



KURANDA
conservation

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13 September 2016

Mr Matthew Dutkiewicz
Director
Compliance Section
Department of the Environment and Energy
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601

Your ref: 2016/7710
KUR-World Proposed Development, Kuranda Qld 4881

We write in support of Nadine O'Brien, Friends of the Earth Far North Queensland's report to you relating to excessive vegetation clearing at the KUR-World site.

Kuranda Conservation's focus is on cassowary conservation, and has been so for decades. Our group represents the Kuranda region on the Cassowary Recovery Team. This is an independent body, assisted by the Wet Tropics Management Authority, which seeks to protect, research and facilitate cassowary recovery across the World Heritage Wet Tropics region. In Kuranda, we collect sightings data and, in conjunction with Terrain NRM, are contributing to a WT regional database and mapping project.

We are able to report sightings of cassowaries on the fringes of the large KUR-World property, several over the last 10 years and two on the north-eastern and eastern side in the last 18 months. We are not able to confirm the presence of cassowaries on the KUR-World property because being private land we have not had access to it. However, since the property is surrounded by cassowary habitat it is reasonable to extrapolate that the birds seen on the perimeter will be moving through it at the very least and possibly using it as habitat.

It is interesting to note that a recent video pitched at Chinese investors promotes cassowaries as a drawcard to the property, along with frogs, lizards and water dragons.

The vegetation clearing that has taken place will have seriously degraded the habitat for all wildlife and the proposals for development would further devastate the land. Apart from resorts and luxury apartments, large-scale residential subdivision is proposed – dogs, roads and people!

From an environmental perspective, the integrity of the WHWTA depends on the quality of its surrounds. The KUR-World development would have a direct impact on this and every precaution needs to be taken to ensure the values of our protected land is preserved. Right now, it is at high risk.

Please keep us in the loop regarding your deliberations and actions in relation to this project.

Jax Bergersen
Secretary/Co-ordinator
Cc: compliance@environment.gov.au

Innovation in Conservation

Innovators are leaders, not followers