



-Community Consultation Report-
Developed by Pip Miller,
Pip Miller PR



March 2018 Report Summary

On 28 October 2017 the Queensland Government announced a proposed Global Tourism Hub (GTH) for Tropical North Queensland.

The Tropical North GTH, including a casino, must be located within a 70km radius of Cairns. The government's preferred site is the Cairns City Port precinct which has the potential to integrate and complement the state's expansion of Cairns Convention Centre.

A regional GTH has potential to deliver a range of tourist related facilities and attractions that not only support the growth of tourism in Queensland, but the wider, Tropical North region; facilitating and maximising broader community benefits that include employment, investment and associated, flow-on developments.

From December 2018, the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development – Special Projects Unit, oversaw a six-week community consultation project undertaken independently by Cairns based consultancy, Pip Miller Public Relations.

This initial consultation program was a structured process integrating a combination of platforms and opportunities to proactively seek and record the views of Cairns residents and its broader community.

This report presents the findings of an independent review and analysis of feedback generated within Tropical North GTH community consultation timeframe (Monday 20



December 2017 to Sunday 11 February 2018) for the Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development (DITID).

This consultation report is developed to inform the Special Projects Unit (DITID) and the potential proponent's going forward with an early understanding of community views.

Tropical North GTH Community Consultation Program

In line with the Tropical North GTH announcement and Registration of Interest (ROI) process, the consultation aim was to inform and engage members of the community and local business with the message "Have Your Say". The consultation utilised the lodgement of feedback and views via a four-page, written/online questionnaire. The collection of responses will assist the State Government in framing its request for GTH proposals for the Tropical North.

Consultation timeline – key dates

28 October 2017

Tropical North GTH announced by former Treasurer, Member for Mulgrave, Curtis Pitt MP in Cairns

20 December 2017

Community consultation commencement announced by new Tourism Industry Development Minister, Kate Jones MP in Cairns

20 December 2017 to 11 February 2018

"Have Your Say" consultation undertaken

15 January 2018

Local MP, Michael Healy announces CBD pop up stall



15 January 2018 to 11 February 2018

CBD ‘Pop Up’ Stall at Cairns Central shopping centre

Engagement Elements of ‘Have Your Say’ Consultation



Pop up at Cairns Central shopping centre

Incorporating a four-page questionnaire which invited the community to lodge feedback, the Tropical North GTH “**Have Your Say**” consultation was communicated and recorded through various channels including:

- Website: www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/major-projects
- Email: tropicalnorthqld@dsd.qld.gov.au
- 1800 100 244 (between 9am and 5pm AEST)
- A CBD pop-up stall at Cairns Central shopping centre operating from Monday 15 January to Sunday 11 February 2018



"Have Your Say" –how the program was promoted

"...a global tourism hub in Cairns would deliver much needed tourism infrastructure for North Queensland"

Honourable Kate Jones MP, Wednesday 20 December 2017

A media announcement on **Wednesday 20 December 2017** by **Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games, Kate Jones** signalled the start of the consultation period and was supported by local newspaper, radio and television news bulletins supported by and a series of public notices in the Cairns Post - the Far North's key daily newspaper.

How the 'Have Your Say' questionnaire was promoted:

- Ministerial Media Statement
- Publicity Cairns Media Outlets – Print, online and broadcast (Radio & TV)
- Department of State Development website
- Public Notices in Local and Major Daily Newspapers
- Tropical North GTH monthly update to subscribers
- CBD Pop Up display at Cairns Central shopping centre
- Industry event at Wharf One Café, Wharf Street Cairns
- Social media cross promotion with Ports North online platforms



Tropical North has its say; Top 5 wants....

1. Long term operational jobs for Cairns and Far North locals
2. Investment in environmental improvement and management
3. Investment in new tourism opportunities for the local area
4. Improved patronage of existing local restaurants and businesses
5. New public open spaces on the Global Tourism Hub site and associated public access

The community response to “Have Your Say”

The structured feedback collected included

- 254 ‘Have Your Say’ online questionnaires
- 349 ‘Have Your Say’ hard copy questionnaires

603 ‘Have Your Say’ submissions received

Additionally:

- 15 ‘Have Your Say’ 1800 number enquiries
- Email submissions from businesses, industry groups and individuals
- Feedback from stakeholder meetings – business community and civic leaders
- Feedback from one invitation-only gathering for business and civic leaders

“Have Your Say” – response location

The vast majority of respondents were from Cairns and/or live in Queensland

- More than 50 per cent of respondents identified as being from the Cairns region



- More than 40 per cent of respondents identified as being from Queensland
- The remainder of respondents either did not indicate location/residence or were interstate or international

“Have Your Say” – what the community said

In a snapshot

Overall, the community showed interest in, and support for, a potential GTH in Cairns on the identified, waterfront site.

