

5.04. PRELODGE MENT ENQUIRY - MOWBRAY ADVENTURE PARK

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DEPARTMENT: Development and Environment

PROPOSAL Education, Sport and Entertainment Facility (Mowbray Adventure Park) – Pre-lodgement Enquiry

APPLICANT NQL Properties Pty Ltd
c/o Gilvear Planning Pty Ltd
PO Box 228
Babinda QLD 4861

LOCATION OF SITE Andreasson Road, Craiglie

PROPERTY Lots 1 – 6 on C2254, Lot 87 on SR370 and Lot 90 on SR678

LOCALITY PLAN



LOCALITY Port Douglas and Environs

PLANNING AREA Residential 1 / Conservation

PLANNING SCHEME	Douglas Shire Planning Scheme 2008 (as amended in 2010)
REFERRAL AGENCIES	State Assessment and Referral Agency (not applicable for a pre-lodgement enquiry)
NUMBER OF SUBMITTERS	Not applicable
STATUTORY ASSESSMENT DEADLINE	Not applicable
APPLICATION DATE	3 December 2015
RECOMMENDATION	

1. **That with respect to the pre-lodgement enquiry lodged in relation to the proposed Education, Sport and Entertainment Facility (Mowbray Adventure Park) located at Andreasson Road, Craiglie, that the proponent be advised that Council provides its in principle support. The following advice is provided:**
 - a. **The proposed use remaining a low-key ‘nature-based’ adventure park generally as presented in the application. However, the site is considered to be unsuitable for activities that will generate high volumes of traffic or generate significant noise (e.g. outdoor music venue, major sporting events, general theme park activities that are not based on the appreciation of the natural environment, and the like).**
 - b. **Rehabilitation of the land to support the ‘nature-based’ theme of the adventure park is an expectation and this must be demonstrated in a formal application.**
 - c. **The proposed use will be predominately a day-time venue. Accommodation is to be short-stay, dormitory style suitable for school groups, corporate groups or similar.**
 - d. **Consideration needs to be given to reverse amenity impacts associated with the land to the north and west being developed in the future as a residential estate;**
 - e. **Site-based management plans mentioned in the prelodgement submission form an up-front part of the development application (e.g. the biting-insect management plan, crocodile management plan, traffic assessment, engineering advice on services and site constraints);**
 - f. **Advice being sought from the Department of Transport and Main Roads with respect to the intersection of the Captain Cook Highway and Andreasson Road.**
 2. **That the above information is offered in the context of providing open and frank without prejudice comment from Council in relation to the proposed uses. The determination of any future application is a matter for Council following detailed assessment of the application, including consideration of any properly made submissions.**
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is in receipt of a formal pre-lodgement enquiry on behalf of NQL Properties Pty Ltd with regard to an Education, Sport and Entertainment Facility (Mowbray Adventure Park) at Andreasson Road, Craiglie. The application is accompanied by plans that show the land divided into a series of themed activity precincts that are broadly based on adventure and an appreciation of nature. Most of the activity is in the outdoors and does not involve permanent buildings and structures. Permanent buildings and structures are confined to the highest parts of the land away from areas that are erosion prone or subject to tidal surge flooding.

While the land is constrained, the applicant is of the view that many of the issues raised through pre-lodgement discussions (vector control, infrastructure, crocodile management etc) can be appropriately managed. It is considered that the proposed use provides an opportunity to value-add to the tourism experience in Douglas Shire, by providing an activity that is currently not available in the market. The proposed use must remain 'nature-based' and significant rehabilitation of the land is an expectation. However, the land is considered to be unsuitable for activities that generate significant volumes of people and / or noise (e.g. outdoor music venue, major sporting events, general theme park activities that are not based on the appreciation of the natural environment, or similar). In principle, support is provided on this basis.

TOWN PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Site

The site, consisting of eight (8) allotments is located at Andreasson Road, Craiglie close to the mouth of the Mowbray River. The site contains 22.06 hectares of non-contiguous land, being divided by a number of unconstructed road reserves.

Part of the land is being used for sugar cane cultivation, while the lower portions of the land do not appear to be used for any particular purpose. The land is predominately cleared of vegetation.

Access to the site is via Andreasson Road.

Background

The land has been subject to development enquiries in the past, including applications for houses on each of the existing lots. The land is predominantly low-lying and generally unsuited for permanent buildings or residential development, despite its inclusion in the Residential 1 Planning Area.

