

## 5.05. NAMING OF HEADLAND 'FOXCROFT POINT'

**REPORT AUTHOR(S):** Susanna Andrews, Property Officer  
**GENERAL MANAGER:** Darryl Crees, General Manager Corporate Services  
**DEPARTMENT:** Governance

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council advises the Department of Natural Resources and Mines that it does not support the naming of a headland situated on land described as Lot 20 on Crown Plan NPW695, on proposed plan QPN1278, in the Daintree National Park located at Kimberley 'Foxcroft Point' in honour of Mr Len Foxcroft, for the following reasons:

1. insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate there is a local historical connection between the nominated point and Mr Len Foxcroft; and
2. an Indigenous Land Use (Area) Agreement for the Eastern Kuku Yalanji ILUA Area exists over the land, between Agnes Walker, Eileen Walker, Hazel Douglas, John Walker Jnr, Peter Fischer, and the Douglas Shire Council. Council considers it more appropriate to allow naming of the point by the ILUA representatives.

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with the *Place Names Act* 1994, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) has requested the Douglas Shire Council's view to the Minister's proposal to name a headland in the Daintree National Park at Kimberley 'Foxcroft Point' to honour the contribution Mr. Len Foxcroft made throughout his life and career as a pilot and skipper of various lighthouse vessels from Mackay to Darwin.

### BACKGROUND

A currently unnamed headland exists on land located in the Daintree National Park at Kimberley, also described as Lot 20 on Crown Plan NPW695, about 110 kilometres north of Cairns, close to Cow Bay. A plan of the location, QPN1278, is attached at Attachment 1.

The Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has proposed to name the headland 'Foxcroft Point' to honour the contribution Mr. Len Foxcroft made throughout his life and career as a pilot and skipper of various lighthouse vessels from Mackay to Darwin. A brief history of Mr. Len Foxcroft, which was supplied DNRM, follows:

#### Len Foxcroft

Len Foxcroft was born in 1923 in Liverpool, England. The family moved to Australia (Williamstown, Victoria) when he was two years old.

At the age of 13, Len finished school and gained an apprenticeship as a marine fitter in the dockyard. In time he became a ship's steam engineer.

In the last year of his apprenticeship he signed on as 4<sup>th</sup> Engineer on the 'George Frederick Holden', a suction dredge which sailed from Melbourne to Cairns in 1941, where the plan was to dredge half of Admiralty Island to make room for the combined fleet of Australian and American naval vessels that were using Cairns as their base during WWII.

However, plans changed when Manus Island in New Guinea became the naval base and Admiralty Island was not dredged at all.

In ensuing years Len returned to Melbourne and travelled the world as an engineer on several steamships.

In 1947 he joined the '*Royal Star*' for a run from London to Australia and back to London. This was his last trip in a steamship. He worked his passage back to Australia on the last commercial sailing ship, the '*Passat*' – a four-masted barque, taking 132 days to do the trip.

After returning to Australia in 1949, he began working his two-masted, gaff-rigged ketch, called '*La Mouette*' – fishing, collecting trochus shells, and running tourists and cargo around the Whitsunday Islands.

In 1953 Queensland newspaper reports praised Len's skill and bravery when he sailed his ketch through high seas and dangerous weather to take a sick child and his mother from Brampton Island to Mackay for emergency medical treatment.

After marrying, he and his wife Carol sailed the '*La Mouette*' to Cooktown where Len worked on the new jetty. From there they moved to Thursday Island where they stayed for the next 15 years.

One of Len's most important contributions was whilst working in the Torres Strait where he instructed his islander crews on navigation, proper seamanship and boat handling of large vessels so that they could get their marine tickets.

His work with them was crucial to the preservation of the reef in many areas, including the Torres Strait.

Len worked as a rigger on the pearling luggers, and also as skipper on local boats running to the outer islands.

He worked for the pilots from 1960 to 1967 when he became skipper of the lighthouse vessel the '*MV Swingle*', later replaced by the '*MV Wallace*', which in turn was replaced by the '*MV Lumen*'. These vessels serviced lighthouses from Mackay to Darwin.

