

KUR-World

Introduction

Chapter 1.0

Environmental Impact Statement



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Abbreviations used in this chapter are as follows:

Abbreviation	Meaning
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EBPB Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
EP Act	<i>The Environmental Protection Act 1994</i>
EPPs	Environmental Protection Policies
EP Regulation	The Environmental Protection Regulation 2008



Abbreviation	Meaning
FNQ	Far North Queensland
IAS	Initial Advice Statement
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
SDPWO Act	<i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>
TOR	Terms of Reference



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

The proposed KUR-World Integrated Eco-Resort (KUR-World) development aspires to be the premier integrated Eco-Resort and business destination in Northern Australia, catering for both international and domestic tourism markets and providing employment and commercial opportunities for Kuranda and Tablelands residents, with economic benefits also flowing to the wider region. The KUR-World experience will focus on the appreciation and protection of the site's natural and cultural assets, as well as those of the surrounding Atherton Tablelands and Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. It will deliver a combination of day experiences, short term and permanent residential options (including education), recreation, wellbeing, nature-based and rural activities.

The project site comprises 10 titles on 648.3ha and currently comprises pasture land, recent regrowth, open woodland and rainforest.

The KUR-World Integrated Resort will encompass the following themes:

1. Eco-Tourism
2. Education and Business
3. Health and Wellbeing
4. Adventure and Recreation

The objective of this draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is to ensure that all relevant environmental¹ impacts and benefits of the proposed KUR-World integrated Eco-Resort (KUR-World) have been identified and assessed. This document also recommends mitigation measures to avoid and/or minimise potential impacts and demonstrates that the project is based on sound environmental principles and practices. This draft EIS is the main source of information on KUR-World for the public. All the information contained in this document and its appendices assist the Australian and Queensland State Governments to assess the impacts of the project on the environment can be managed.

The proponent engaged specialist and local consultants to identify the environmental values, potential impacts and opportunities associated to the project site (Refer to Table 1-1). All members of the project team assisted with strategies to minimise and mitigate potential impacts to ensure KUR-World is based on sustainable principles.

Table 1-1: EIS project team and area of expertise

Specialist/Consultant	Project specialisation
ARUP	Infrastructure/Wastewater/Traffic/Waste/Energy/Power
Dr Åsa Ferrier and Alice Buhrich	Indigenous Cultural Heritage/Cultural Heritage Management Plan
Cardno	Legislative Approvals and Permits/Planning/Visual amenities

¹For the purposes of the EIS process, 'environment' is defined in Schedule 2 of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 (SDPWO Act) and includes social and economic matters.



Specialist/Consultant	Project specialisation
Cummings Economics	Economic Impact Assessment
Hopgood Ganim Lawyers	Native Title/Cultural Heritage Management Plan
Dr Justine Thorp	Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage
Mr. Mark Lawson (Develop North)	Project Management
Natural Resource Assessments (NRA) and various sub-consultants	Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Disaster Solutions	Hazards, Health and Safety Impact Assessment
Sustainable Solutions Global (SSG)	Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement

The project team worked closely with the proponent to identify impacts, constraints and mitigation strategies which resulted in significant changes to the original master plan provided in the Initial Advice Statement (IAS). These modifications include changing the golf course configuration, including “no go” areas set aside as frog habitat, relocation and reconfiguration of the campus and luxury villas, among others.



