide construction and operation to reduce the environmental impacts of the project where possible is committed to.

Opportunities will be provided to guests to ‘offset’ the carbon emissions associated with their holiday by

- 1) choosing to visit this site over others who are not designed and managed to reduce their carbon emissions and ecological footprint
- 2) Offsetting the costs of their travel etc by supporting revegetation activities conducted on site and in the surrounding regions. Guests will be offered the chance to ‘plant a tree’ to remember their visit and/or to pay for the ongoing maintenance of the forest or the animals that utilise it.
- 3) Clients will be given the opportunity to choose ‘environmentally friendly’ products and operating regimes.

Selection of packaging from local sustainable sources where practical (determined by ability to supply quantities etc, but providing opportunities for other sustainable businesses to grow); cleaning products to reduce environmental impacts and carbon emissions from operational regimes. Options will continuously be reviewed.

## **8. Taxation Contributions**

While taxation contributions forms part of the economic impact studies currently being prepared, the Consortium has noted the forecast contributions from the Ella Bay project near Innisfail. It is expected that the taxation contributions from the Tropical Paradise Resort Precinct Development will be at least equal to Ella Bay and therefore, a summary of the Ella Bay taxation forecasts when the project is fully completed are included here for reference.

- General Council rates will be in the order of \$10 million per annum
- Transfer and Mortgage Duties arising from property transactions estimated at \$45 million over the first 10 years
- Land Tax will be in the order of \$5 million per annum
- Personal income tax estimated at \$15 million per annum during the first 10 years
- Company Tax is estimated at \$34 million and GST at \$45 million over the 10 year construction timeframe.

## 9. References:

- Cairns Plan (2005): [www.cairnscity.qld.gov.au/CairnsPlan](http://www.cairnscity.qld.gov.au/CairnsPlan)
- Ella Bay Resort Development EIS (2008)
- EPA website – Regional Ecosystems; Queensland Planning Policies: [www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au)
- Google Earth
- Queensland Dept of Local Government and Planning: [www.lgp.qld.gov.au](http://www.lgp.qld.gov.au)
  - Draft Far North Queensland Regional Plan (2008) [www.localgovernment.qld.gov.au](http://www.localgovernment.qld.gov.au)
- Queensland Dept of Main Roads: [www.dmr.qld.gov.au](http://www.dmr.qld.gov.au)
- Queensland Office of the Coordinator General: [www.coordinatorgeneral.qld.gov.au](http://www.coordinatorgeneral.qld.gov.au)
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland: [www.tropicalaustralia.com.au](http://www.tropicalaustralia.com.au)
- Wet Tropics ecological values – [www.wettropics.gov.au](http://www.wettropics.gov.au)
- Wet Tropics Regional Agreement – Rainforest Aboriginal peoples (WTMA 2005)
- Wet Tropics Tourism Strategy (WTMA 2001)

	by	Checked by:
This document has been collated by Tropical Consulting Services for the Consortium, Tropical Paradise Resort, to meet the requirements of an Initial Impact Assessment for the Coordinator General's Dept Queensland, to verify Project of State Significance status of this development.	Kim Forde	Allan Carlsson/ Paul Davies
V1: January 2, 2007 V2: January 17 2007 V3: February 26 2007 V4: January 2008 V5 – 7: July 2008	Kim Forde / Kate Roper	Allan Carlsson/ Paul Davies
V8 – v9 July 2008 V10 July 2008	Allan Carlsson Kim Forde	Paul Davies Paul Davies/ Allan Carlsson

## Attachments:

Attachment 1: Comparison of alternative sites in the region

Attachment 2: Letter from The Hon.Desley Boyle MP – Member for Cairns: Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry

