



WHITSUNDAY CONSERVATION COUNCIL

Caring for the future is in our nature

Email: admin@whitsundayconservation.org.au

www.whitsundayconservation.org.au

Contact: Secretary 0407 207 441

email: mayor@wrc.qld.gov.au

28 September 2022

Dear Mayor Julie Hall,

RE: Proposed WHITSUNDAY HEART OF THE REEF DISCOVERY CENTRE (WHRDC)

To begin, the executive of the Whitsunday Conservation Council (WCC) would like to congratulate you on your recent appointment as Mayor of the Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC) and look forward to working with you and council to protect, maintain and enhance the natural and build environment of our wonderful Whitsunday region.

To continue, WCC respectfully requests a meeting with you to bring to your attention the above project, WHRDC, which was initiated by the WCC in a presentation to former Mayor Willcox in council chambers on 21 March 2021. Mayor Willcox encouraged us to canvas for popular support.

Letters and registers of community and organisational support are attached.

This we did and our presentation to the Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, Minister for Tourism et al met with enthusiasm and support.

Since then, a grant was obtained by WRC and EarthCheck were commissioned to prepare a feasibility report of the proposed WHRDC; the WRC established the WHRDC Strategic Board; and Dr. Lindsay Simpson, WCC committee member, was appointed to this Board.

Recently the WRC ran a public consultation via the "Have Your Say" of EarthCheck's "Heart of the Reef Discovery Centre Market Sounding Report" and it is this report and what appears to be a lack of focus on a stand alone Reef Discovery Centre that members of the WCC WHRDC subcommittee would like to urgently discuss with you.

At this meeting we would like to make a short PowerPoint presentation of our original concept for the WHRDC and discuss the long term aims of this project.

While EarthCheck's options such as light shows, a virtual discovery centre and such have merit, we contend that the establishment of a world class Reef Discovery Centre in Whitsunday should be supported and promoted by the WRC.

WCC accepts that such a facility will be an expensive long-term project, but with foresight and support from WRC and State and Federal governments the proposed stand-alone WHRDC will attract visitors to Whitsunday and promote citizen science projects, education, conservation, research and protection of the Great Barrier Reef. It will also provide long term employment for our community.

WCC WHRDC subcommittee members, Dr Lindsay Simpson and Faye Chapman look forward to meeting with you, and possibly Mr. Gary Warrener – WRC Economic Development Manager, as soon as conveniently possible.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Secretary
Whitsunday Conservation Council
0407 207 441