Figure 1-1: Master Plan included in the Initial Advice Statement

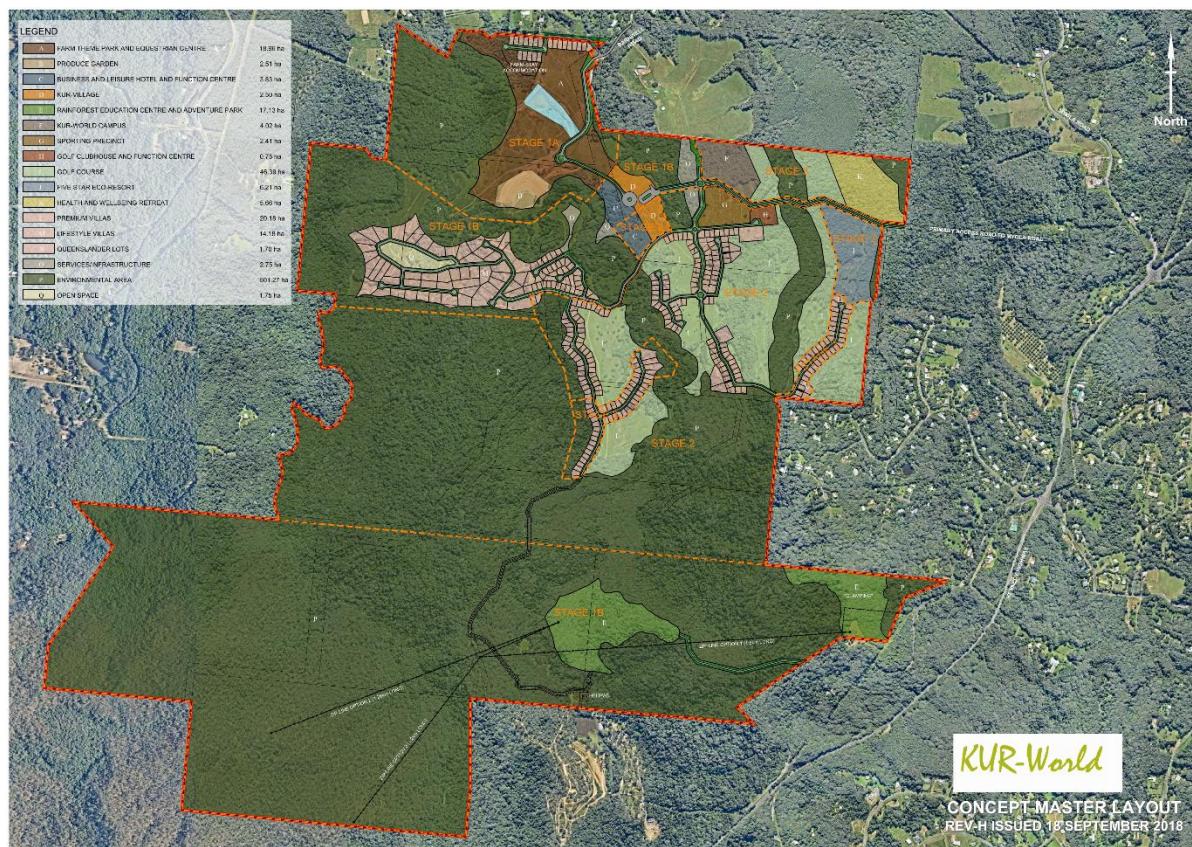


Figure 1-2: Current Master plan (2018)

Figure 1-1 is the master plan included in the Initial Advice Statement. Figure 1-2 is the current 2018 master plan. Table 4-1 in chapter 4 identifies the differences between the current master plan (revision H) and the master plan provided in the Initial Advice Statement (May 2016). The differences are outlined as follows:

- Introduction of additional environmental protection area, habitat retention areas and waterway buffer zones within the development resulting in about 75% of the site being retained and/or enhanced for environmental purposes.
- Define with boundaries the proposed zoning and precinct uses including open space, recreational areas and environmental areas.
- Structure development layout and boundaries to meet the relevant town planning and engineering guidelines.
- Realignment of the proposed internal roadways to better align with the existing tracks and natural terrain within the development area.
- Relocation of KUR-World Campus and Sporting Precinct from proposed environmental area and closer to proposed access road and major infrastructure.
- Removal of swimming pools from the proposed KUR-World Campus and Student Accommodation.
- Reduction in the footprint of the Five-star Eco-Resort, including the reduction in hard surface pavement, swimming pools and build structure.
- Combination of produce, tropical food and medicinal herb gardens to central Produce Garden location.
- Reconfiguration of the proposed Lifestyle Villa and Premium Villa lots to better align with the natural terrain of the site.

- Introduction of the Queensland Lots at the northern boundary of the site to match the existing style of residential housing adjacent to the site.
- Relocation of the KUR-Village and Business and Leisure Hotel to provide linkage with the proposed Farm Theme Park and Equestrian Centre.
- Reduction in development footprint to about 157.33ha.
- Remove ambiguity from the previous high-level concept master plan through removal of the need of interpretation of the architectural intent documentation and removal of duplicated proposed uses.
- Realignment and relocation of proposed Golf Course to remove overlap with proposed environmental buffers and waterways.
- Redefine proposed Education Centre as Rainforest Education Centre and Adventure Park, removing proposed laboratories.
- Introduction of areas to be revegetated and rehabilitated.
- Co-location of similar and complementary uses.
- Introduction of defined areas for centralised infrastructure uses.

