

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 29 July 2026 4:58 PM
To: Enquiries
Subject: Wonga beach submission

Re: Development Application CA 2025_5878 – Wonga Beach Resort, 18 Oasis Drive, Wonga Beach

Dear Councillors and Planning Officers,

I write in strong support of the proposed Wonga Beach Resort development at 18 Oasis Drive, Wonga Beach.

Our family has lived in the Douglas Shire for more than 30 years and has raised our three children in Wonga Beach where they attended Wonga Beach State School and Mossman High School. As a family we have been involved in a wide range of community, sporting and business roles-including Wonga Beach State School P & C, Port Douglas Junior Crocs AFL, Port Douglas Surf Lifesaving, Douglas Chamber of Commerce, LIPs, and numerous other community stakeholder groups and businesses within the private sector.

Over that time, my family has witnessed both the strengths and challenges of our local economy, particularly the ongoing need to diversify and strengthen tourism opportunities beyond Port Douglas while protecting the unique natural values that make our region so special.

Having reviewed the Oasis Drive proposal, I believe this development represents an outstanding opportunity for Wonga Beach, the wider Douglas Shire, and Far North Queensland.

Economic Benefits and Employment Opportunities

One of the most compelling aspects of this proposal is its potential to generate significant economic activity for the region. The construction phase alone will create employment opportunities for local tradespeople, contractors, suppliers, and service providers. Once operational, the resort will provide a range of ongoing jobs across hospitality, tourism, maintenance, administration, wellness services, food and beverage operations, and cultural tourism experiences, which is so very much needed to retain our youth in the region.

Importantly, these opportunities will benefit not only Wonga Beach residents but also people from Mossman, Daintree, Port Douglas, Cairns, and surrounding communities.

Regional economies thrive when there is investment confidence. This proposal sends a positive message that Douglas Shire remains a destination worthy of significant private investment and innovation.

Supporting the Future of Tourism in Douglas Shire

Tourism remains the lifeblood of our region, yet most locals recognise that our tourism sector has faced significant challenges over recent years. We believe the Shire needs fresh new, high-quality tourism products that attract visitors seeking premium experiences while complementing, rather than competing with, existing tourism offerings.

The application proposes a luxury eco-tourism and wellness destination featuring accommodation, conference facilities, wellness experiences, dining opportunities and cultural interpretation experiences. The development is specifically designed to attract visitors seeking nature-based, wellness-focused and environmentally conscious travel experiences. These are precisely the types of experiences increasingly sought by domestic and international travellers.

Such a development would broaden the appeal of the Douglas tourism market and encourage longer visitor stays within the region.

A Gateway to the Daintree and the Great Barrier Reef

Sleepy Wonga Beach occupies a unique position as a gateway between two of the world's most remarkable natural assets—the Wet Tropics rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef. Nestled between the mountains and the Coral Sea, Wonga Beach offers visitors an authentic Far North Queensland experience that is becoming increasingly rare in a world of crowded tourism destinations and overdeveloped coastlines.

Modern travellers are increasingly seeking immersive experiences that connect them with nature, culture, wellness and a genuine sense of place. This development has the potential to showcase the northern part of the Douglas Shire to a global audience while encouraging visitors to explore the wider region, support local businesses, and discover attractions beyond the traditional Port Douglas tourism hub.

Importantly, this proposal has the potential to place Wonga Beach firmly on the tourism map without sacrificing the relaxed character and natural beauty that residents value so highly. Unlike large-scale urban-style developments, the resort's eco-tourism and wellness focus appears well suited to the tranquil nature of the locality. Rather than changing the identity of Wonga Beach, it has the potential to celebrate and enhance it, attracting visitors who appreciate the area's unique environmental and lifestyle qualities.

As long-term residents, we also recognise the historical significance of this site within the local community. Many residents fondly remember when the Redbacks Hotel/Motel operated on the same site. For years, Redbacks served not only as accommodation for visitors but also as an important social and community hub. It provided a venue for functions, meetings, celebrations and informal gatherings, as well as facilities including a swimming pool, tennis courts and a local shop. It was a valuable source of employment opportunities for locals, including myself and my wife. It was a place where residents connected with one another and where visitors could engage with the local community.

The closure of Redbacks left a noticeable gap in both community infrastructure and visitor services. Since that time, the site has remained significantly underutilised despite its prominent location and enormous potential. This proposal offers an opportunity to breathe new life into a site that has long been recognised as an important focal point for Wonga Beach.

A development of this calibre would not only restore activity and purpose to the site but also create a destination that reflects the aspirations of a modern tourism market while respecting the area's history and character. It would provide a welcoming first impression for visitors entering the northern part of the Shire and reinforce Wonga Beach's role as a natural gateway to the Daintree Coast, the rainforest and the reef.

For these reasons, I believe this proposal represents an exciting and appropriate evolution of a site that has historically played an important role in community life and has the potential to do so again for future generations.

Environmental Leadership and Sustainability

As long-term residents, my family is deeply protective of our natural environment. We therefore appreciate that the proposed resort has been designed around sustainability principles and environmental responsiveness.

The application outlines a climate-positive approach incorporating green roofs, solar integration, natural ventilation, low-impact construction methods and careful consideration of coastal processes and resilience. The proposal also seeks to maintain and enhance landscape values while integrating the development within the natural setting.

I believe developments that actively embrace environmental leadership should be encouraged. This proposal demonstrates that economic development and environmental responsibility can coexist.

Supporting Douglas Shire's Green Credentials

Douglas Shire has long promoted itself as a destination where nature, sustainability and tourism work together. This development embodies those values.

A world-class eco-resort with strong sustainability credentials has the potential to become a showcase project not only for the Shire but for Queensland and Australia. It demonstrates how future tourism developments can be designed to respond to climate challenges while creating economic opportunities and enhancing visitor experiences.

Wellness Tourism and Cultural Tourism Opportunities

The inclusion of wellness facilities, interpretive experiences and opportunities for cultural engagement reflects global tourism trends and helps diversify the local visitor economy.

The proposal's emphasis on wellness experiences and First Nations cultural interpretation creates opportunities for meaningful visitor engagement while supporting the growing demand for authentic and enriching travel experiences.

These elements distinguish the development from traditional resort models and strengthen its potential to attract high-value visitors.

A Landmark Development for Wonga Beach

For many years, the site has remained underutilised despite occupying a highly visible and strategically important location within Wonga Beach.

The proposed development represents a thoughtful and ambitious vision for the site. Rather than a conventional tourism project, it seeks to create a destination that reflects the environmental, cultural and natural values of the Douglas Shire.

We believe it would become a landmark development that the community can be proud of.

Conclusion

After living in this region for more than 30 years and raising our family here, I understand the importance of balancing environmental protection with economic opportunity.

In my view, the proposed Wonga Beach Resort achieves that balance. It offers significant economic and employment benefits, strengthens the tourism sector, supports sustainability objectives, promotes wellness and cultural tourism, and has the potential to elevate the profile of Wonga Beach and the broader Douglas Shire on both national and international stages.

I respectfully urge Douglas Shire Council to support and approve this application.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

On behalf of a long-term Wonga Beach resident 
Residents of Douglas Shire for 30 years