Proposal

The pre-lodgement enquiry involves a proposal to develop the site for an Education, Sport and Entertainment Park ('the Mowbray Adventure Park'), including, in the words of the applicant, *"fun activities, entertainment, healthy lifestyle, nutrition, renewable energy, environmental protection and restoration of degraded areas. The goal is to get people moving, living and eating in a healthy but fun, sustainable and interesting manner, whilst also learning."*

The Adventure Park is to be designed to permit half, full or multi-day attendance with a fixed entry fee that includes access, meals and drinks.

The plans provide for the potential to include dormitory facilities to enable ‘camps’ for attendees (likely to be school groups in the main). These facilities would be akin to “bunkhouse accommodation” only. In the event that patrons prefer more upmarket accommodation, transfer/s to the existing accommodation providers in Douglas Shire will be provided.

Access, to and from the site, will predominantly be via shuttle bus / bus, with a smaller proportion of visitors being self drive.

Given the environmental aspirations for the site, and the potential for education in this regard, it is proposed to develop ‘off-grid’ for energy. Options include solar, gas generator and / or battery storage, or any combination of current options in this regard.

Overall, NQL believe the use is likely to complement existing tourism options in Douglas Shire and is not seeking to duplicate the reef and rainforest experience currently on offer. The target market is children and teenagers, as well as corporate groups, special interest groups and the like.

Elements of the Plan

The site is divided up into a series of conceptual precincts (see Attachment 1). Each precinct has an activity focus as follows:

Sheet 1

Precinct	Purpose
1. Mountain Madness	Including bike skills and jump zone area. This area is an active play space.
2. Site Maintenance	Maintenance sheds and buildings located in a non-erosion prone area on the site.
3. Solar Farm	Green power generation area; renewable energy education options.
4. Dormitory Accommodation	Buildings for overnight accommodation / short stay by education or corporate groups located in non erosion prone areas.
5. Reception / Entry Building	Including the main buildings which encompass reception, shop (for products / foods aligned with the site use, similar to a tourist shop), kitchen and café. Additionally a teaching room and auditorium will also be provided, to enable a more formalised “welcome” and introductory sessions to be provided to patrons, identifying the focus of their visit (be it corporate team building, school education / health focus or tourist “experience”), and providing information of assistance at an early stage in their visit. These facilities have been located outside areas mapped as erosion prone on the site, but may be developed to ensure resilience to storm surge situations as required.
6. The Bowl	Areas established for skating, scooter use and / or bikes.
7. Outdoor Multi-use Sports courts	Options for use for basket ball, netball and the like.
8. Sustainable Agriculture and Modern Agronomy Education	This area is to be utilised for growing and tending of vegetables, fruits and bush tucker appropriate for the region. Additionally, the area will provide appropriate spaces to enable complementary learning opportunities for sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and discussion

Precinct	Purpose
	<p>of modern agronomy practices.</p> <p>Noting the soils on the site, it is anticipated that improvement to soil and / or establishment of raised beds will be necessary to facilitate this use.</p>
9. Bush Kitchen and Entertainment	Taking produce from the adjoining agricultural areas, it is proposed to construct a bush kitchen in a non-erosion prone area on the site, facilitating the opportunity for cooking classes and education regarding healthy eating, local produce and the like.
10. Mowbray River Recreation and Education	<p>Access point for 'river expeditions' intended to be light framed / non permanent. Options for exploration in a safe, educational way of the unique Mowbray River system, including mangroves and fish species, water quality discussion and aligned activities.</p> <p>Access will be controlled and supervised at all times.</p>

Sheet 2

Precinct	Purpose
1. Creek Access	As an option, potential for education and interpretation of the adjoining creek to the north may be possible via a walking / bike / scooter track.
2. Port Douglas Connection	Options for a connection back to Port Douglas via a walking track or similar may be appropriate to consider.
3. Bush Craft, Creative Nature Play Space	No comments provided by the applicant.
4. Billabong Day Camp	<p>The site is improved with a billabong, surrounded by local melaleuca trees. It is not proposed to greatly alter the natural topography, but to work with it in development of 'temporary' shelters within which patrons can experience 'bush camping'. Potentially uses could include bush cooking demonstrations, tent erecting and packing up and associated activities.</p> <p>No overnight stays within this area will be permitted, and at the conclusion of each day, all temporary structures will be removed as part of the experience for patrons in this area.</p>
5. Open Field	This area may be utilised for a variety of activities and events, involving relocatable and non-permanent shade structures if necessary.
6. The Tangle	An obstacle course with climbing options, aimed at challenging mind and body.
7. Indigenous Culture	NQL would investigate options to partner with local Indigenous groups to develop appropriate uses across the site, and in this area particularly. Uses may include demonstrations of dance, use of spears (in controlled settings), and indigenous food, arts and tracking skills.
8. Mountain Madness	Including bike skills and jump zone area. This area is an