KUR-World is designed to appeal to a wide range of market sectors due to its variety of attractions, some of which are not currently available in the region. The multiple activities, along with the different accommodation styles, are designed to attract tourists of different age groups, backgrounds and with multiple and diverse interests. KUR-World will be well suited to accommodate high-end, middle-income earning families, single visitors and groups, as well as retired and elderly guests.

The proposed KUR-World development is in Myola, approximately 22 kilometres north-west of Cairns in Far North Queensland (FNQ), at the top of the Kuranda Range. The site is 30 minutes' drive from Cairns International Airport, the entry point for domestic and overseas visitors to Cairns and the wider FNQ region.

Tourism is the third largest export industry in Queensland (behind coal and food)², supporting almost 10% of all Queensland jobs through more than 52,000 tourism businesses (61% of those in regional areas)³. Increasing numbers of international (+11.3%) and domestic visitors (+5.7%) to Queensland and the Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2016–2020 create a unique opportunity for KUR-World to participate in the sustainable growth of the region, and to offer an innovative setting with diverse activities for a wide range of visitors

1.2 Co-ordinated project declaration

Reever & Ocean Pty Ltd, the proponent, applied for a coordinated project declaration in May 2016. The Coordinator General found that on environmental grounds, KUR-World is of local (Mareeba, Kuranda, Myola), regional (Atherton Tableland, Cairns, Far North Queensland) and State significance, declaring it a coordinated project in July 2016. This declaration requires an EIS to be prepared and assessed for the project in accordance with the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act). The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the EIS were issued by the Coordinator-General in October 2016. Chapter 5 (Project approval process) indicates in flow-chart form the key approvals and opportunities for public comment.

² Queensland Statistician's Office Tourism Research Australia. State Tourism Satellite Accounts: 2014–15

³ Tourism Research Australia. State Tourism Satellite Accounts: 2014–15 Tourism Research Australia & Tourism businesses in Australia: June 2011 to June 2015. Australian Bureau of Statistics.



1.3 Description of controlled actions under commonwealth legislation

On 24 May 2016 a Referral was lodged with the *Department of Environment and Energy pursuant to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) to determine whether the project is a controlled action. On 27 June 2016, the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment determined KUR-World to be a 'controlled action' under the EPBC Act, due to the likely potential impacts on matters of national environmental significance (MNES) (reference number EPBC 2016/7710). This means that the following matters must be addressed in a stand-alone section of the EIS to meet both State and Commonwealth impact assessment requirements:

- World Heritage properties
- National Heritage places
- Listed threatened species and communities
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

1.4 Objectives of the EIS

This draft EIS addresses the matters outlined in the final terms of reference (TOR), released on 18 October 2016⁴ by the Coordinator-General under section 30 of the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act). For each stage of the KUR-World project (pre-construction, construction and operation stages), this EIS seeks to:

- Provide information to the public and government assessment agencies about the project to enable informed assessments of the impact of the project.
- Identify and describe the environmental values to be protected according to the relevant legislation.
- Describe the expected benefits and opportunities associated with the project.
- Consider both short and long-term impacts, assess which ones may be irreversible and consider the potential for currently unpredictable impacts.
- Provide relevant baseline information and assess the quality of that information.
- Provide detailed strategies to avoid, minimise and manage any likely impacts.
- Describe monitoring and adaptive management approaches for the impact minimization measures.
- Present feasible alternatives of elements of KUR-World to address potential impacts, with recommendations and justifications.
- Discuss the consequences of not proceeding with KUR-World.
- Assess the extent to which the KUR-World proposal meets policy and legislative requirements at all levels of Government.
- Describe the proponent's public engagement program and report on how feedback from stakeholders has been addressed or incorporated at each stage of the KUR-World project proposal.
- Assess cumulative impacts of different elements of KUR-World over time, including direct, indirect and consequential impacts.
- Provide a detailed list of all the proponent's commitments to implement management measures (including monitoring and evaluation programs).