As Master of the '*MV Wallach*', in 1969 while on a run out to Booby Island, he was called to run down to the Hope Islands (off Cooktown) as Cook's cannons had been found and he was to assist with the salvage them.

In 1970 Len assisted in the containment of what was to be known as Queensland's biggest oil spill when the tanker '*Oceanic Grandeur*' struck a submerged object in the Torres Strait.

Being on site in 1972, Len and the '*MV Wallach*' supported the salvaging of the freighter '*Straat Chatham*' which ran aground on Gubbins Reef, south of Cooktown.

Len and family relocated to Cairns in 1974, which had become the base for the '*MV Lumen*'. He remained with the lighthouse service until he retired at 61.

Len Foxcroft died on 6 October 2013.

## **Indigenous Land Use Agreement**

An Indigenous Land Use (Area) Agreement for the Eastern Kuku Yalanji ILUA Area exists between Agnes Walker, Eileen Walker, Hazel Douglas, John Walker Jnr and Peter Fischer and Douglas Shire Council. Consideration should be given to whether it may be more appropriate to allow ILUA representatives to propose a name for the headland.

### **COMMENT**

Following a request for further details, the DNRM has provided Council with substantial information about the life and contribution of Mr Len Foxcroft during his maritime service. The information does not, however, show a specific association with Douglas Shire, or the locality proposed to be named after him.

### **Development Assessment and Coordination**

Development Assessment and Coordination does not see a local history connection between the nominated point and Len Foxcroft. No detail has been provided by the DNRM to demonstrate the local association between Len Foxcroft and Kimberley / Douglas, other than he was a pilot who worked between Mackay and Darwin. Support is not provided to name a local point for someone who is not connected to the Shire or the area.

There is an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) over the land. It would be more respectful to defer naming of the point to ILUA representatives.

### **PROPOSAL**

The Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has proposed to name a currently unnamed headland that exists on land located in the Daintree National Park at Kimberley, also described as Lot 20 on Crown Plan NPW695, 'Foxcroft Point'. The headland is located about 110 kilometres north of Cairns, close to Cow Bay. Mr Len Foxcroft made a significant contribution to the maritime industry throughout his life and career as a pilot and skipper of various lighthouse vessels from Mackay to Darwin.

However from the information supplied there does not appear to be any historical connection to the Douglas Shire Council area and considering this land is subject to an ILUA, it is deemed appropriate that the ILUA representatives be consulted in naming this headland

### **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial or resource implications in regard to the proposal.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications in regard to the proposal.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

**Economic:** There are no economic sustainability implications.

**Environmental:** There are no environmental sustainability implications.

**Social:** As there is an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) in force over the land, it may be more appropriate to defer to ILUA representatives to suggest a name for the point.

## **CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

### **Corporate Plan 2014-2019 Initiatives:**

#### **Theme 5 – Governance**

*5.2.1 – Provide Councillors and community with accurate, unbiased and factual reporting to enable accountable and transparent decision-making.*

## **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 areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

**Agent** Delivering a programme or activity for another organisation  
(usually another level of government)

## **CONSULTATION**

**Internal:** Development Assessment and Coordination

**External:** The Department of Natural Resources and Mines advertised the proposal in the Queensland Government Gazette on 22 May 2015 and the Port Douglas and Mossman Gazette on 28 May 2015.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 - Department of Natural Resources and Mines request for comment, including map



Proposal to name  
a geographical feature

as

# FOXCROFT POINT

within Douglas Shire Council



Feature Name	Feature Type	Latitude	Longitude
Foxcroft Point	Point	145°28'49" E	16°14'33" S

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### LEGEND



Comments on this proposal may be lodged in writing with  
The Executive Director  
CI- The Cartographer  
Spatial Information Services (Townsville)  
Planning Services North  
Department of Natural Resources & Mines  
North Region  
PO Box 5318 Townsville QLD 4810  
within TWO months of the date of the Proposal Gazette

Prepared by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines to show proposed place names and boundaries under the provisions of the Place Names Act 1994.

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The base information shown on this plan was derived from the Digital Cadastral Database (extracted December 2014)

Notings Data Base reference: 15N105



# Proposed Plan QPN1278