Precinct	Purpose
	active play space.
9. Putt Putt and Golfing Skills area	No comments provided by the applicant.
10. Central Amenities East	This building located outside any areas mapped as erosion prone, is intended to contain amenities for patrons using the site during the day, including: (a) Toilets; (b) Water supply; and (c) Fridges for lunches etc.
11. Festival Fun	Including areas for 'circus talent' exploration, bush art or similar activities.
12. Child v Wild	A concept involving practical experience in 'mock' survival situations, including discussion and demonstration involving bush tucker, basic survival skills, and fun demonstrations pitting patrons 'against the wild' in a controlled manner.
13. Open Field	This area may be utilised for a variety of activities and events, involving relocatable and non-permanent shade structures if necessary.
14. Mowbray River Education	Secondary / alternative access point for 'river expeditions' intended to be light framed / non permanent. Options for exploration in a safe, educational way of the unique Mowbray River system, including mangroves and fish species, water quality discussion and aligned activities. Access will be controlled and supervised at all times.

It is anticipated that staff required to facilitate management and operation on site will include:

- Management;
- Marketing;
- Safety and First Aid;
- Nutrition;
- Physical Education;
- General Education;
- Renewable Energy/Science;
- Environmental Management/Horticulture;
- Food Preparation;
- General Maintenance;
- Specific Course/Activity Experience
- Reception, secretarial, accounting, general administration.

Douglas Shire Planning Scheme Assessment

Under the 2006 Douglas Shire Planning Scheme (as amended), the land is included within the Port Douglas and Environs Locality and is part of the Residential 1 Planning Area. Small parts of the site along the edges of Lots 80 and 87 are included within the Conservation Planning Area. The proposed development does not neatly match any of the land use definitions contained within the planning scheme and is therefore classified as an 'Undefined Use'. Undefined Uses are Impact Assessable.

Commentary

The proposal has been subject to a pre-lodgement meeting with the applicants and a number of issues were raised. These issues are broadly summarised as follows, with the applicant's commentary provided in response.

Issue	Reason	Applicant's Response
Coastal processes		
No buildings in Erosion Prone/Storm Surge Area	Risk to occupants and safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Erosion prone area being assessed. ○ Reception/accommodation buildings located outside Erosion prone areas. ○ Other buildings / infrastructure will be constructed to ensure relocation is possible and / or will be constructed of material or for a function that is able to be abandoned.
No accommodation (camping / bunkhouses) in Erosion prone area / Storm surge area	Risk to occupants, safety and impact on disaster management responses for Council, QFRS etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accommodation will be located outside the Erosion Prone Area, and be set back from the Mowbray River frontage sufficiently to ensure that impacts may be managed. ○ Risk management will include 'shut down' of accommodation during a cyclonic event and / or other high risk times or events. ○ Use will not involve permanent accommodation on site. ○ Evacuation from the site possible given usual notification periods applicable for sites within storm surge areas.
Safety		
Vector (mosquito and biting midges) control	Location and nature of insects prevalent on site.	Vector Management Plan can be prepared for assessment with a development application.
Crocodile control / management required	Safety issue potential for interaction if waterway education activities proposed.	<p>Site-based Management Plan for crocodiles can be prepared and lodged with the application; practices could include management of hours of operation for direct Mowbray River activities, reporting protocols, relationships with stakeholders involved in Crocodile management, and erection of suitable barriers in suitable locations (for example around buildings, car parks).</p> <p>The current concept confirms an intent to fence boundaries of the site with waterways including the Mowbray River.</p>
Hours of operation	Reduction in vector and crocodile interaction for patrons; safety.	Options for accommodation of patrons in bunkhouse or similar is considered appropriate. Activities predominately day-time, other than accommodation.