Attachment 3: Concept Plan

Attachment 4: Precinct Plan

Attachment 5: Site Plan

<b>Attachment 1: Comparison of alternative sites in the region</b>			
<b>Land – all areas have sufficient quantities of land available (2007)</b>	<b>Distance to Cairns Airport</b>	<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
Mowbray Valley  Average \$10K – 25K per hectare	60km north	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Close to Port Douglas (&lt;10km)</li> <li>▪ Current use – cattle grazing; rural – residential; sugar cane</li> <li>▪ Surrounded by Wet Tropics World Heritage Area</li> <li>▪ Access via scenic Captain Cook Hwy</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to Mowbray River</li> <li>▪ ‘Green’ Council – will support sustainable development but require strict compliance to DA conditions</li> <li>▪ Potential to access cane rail network for people moving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High land values due to proximity to Port Douglas</li> <li>▪ Limits on land available: constrained between mountain n sea</li> <li>▪ Access via scenic Captain Cook Hwy (narrow, winding, multi-use road)</li> <li>▪ Mowbray River not navigable, but accessible to sea.</li> <li>▪ Crocodiles in lower reaches of Mowbray River</li> <li>▪ Ocean side of highway is low-lying and could be subject to inundation during cyclone and tidal surge events</li> <li>▪ Highly environmentally aware local population.</li> </ul>
Julatten  Average \$1.5 - \$10K per hectare  Second lowest cost land	75 km north-north-west	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current use – cattle grazing; rural – residential; sugar cane</li> <li>▪ Surrounded by Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, particularly Mt Lewis</li> <li>▪ Within Mareeba Shire – Council supportive of development, likely to provide subsidies or support initiatives to create employment within the region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accessed via Captain Cook Hwy and Rex Range Road – narrow and winding, multi-use road</li> <li>▪ Highly environmentally aware local population</li> </ul>
Smithfield/Caravonica  Average >\$50K per hectare	15 km north	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current use – cattle grazing; residential; sugar cane; sand mining</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to Barron River and Thomatis creeks – Barron navigable to ocean.</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to Barron Gorge National Park, Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and existing tourism node</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to Captain Cook Highway</li> <li>▪ Potential to link to tourism node with Skyrail and Tjapukai Aboriginal Dance Theatre</li> <li>▪ Potential to access cane rail network for people moving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Land is low-lying and could be subject to inundation during cyclone and tidal surge events</li> <li>▪ Land will need re-zoning from Good Quality Agricultural Land</li> <li>▪ Probably the most sought after and therefore most expensive land within the region</li> </ul>
Koah  < \$ 5K per hectare Lowest cost land	40 km north-west	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current use – cattle grazing</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to Wet Tropics World Heritage Area</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to Clohesy and Barron Rivers</li> <li>▪ Within Mareeba Shire – Council supportive of development, likely to provide subsidies or support initiatives to create employment within the region.</li> <li>▪ Significant area available for development</li> <li>▪ Wildlife park adjacent (benefits-shared marketing; transport)</li> <li>▪ Potential to link to tourism node in Kuranda (&lt; 10km east) with Skyrail and Kuranda Scenic Train</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to access via Kuranda Range Road and Kennedy Highway – upgrade of Highway required to allow extra traffic</li> <li>▪ Land more prone to fire than other regions</li> </ul>
Gordonvale  Average price \$5K – 50K per hectare	25km south	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current use – cattle grazing; sugar cane</li> <li>▪ Sufficient quantities of land</li> <li>▪ Good access via Bruce Highway</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to navigable Mulgrave</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adjacent to Cairns Crocodile Farm (identified as high risk of crocodile escape if inundated)</li> <li>▪ Land is low-lying and could be subject to inundation during cyclone and tidal surge</li> </ul>



(increasing land values)		<p>River</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Potential to access cane rail network for people moving</li> <li>▪ Adjacent to Wet Tropics World Heritage Area</li> </ul>	<p>events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Land being encroached by residential subdivisions from Cairns</li> <li>▪ Access for southern Powerlink transmission lines through land</li> <li>▪ Potential Acid-sulphate soils</li> <li>▪ Adjacent Identified significant wetland areas</li> </ul>
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