Overall, the main objective of this draft EIS, is to evaluate the project and its impacts to inform the Coordinator-General and the Department of Environment and Energy in deciding whether the impacts of the project have been assessed and can be managed. Additionally, this document informs stakeholders (government agencies and the community) of the project, its likely impacts on diverse issues of interest and the proposals and management practices that will apply to avoid, minimise, and/or mitigate those impacts. The preparation of this EIS allows the project, as originally proposed in the Initial Advice Statement (IAS), to

⁴ <http://eisdocs.dsdp.qld.gov.au/KUR-World%20Integrated%20Eco-resort/Tor/kur-world-final-tor.pdf>



be modified and refined in response to community and agencies feedback, and the results of different baseline studies, to avoid impacts or minimise and mitigate unavoidable impacts.

1.5 The draft EIS structure

1.5.1 The EIS Process

This draft EIS describes and evaluates the impact of the project on environmental values provided for in the TOR issued by the Coordinator-General in October 2016. In Chapter 5, the 'EIS process flowchart' describes the opportunities for public comment on the EIS and the other steps involved in the evaluation of the impacts of the project by the Coordinator-General and the Commonwealth government.

1.5.2 Terms of reference requirements

Following the finalisation of the Terms of Reference (TOR), the draft EIS identifies and describes the environmental values that must be protected under: *The Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act)⁵; the Environmental Protection Regulation 2008 (EP Regulation); environmental protection policies (EPPs) and any other relevant guidelines including the draft Social impact assessment guideline (2016).

This draft EIS covers short and long-term impacts and states if any relevant impacts are likely to be irreversible. All available baseline information is provided in the EIS and details about the quality of the information. Including, how recent the information is; how the reliability of the information was tested; and any uncertainties.

Detailed strategies for the protection and/or enhancement, of relevant environmental values in terms of outcomes and possible conditions that can be measured and audited are presented. In general, the preferred hierarchy for managing likely impacts is: (a) to avoid; (b) to minimise; and (c) if necessary mitigate.

The impact minimisation measures include ongoing monitoring and proposals for an adaptive management approach. The proposed measures give confidence that, based on current technologies and knowledge, the impacts can be effectively avoided or minimised over the long-term. Feasible alternatives of the project's configuration (including individual elements) that may improve environmental outcomes, including those identified in community consultation, are also provided. Reasons for selecting the preferred option/s and rejecting alternatives are discussed.

This EIS describes any infrastructure alternatives, justified in terms of ecologically sustainable development. Describes energy and water conservation and waste reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery in the context of relevant government policies. It also assesses the extent to which the project meets all policy, statutory and regulatory requirements of local, state and Commonwealth governments. Demonstrates that the project and the predicted outcomes are consistent with current state policies and guidelines. If there is conflict, comments on the government policy merits that support the project are given.

This EIS also describes the public consultation that has taken place and addresses comments from the community and government agencies; and how these comments have been incorporated into the design and outcomes of the project. The engagement processes used to ensure open and transparent communication with stakeholders is described, including the community reference group forums, open days and pop-up stalls. This engagement process considered different environmental factors and the linkages between them.

⁵ Part 3, Division 2, Subdivision 1, section 9
KUR-World Environmental Impact Statement



1.5.3 Critical and routine matters

1.5.3.1 Critical Matters

The following matters are considered critical, have been studied in great detail, peer reviewed when possible and included in management plans dealing with the potential impacts and/or level of concern expressed by the majority of local stakeholders.

Each chapter includes detailed information to enable an informed assessment of the risks and magnitude of impacts and the potential of the project to cause environmental harm and/or environmental nuisance.

The following environmental values are considered in the chapters outlined below:

- Land Use – the extensive nature of the project and change in land use from the surrounding mostly rural residential and urban residential land uses is detailed in Chapter 6.
- Flora and Fauna – the presence of species of National and State Significance has resulted in major changes to the proposed project Concept Master Layout, the inclusion of substantial buffers and other measures which are described in Chapter 8.
- Water Quality – the management of water quality entering and leaving the property; interaction with significant fauna species and surrounding catchments; and management measures are described in detail in Chapter 9.
- Social and Economic – the potential impacts on the surrounding community values, community services and employment opportunities have been studied in detailed as part of extensive and diverse stakeholder engagement activities; and are detailed in Chapter 11.
- Transport – the methodology to assess and address transport impacts has required detailed and iterative agency discussions which are documented in Chapter 13.