Employment and infrastructure are the key priorities for Cairns residents.

In general, the community acknowledged the proposed development would provide significant opportunity for Cairns to become a competitive and world-class tourism destination, contributing not just to the infrastructure, amenity and aesthetics of the waterfront, CBD but to the city and region's economy.

Clearly a majority of respondents support the proposal for a GTH, there were varying views with regards to the waterfront development and its use in terms of current shipping and marine operations, open space for leisure and recreation and building density. There were mixed views on the use of the port and on what role, if any, a possible second casino would play within the development scope. Most agreed the location was ideal in potentially integrating with the nearby Cairns Convention Centre, particularly in light of its future expansion.

Key survey findings and consultation observations

- Most people indicated preference for GTH and the economic boost it would offer in terms of construction and jobs



- Preference for development of world-class public space sympathetic to tropical environment along with need for new, quality five to six-star accommodation and CBD revitalisation Note: many respondents cited Singapore's Marina Bay Sands and Brisbane's Queen's Wharf project as ideal and appropriate inspiration for a Tropical North GTH
- Development of marine infrastructure was popular among respondents
- Community identified the need to link GTH with the proposed Cairns Convention Centre expansion
- Preference for low-rise, low-density and innovative 'landmark' architecture that would attract global attention
- Preference for a precinct which celebrates the natural environment and multicultural community, including its Indigenous First Nation Peoples
- Respondents favoured GTH as a catalyst to promote range of activities and quality entertainment offerings in Cairns – particularly that which is free and family oriented; provides opportunity to incorporate a venue/s with capacity to secure large events and 'acts' currently not available
- The desire for incorporating a water park was popular among respondents
- Some respondents indicated a preference for retaining green space along waterfront and the preservation of heritage values
- Respondents expressed need to redevelop casino facilities to a new standard while showing relatively low interest in a second casino
- The environment and its protection, dredging of inlet from both a port operational and environmental perspective, increase in crime rate, unemployment and lack of transport options are key lifestyle/community/social issues raised by respondents requiring attention

Heritage

The redevelopment of the waterfront site provides an opportunity to incorporate existing heritage listed buildings and the Cairns Convention Centre with innovative yet sympathetic uses that reflect the tropical climate and natural environment.



The waterfront and heritage listed Cairns Cruise Liner terminal is valued by the community.

Cairns' cultural heritage is valued by its community with a desire for stronger Indigenous recognition.

Connectivity

Strong support for the GTH with better transport connectivity throughout the CBD, Cairns Airport as well as northern and southern suburbs. Bike paths, light rail, shuttle bus and monorail transport a common 'need'.

Need for better WIFI connectivity.

Public Realm

Need to ensure best practice design and architecture for a tropical waterfront environment with heritage value. Scope for incorporating iconic structure.

Need to incorporate green 'open' spaces which include the community's much-loved Fig-Tree and treehouse playground adjacent Wharf One.

Leisure and Entertainment

Strong support for creating a dynamic, world-class destination in its own right – accessible to all. Integrating leisure and entertainment with accommodation, dining and heritage/cultural attractions.

Waterfront

Most people agree the waterfront site was ideal for development of a GTH providing it incorporates existing heritage buildings and does not impact on, but supports and protects the growth of the port.

Casino

Mixed views about the possibility of a second casino.



Respondents who favoured a casino favoured the upgrade of Cairns' existing Reef Casino into a world-class facility integrating with the GTH.

Civic and Environmental Issues

Concern and care for environment a high priority among respondents namely reef protection, achieving clean energy targets, risks of coal mining and more sustainable, eco-tourism offerings with Indigenous focus (ie park rangers).

Many respondents concerned about current crime rate and considered the prospect of how this would be affected by a GTH.

As above, concerns about parking and current lack thereof – GTH would need to address this issue.

Transport needs to be improved and many keen to see a city-circle service introduced to boost visitors and residents' connectivity to city and surrounds.

Respondents were very aware of port and concerns for its future with many suggesting the dredging needed to be done first before any plans for a GTH are mobilised.

The preservation of the environment, Reef and Rainforest in particular, are key concerns for the community.

General Note

Respondents were pleased with the opportunity to engage and have their say in what is a potential, large-scale development for Cairns.

Many acknowledged they approved and agreed with the consultation process providing opportunity to be informed and submit feedback post the *Aquis at the Great*



Barrier Reef Pty Ltd Integrated Resort Development withdrawal from Yorkeys Knob (August 2016) (which subsequently created some scepticism in community with reference to future large -scale developments).

Most people are open to the prospect of development providing it is managed responsibly and in keeping with protecting the environment and heritage.