

TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

“Protecting the quality of living on Tamborine Mountain”

The Assessment Manager
Scenic Rim Regional Council
PO Box 25
Beaudesert Qld 4285

17/12/2017

Dear Sir,

Re: Development Application MCBd15/068 Tourist Cabins (4 Cabins)
43 Justin Avenue Tamborine Mountain

Tamborine Mountain Progress Association Inc. submits that this application should not be approved in its current form.

Council is being asked to assess a proposal that purports to be a new style of tourist accommodation for Tamborine Mountain, claimed to have been designed to achieve the highest of standards, but so little detail is given of what is envisaged that a proper assessment cannot be made.

The developer must have some knowledge of what is intended yet, if approved, future compliance for the new structures will consist of there being a floor and a canvas covering, a water tank and a sullage tank. It should not be left to Council to specify the minimum requirements of the internal fittings.

In the Overall Outcome for a Tourist Cabin the first requirement is that it be self-contained. There is no indication of how this requirement is to be met in the three tent “cabins”. There is just an indicative open space – even the size of the floor is undetermined.

“The final configuration of the tents are still to be decided, depending on the specifications of the supplier. The external footprint of these semi-permanent structures however will be in the range of 100m² to 120m². The internal area will not exceed 120m².”

Probable solution S2.2 of the Tourist Cabin Code provides that each cabin has a maximum gross floor area excluding verandahs of 100m². The larger floor space puts the application in conflict with the Planning Scheme with no justification of need having been provided.

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Whilst email advice has been received that the developer confirms the internal space will not exceed 100m² that is not what is in the application and the developer should have been advised and known of probable solution S2.2. before making the application.

In the same email advice it is said:

“these are tents and do not have floor plans like a permanent building”.

A decision will need to be made at some stage as to what facilities will be installed and where. Why should it not be made before the application is submitted so that persons considering the application can know what facilities and what type of facilities will be included.

What are the elements which are considered to define the experience “glamping” in this particular development? Will there be showers / spas, an indoor gas/electric stove or an external BBQ, a sink or basin for washing up with running water? What form, if any, will there be of internal heating or cooling? Is it anticipated that electric lighting will be used or lanterns? Will electricity be supplied to the tents?

It is also asserted in the email that:

“The very scale and number of cabins is a limiting factor in the number of persons that can be accommodated.”

Given that the floor space is equivalent to a small home without the constraints of fixed walls there is no reason to assume that a group of people would not choose to “glamp” together rolling out their swags on the floor.

The whole site of the development is recognised as an area of landslide hazard. The Letter of Comment from Warwick Wilmott – 11/10/2011 - describing the deep-seated rotational slides that can and have occurred on the site indicates that the questions are when and how big future slides will be rather than whether there will be further landslides.

Within the Geotechnical Investigation Report there is an emphasis on the lightweight structures of the “tents” but no mention of the weight of the accompanying rainwater tanks or how they are to be dealt with, e.g. whether they are to be raised or resting on the ground. There is also the warning:

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“The selected sites are located within areas subject to possible landslip, especially following periods of heavy and prolonged rainfall. Selective location of sites, adopting suitable structures and installing drainage controls is a way of managing and mitigating the risk of landslip. This risk however can never be totally removed.”

It would seem the developer has chosen to use semi-permanent “glamping” structures as a cover for the inadvisability of building conventional cabins on the site.

If Council does approve this application, a minimum requirement would be that the earlier development application is withdrawn. Council should also clarify its requirements for the facilities which are to be provided and the maximum numbers of guests per tent at any one time. Whilst the current owner may have the best will to provide a superlative experience, the property will inevitably change hands and Council and residents should be secure in knowing what is allowed for on the site.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Peat". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Peat
Honorary Secretary