



# Innisfail advocate

## State Government gives green light to multi-billion dollar Ella Bay development

# Tick of approval

**HISTORIC:** Queensland Premier Campbell Newman (right) makes the announcement about the Ella Bay development (background). **INSET:** The Ella Bay development plans.

**Pictures:** File



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ELLA Bay developer Rod Lamb has expressed his "total relief" at yesterday's announcement by the Queensland Co-ordinator General, rubber stamping the

much anticipated \$1.4 billion integrated resort development to the north of Flying Fish Point.

In what amounted to nothing less than a glowing endorsement from the State Government, Premier Campbell Newman yesterday called a special press conference in Brisbane to herald what he said was "believed to be the largest ever tourism project to be approved in Queensland".

Mr Newman told journalists that the

advice both he and Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney had received from the Co-ordinator General was that "the proponent has put forward as close as he has ever seen to a model proposal" for the development on the 470ha former cattle station, which is fringed by World Heritage rainforest and magnificent tropical beaches.

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# Developer relieved

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Speaking with the *Innisfail Advocate* immediately following the announcement, Mr Lamb, the chemical engineer turned developer with strong links to Australia's cashed-up mining industry, was clearly overjoyed.

"After seven years of work on it, it's total relief that it's been approved by the Co-ordinator General," Mr Lamb said.

"It's been a long time coming and there were a few compliments that they paid, in terms of being a model project.

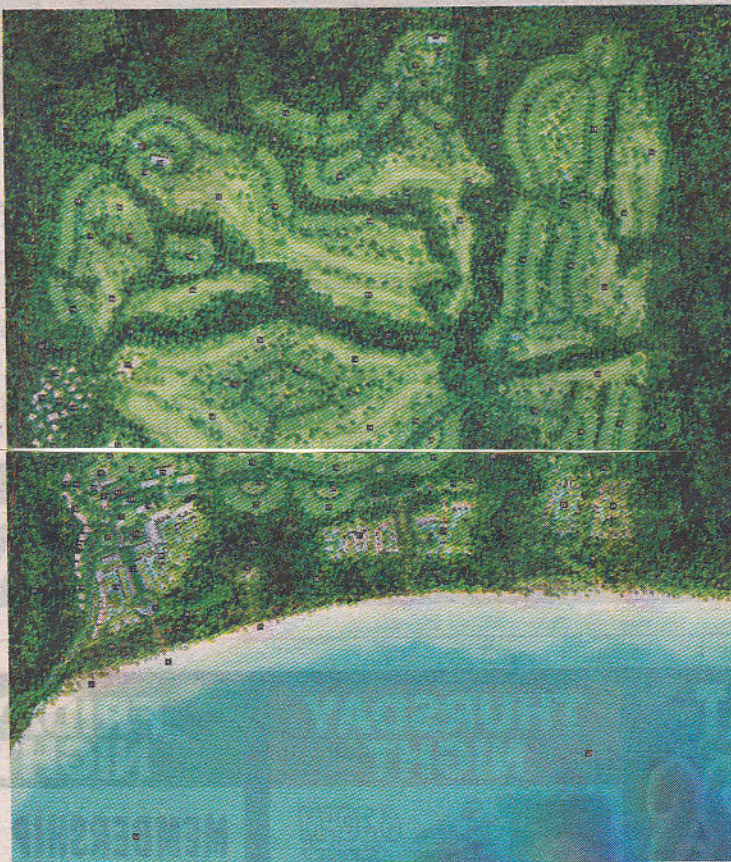
"It's a real compliment to the work that we've done and it obviously recognises the environmental approach that we've taken."

Considered a controlled action under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, the application for the master planned tourism/residential community will now be referred to Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke for final approval within 30 business days.

Mr Lamb was yesterday confident that Mr Burke would look favourably on the project which has already been through an exhaustive environmental impact assessment process as the developer went to great lengths to mitigate environmental harm.

Extensive revegetation with cassowary-friendly fruit trees has already taken place on the site, which will include 155ha of conservation covenant, 58.9ha of setbacks and easements and 62.8ha of land to be transferred to national park.

Yesterday's announcement followed a public meeting in



**PLAN:** A site map of the extensive development at Ella Bay.

Innisfail in September where strong support was shown for the project that, if approved, could deliver an economic lifeline for the Cassowary Coast's struggling retail sector.

"The main guts of it is the jobs for Innisfail, that's really what will make a big difference," Mr Lamb said.

Mr Lamb, who has previously had interest in the project from Asia, is yet to secure a financial backer for the ambitious multi-resort and golf course development, which is slated to

include resort hotels and holiday villas for about 2000 tourists, in addition to 540 permanent residences, housing up to 1400 people.

He indicated yesterday that federal approval would likely trigger renewed interest in the property which is about 90 minutes south of Cairns International Airport.

"We are working on that, there will still be the Commonwealth process to go and after the Commonwealth process there's council approvals be-



**Rod Lamb**



**Tony Burke**

fore the development application is approved," Mr Lamb said.

"We have been approaching investors who have been interested for some time for a commitment."

The Co-ordinator General's approval includes the proposed bypass road behind Flying Fish Point, which will link Bay Road near Sandfly Creek with Ella Bay Road to the north of the suburb.

The access road will then follow the existing Ella Bay access which would be upgraded to cater for up to two-way traffic flow of 4000 vehicles a day.

Picture: Supplied