



Williams Development Garners Beach—11 lots on 8.5 hectares—Rural/conservation/remnant vegetation/essential cassowary habitat/ habitat/corridor

It is with great disappointment that the development of 11 residences at the end of a dirt road in an undeveloped area which has a very high biodiversity associated with the varied land forms and ecosystems has passed the local and state approval process.

An upgrade of the dirt road access will greatly diminish a pride of the local residents and the reason for Garners Beach to be considered one of the unspoiled areas at Mission Beach.

The narrow beach road represents some of the best critically endangered littoral rainforest occurring along the coast which will require substantial disturbance to comply with the condition for a road upgrade.

The section of road has very low and slow traffic use and is one of the few beaches left in the Mission Beach area where cassowaries are often sighted.

Determining this development would have offered the opportunity for the CCRC to show their commitment to understanding the importance for constraint in development and consideration for the natural values as outlined in the FNQ 2031 Plan.

Local government has discretionary powers and there are options available under the present planning schemes if a Council has the will to use them

The Council minutes don't mention any discussion that may have been entered into by Councillors before the planning officer's recommendations were accepted and voted on.

C4 believes this development will cause serious environmental harm and will have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance.

The controversy surrounding this development site dates back more than 20 years when the hill tops were being removed and dumped onto the wetland below creating two unstable areas adjacent to steep adjoining roads.

The proponents of this development continually refer to the cleared area as a quarry. There was never a registered quarry at this location.

The current dwellings on the lot being presented as a template for the rest of the development gained an award partially because of the claim to have rehabilitated a quarry site.

A development was proposed on the pre-emptively cleared site in the early 1990's. C4 challenged the 'Cofordo' proposal in court on the grounds that the Johnstone Shire Council should have

called for an Environmental Impact Assessment given the high ecological values of the site and surrounding area.

A lot of scientific evidence was produced supporting the value of the site despite the clearing that had taken place.

The proponents withdrew their application and the lot was left to nature until the present owners' occupation. The rainforest canopy had closed over the majority of the disturbed areas except where the excavation had left bedrock clearings. (Fig 1).

Cassowaries were regularly seen on the lot and on the small beaches that could only be accessed by walking over the knoll because of the steep cliffs on both sides of the lot.

Incremental loss, of natural areas at Mission Beach, otherwise known as death by a thousand cuts, continues through private insensitivity or developments such as this and the two featured on the opposite page.

They can all be graphically shown to result in substantial disturbance and fragmentation of remnant rainforest/essential cassowary habitat. This is quite apart from the negative impacts of significant increase in traffic and people being introduced to presently unoccupied areas.

The Williams development not only puts high density housing into a low density, highly environmentally sensitive area but the style of housing has a **very** large footprint.

An email was circulated amongst the community titled '*Paul and Lynda need your help*' soliciting for support for the development. One claim in the email was;

- Small housing envelopes on cleared land and re-vegetated wildlife corridors around every house blocks; increasing the net habitat.

The existing 'house' consists of three above average sized large dwellings which is stated in the development application to CCRC to be the template for the rest of the development. (Fig 2) The space between any of the house blocks is minimal and considering access, garages, etc could not be called wildlife corridors.

The email can be viewed at C4 for anyone interested.

The approved 11 lots and infrastructure will occupy all the level ground on the lot and any planting of fruiting trees around the dwellings will attract cassowaries into a threatening environment.

It will be virtually impossible for cassowaries to move over the lot to access the beaches they have traditionally foraged without encountering roads, people and all the invasive elements and noise associated with everyday activities, recreation and maintenance.



Fig 1 2005 Pre cyclone Larry



Fig 2 Current dwellings footprint



Approved Configuration of lots and infrastructure



EPA Remnant vegetation mapping showing unprotected area

The existing group of dwellings is situated at the larger of the destructive landslip areas created by the original clearing that caused a lot of sediment to enter the marine park immediately below.

It is unclear what 'eco efficient' means but low environmental impact this development is not.