



## COMMISSION PUTS STRICT CONSENT CONDITIONS ON PERMANENT HOME FOR FALLS, SPLENDOUR

13 March 2019

The popular Falls and Splendour in the Grass Festivals have a permanent home after the state's Independent Planning Commission (IPC) today signed-off on a \$42-million development application for North Byron Parklands.

But the Commission has put in place strict conditions of consent to address residents' concerns about crowd numbers, noise, traffic and sewage and wastewater management – and to achieve appropriate environmental and social outcomes.

Billinudgel Property Pty Ltd (the Applicant) lodged a state significant development application with the Department of Planning & Environment for the ongoing use of the site on Tweed Valley Way, Yelgun, for up to 20 event days per year.

It had previously received approval from the former Planning Assessment Commission to host outdoor events there on a trial basis for five years.

Under the proposal:

- Falls Festival and Splendour in the Grass could continue to be held over a maximum of five days each. Total maximum daily patron numbers would rise to 35,000 and 50,000 respectively – the latter being a staged increase, conditional on the applicant demonstrating its management and mitigation measures are effective
- the Parklands could also host three 'medium' event days for up to 25,000 patrons per day; five 'small' event days for up to 5,000 patrons per day; and two 'minor' day-long community events for up to 1,500 patrons, and
- an administration building, conference centre, road and transport infrastructure and other amenities would be built within the Parklands to support the staging of events on site.

The Department referred the matter to the Commission for determination after receiving 7,204 submissions – 118 of those were objections, including from Byron Shire Council and Tweed Shire Council.

IPC Chair, Professor Mary O'Kane AC, appointed a three-member panel, comprising Professor Richard Mackay AM (Panel Chair), Ms Catherine Hird and Mr Andrew Hutton, to scrutinise the application.

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They met with the Applicant, Department and representatives of both Councils, and inspected the site and surrounding area. A public meeting was held in Ocean Shores in December last year to listen to the community's views.

After carefully considering all the evidence, the Commission has today (Wednesday 13 March 2019) determined to approve the application, subject to conditions.

"The Applicant has demonstrated throughout the five-year trial period that it can adequately manage outdoor events for up to 35,000 people at the site – including trialling, monitoring and refining a range of measures to manage and mitigate impacts associated with development, which have resulted in overall improvements in amenity and a reduction in complaints from local residents," the Commission concluded.

The Commission also found the:

- proposed staged increase in patron numbers is appropriate... subject to the Applicant implementing the required mitigation measures
- predicted traffic impacts are acceptable and appropriate traffic management will be in place, and
- proposed noise impacts and management measures are acceptable because appropriate noise limits are included in the conditions of consent, and the Applicant will be required to prepare and implement a noise management plan and monitoring program for large and medium outdoor events

The Commission noted the Applicant had withdrawn a proposed on-site wastewater and sewage treatment system.

In concluding that the application is in the public interest, the Commission stated: "The development will continue to deliver a unique tourism experience that will generate positive economic and social benefits, including local employment opportunities."

The conditions imposed by the Commission seek to prevent, minimise and/or offset adverse social and environmental impacts; set standards and performance measures for acceptable environmental performance; require regular monitoring and reporting; and provide for the ongoing environmental management of the development.

**The Commission's full Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:**

<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2018/11/north-byron-parklands-cultural-events-site-ssd-8169-and-mp-09-0028-mod-5>

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