



Ella Bay – summary of main issues, February 2013

Background

- Ella Bay Pty Ltd recently received State and Federal approval for the Ella Bay resort development.
- There is strong community opposition to this development, both from within the local Innisfail community and broader regional community.
- The site, a 450-hectare former cattle station, is proposed to be transformed into a \$1.4bn integrated golf course, residential and tourist development which would include 860 units and 540 permanent residences of low and medium-density.
- The development would result in as many as 5,000 people visiting and living on the site, with a high risk of degrading the unique natural and cultural values of the area. The influx would result in a huge increase in traffic on a very narrow coastal road through a regularly cyclone-affected section of the Wet Tropics, and is likely to result in increased Cassowary strikes and ongoing access issues.
- The sheer size of the development means that there can be no possible way to mitigate the impacts of this development on listed species and Matters of National Environmental Significance, of which there are many.

State listed species and Matters of National Environmental Significance

- The proposed site is home to one state and federally listed endangered frog species: the common mistfrog (*Litoria rheacola*) and is considered to be likely habitat of state and federally listed endangered frog species the Australian lacelid (*Nyctimystes dayi*) and the waterfall frog (*Litoria nannotis*).
- The site is prime habitat of the state and federally listed endangered southern cassowary (*Casuarius casuarius johnsonii*). The proposed cassowary fencing is not proven to be successful and may jeopardise the ability of cassowaries to escape from predators.
- The site is also adjacent to (and possibly contains) areas of the EPBC listed critically endangered ecological community known as *Littoral Rainforest and Coastal Vine Thickets of Eastern Australia*.
- The site is adjacent to the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and is surrounded by the World Heritage listed Wet Tropics rainforests.
- The beach adjacent to the development is a known nesting site for a number of state and federally listed endangered sea turtle species including the loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) and the Olive Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) as well as the state and federally listed vulnerable green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*). The proposed development would result in an influx of people using the beach, which would inevitably disrupt these important nesting areas and negatively affect the breeding success of these species.