Infrastructure		
On site effluent disposal requires assessment.	Compliance with relevant standards necessary.	The applicant has provided details of a possible Flowvac system as an alternative effluent disposal method for a variety of land use activities, including accommodation activities.
Vehicular access to site – Upgrades / approach.	Access requires upgrade.	Access will be suitable to accommodate the volume and nature of the vehicles anticipated; traffic assessment capable of being undertaken with application.
Water supply.	Suitable access to water required.	Engineering advice will be sought regarding the appropriate access and / or connection to potable supply, although use of water tanks is likely to be a critical element in supplying the site.
Stormwater management.	Potential detrimental impact on downstream properties and/or environment required to be considered.	Engineering advice will be sought; management options will incorporate suitable and environmentally sensitive options and / or 'new' or trial options in various locations as part of the education experience.
Site constraints		
Vegetation	Damage to vegetation to be avoided.	Development proposed within existing cleared areas; 'permanent' buildings and infrastructure not proposed in proximity to mapped vegetation.
Marine plants.	Damage to marine plants.	Development proposed within existing cleared areas; likely to be improvement in marine plant outcomes via revegetation and rehabilitation in degraded areas of the site being incorporated into the education theme proposed.
ASS/PASS	ASS / PASS to be considered and managed	Disturbance to ASS / PASS considered to be less likely with this use, which involves minimal (if any) excavation or fill, compared with rural uses currently undertaken.
Access / infrastructure.	Appropriate access to infrastructure networks required.	Engineering advice is required to support the project; further discussion on the practicalities necessary, initial comment is that a solution is possible.
Storm surge	No increase in risk to people to result from the proposed use.	Operational plans can be prepared to ensure that the site is managed to reduce risk and / or remove patrons from high risk periods or events. Appropriate evacuation strategies and plans will be put in place.
Erosion prone areas	Development in erosion prone area to be avoided.	Buildings to be placed appropriately; most (if not all) infrastructure may be relocatable and / or of a nature capable of being abandoned (e.g. fencing or similar).

Other Matters

Use must be low-key nature based

In principle support is provided only on the basis that the proposed use remains low-key and nature-based. The land, and its location, is not suitable as a general entertainment venue for things such as concerts or major sporting events due to the future development of land nearby as a residential estate and potential amenity conflicts associated with noise generation.

Future residential development

Despite the fact the land is included within the Residential 1 Planning Area; it is quite low-lying and not suitable for residential development. However, land nearby has approvals in place for subdivision into residential estates. Accordingly, in time the land will have house on its northern and western boundaries. This may detract from the 'nature-based' theme of the proposed adventure park.

Andreasson Road / Captain Cook Highway intersection

There is no information in the application relating to the intersection of Andreasson Road and the Captain Cook Highway. This intersection will be upgraded as part of the future residential development on adjoining land and this will involve significant drainage works that will require a realignment of the intersection. The applicants should consult further with the Department of Transport and Main Roads with respect to any expectations of intersection works associated with the proposed use.

Conclusion

Although there are concerns that the land is constrained, the proponent has advised that these constraints can be managed. In a general sense, the proposal has the potential to add to the tourism experience in Douglas Shire by offering an activity that is not presently available in the market.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following area outlines where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

Regulator: Meeting the responsibilities associated with regulating activities through legislation or local law.

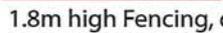
Under the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* and the *Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009*, Council is the assessment manager for the application.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Mowbray Adventure Park – Concept Plans

03/2024

LEGEND

-  Site Circulation
-  Board Walk incorporating Environmental Interpretation
-  1.8m high Fencing, chain mesh.

KEY

- 1 Creek Access
- 2 Connection to wider community
- 3 Zone - Bush Craft, Creative Nature Play Spaces
- 4 Zone - Billabong Day Camp
- 5 Open Field for event / activity flexibility
- 6 Zone - The Tangle Obstacle Course & Climbing
- 7 Zone - Indigenous Culture A special relationship with this unique tropical environment.
- 8 Zone - Mountain Madness Bike Skills & Jump Zone
- 9 Zone - Putt Putt & Golfing Skills
- 10 Lot 90 Central Amenities Structure
- 11 Zone - Festival Fun Circus Talent & Bush Art
- 12 Zone - Child vs Wild Kids Survival Sessions
- 13 Open Field for event / activity flexibility
- 14 Secure Mowbray River Education

Parkland



Existing Vegetation



Proposed Revegetation



PROPOSED ADVENTURE PARK AT MOWBRAY RIVER

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN L2.00 L1506 151123 SC 1:1000 @ A3



MOWBRAY RIVER

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