

Submission re: North Byron Parklands Trial and Expansion Proposal

Dear D.O.P.E.,

I oppose the ongoing development at North Byron Parklands for the following reasons:

- **Visual Impact.**

Can be seen lit up like the mothership from significant stretch of Wooyung Rd. Presents as a large, extremely bright dome of light.

- **Flood Risk Assessment.**

Comments such as “safe, but undesirable” for pedestrians to walk through floating cars suggest that they are not taking the risk particularly seriously and think a flood in this area would be a gently rising lake instead of the raging Amazonian mega river that I witnessed during the 2017 flood, (at Crabbes Creek). Evacuation plans are laughable as the whole area is cut off during major flood events.

- **Fire Hazard**

As reported by residents of Jones Rd, no fire reduction measures have been implemented despite promises and assurances.

- **Waste Management**

The rubbish and excrement of 50,000 people a few times a year is far more than this area can handle.

- **Road and Traffic management.**

Causes traffic jams, delays and disruptions on the main arterial road for the area. Causes local roads to be closed to the public.

- **Pollution.**

Undoubtedly high levels of pollution from large amount of vehicles, and generators. Litter, although cleaned up as much as possible by NBP, will find its way into creek systems and surrounding bushland.

- **Noise pollution.**

During SITG 2014, I was kept awake for 3 consecutive nights due to concert noise. It was not good for my health.

- **Pedestrians.**

Presents extremely high risk as pedestrians walk along a major arterial, often intoxicated, no footpaths, weaving around parked cars. NBP makes a point of insisting no parking along that stretch of Tweed Valley Way and no pedestrian access in an effort to absolve themselves of any responsibility. But just requesting this does not stop people from doing it anyway.

- **Evacuation plans and Emergency Access.**

Could not have chosen a more remote and difficult to access piece of land. Situated a long way from any sort of Medical, Emergency or Support Services. Can be completely cut off during flooding.

- **Possible Gymkhana use.**

Risk of Zoonotic (animal to human) disease transfer by dust-born particles from dried faeces. To use the same site for horses, then 50,000 people is utterly irresponsible, especially since zoonotic diseases can be fatal to humans.

- **Unstable Land.**

Carpark built on peat bog. Local tipper driver told of dumping endless amounts of gravel that just sank into the ground. The idea of increasing land height to minimise flood impact is a truly mind-bogglingly selfish idea that will play havoc with the water table and cause flooding in other areas.

- **Biodiversity.**

It does not need a report to know that large crowds of people, loud music and bright lights frequenting the area many times a year, will have an impact on the neighbouring local wildlife inhabiting what is supposed to be a Nature Reserve.

The biodiversity report details an extreme decline in a local flying fox population which can be taken as an indicator for the effect these festivals are having on our wildlife.

- **Heritage.**

Area contains many bora rings. Bora rings are sacred and dangerous.
Adjacent to 2 dedicated Nature Reserves – Natural Heritage under threat.

- **Local Residents.**

Disruptions to locals is already unfair and will only increase with more events. Some are effectively under house arrest during events. Bribed with free tickets and promises. Local access roads blocked off creating a barrier that makes the entire area off limits to locals and other visitors.

Most local community and conservation groups are opposed to NBP.

- **Investment.**

\$25 million seems an excessive and over-confident investment in a trial. NBP seems to be bullying, bulldozing and forcing its way into ownership of land that is strikingly unsuitable for the proposed purposes. This is a rural area, not the Gold Coast. A 24hr bar is not high on our priorities. Most of us are deeply concerned with conservation and environmental issues. Many promises have been made about supporting the natural environment and giving back to the community but little delivered.

- **Foreign Ownership.**

NBP was bought by USA company Live Nation five years ago. Thinly disguised land takeover by American interests?

- **Bribery and soliciting support.**

There are many local stories of residents being bribed to accept NBP operations. Also it is obvious the NBP has run a campaign of drumming up support from festival attendees, many of whom live far away in Melbourne or W.A., who have no knowledge of, or regard for, this area. This is basically trying to rig the public consultation process with once again quantity over quality, (see sheer volume of reports: I printed them out. It took over 3 reams of paper, an absolute plethora of material containing much froth, fawning and filibuster).

- **Drugs.**

Festival events are notorious for drug use. For all the Risk Management Plans in the world, people on drugs are often unmanageable and reckless. We are already dealing with the ice epidemic, (popular in Byron Bay as reported recently in local paper as being significantly cheaper here than in Sydney).

Events like these encourage, promote and facilitate drug use.

Of particular concern, I think, is the arrest of an older male giving drugs to a young girl...

In conclusion.

It seems that NBP are doing all they can to change and force this area to suit themselves regardless of how impractical, unsuitable, downright ridiculous and/or dangerous.

The reports are so full of gloss and supportive language that they seem neither independent or unbiased.

Crowds of 50,000 (half the MCG capacity) on land that's remote and without the capability/infrastructure/adequate planning to handle such a massive number of people is reckless, and a tragedy in the making.

Although the idea of a festival site is nice enough, the current site is not safe, or appropriate for this scale of enterprise. The investment, infrastructure, building and changing of the area to accommodate NBP's vision of Music/Convention/Gymkhana/Community Festivals is excessive and suspicious. Surely there are many other sites that could suit these purposes better with less disruption and upheaval for locals, and proper capabilities for handling the issues outlined above.

Please do not approve the NBP proposals.

Yours Sincerely,

G. Webb.

Burringbar, 2483

(Please withhold name)