1.5.3.2 Routine matters

Other environmental values assessed in the draft EIS include:

- Air – matters of air quality have been considered for the surrounding community and other sensitive receptors; the management measures recommended to avoid impacts are described in Chapter 12.
- Biosecurity – the local presence of introduced plant and animal species which could impact on significant native species and the management of these issues is detailed in Chapter 16.
- Cultural Heritage – the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous history of the proposed project site have been studied by specialists who have provided recommendations and management plans in Chapter 17 to protect the cultural heritage values of the property.
- Hazards, Health and Safety – the assessment of potential hazards, health and safety risks has resulted in a comprehensive set of mitigation and management recommendations for the proposed project which are detailed in Chapter 18.
- Noise and Vibration – the potential impacts of noise and vibration from the proposed project were studied for the surrounding community and other sensitive receptors; and detailed in Chapter 14.
- Water Resources – the source of water for the proposed development, the perceived potential to impact on surrounding land users due to lack of previous information and the management of this critical issue are described in Chapter 10.
- Waste Management – the types of waste and disposal options were studied and recommendations made to align the proposed project with best practice management solutions which are described in Chapter 15.



1.5.4 EIS Submissions

Chapter 5 describes the key stages in the EIS process. EIS comments and submissions must be made in writing and sent to the Coordinator-General (CG) at the address and within the period included in the public notice about the draft EIS.

The CG will provide copies of the submissions to the proponent, which will be required to provide a response to the submissions to the CG. The CG will consider the content of the submission and the response by the proponent to each submission as part of his consideration and evaluation of the impacts of the project on the environment.

Requirements of a public submission:

- Clearly state the matter(s) of concern or interest and list points to help with clarity.
- Reference the relevant section(s) of the draft EIS.
- Provide factual information relied upon and its source.
- If needed, describe any measures that would be appropriate to improve the proposal.
- Provide sketches or diagrams if they assist to clarify the submission.
- Ensure the submission is legible.⁶

The Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning website includes a fact sheet as a guide for a person making a submission⁷

Section 34 of the SDPWO Act provides the right for any person to make a submission to the Coordinator-General about the draft EIS. It states that a submission must be properly made.

Schedule 2 to the SDPWO Act provides a definition of a 'properly made submission':

- (a) Is made to the Coordinator-General in writing; and
- (b) Is received on or before the last day of the relevant submission period; and
- (c) Is signed by each person who made the submission; and
- (d) States the name and address of each person who made the submission; and
- (e) States the grounds of the submission and the facts and circumstances relied on in support of the grounds.

Properly made submissions can also be submitted by mail addressed to:

The Coordinator-General
c/- EIS project manager KUR-World Integrated Eco-Resort
Coordinated Project Delivery
PO Box 15517
City East Qld 4002 Australia

Or by facsimile to (07) 3220 6502

1.5.5 EIS Structure

The EIS consists of this report, Executive Summary, Matters of National Environmental Significance, Environmental and Social Monitoring and Management Plans, plus a volume of Appendices which provides the complete technical evidence used to develop this report.

⁶ Note: Under section 1570 of the SDPWO Act, it is an offence to give the Coordinator-General a document that contains information known to be false or misleading.

⁷ <http://statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/edq/how-to-make-a-submission.html>



The EIS is organised under the following headings to address matters listed in the final ToR, those received during stakeholder engagement on the draft ToR and during public consultation which commenced in October 2016 and concluded in December 2017. Please refer to appendix 0 for a cross-reference between the final ToR and this EIS.

- Executive Summary
- Chapter 1 – Introduction (this Chapter)
- Chapter 2 – Project Proponent
- Chapter 3 – Site Description
- Chapter 4 – Project Description
- Chapter 5 – Project approval process
- Chapter 6 – Land Use
- Chapter 7 – Infrastructure
- Chapter 8 – Flora and Fauna
- Chapter 9 – Water Quality
- Chapter 10 – Water Resource
- Chapter 11 – Social and Economic
- Chapter 12 – Air
- Chapter 13 – Transport
- Chapter 14 – Noise and Vibration
- Chapter 15 – Waste Management
- Chapter 16 – Biosecurity
- Chapter 17 – Cultural Heritage
- Chapter 18 – Hazards, Health and Safety
- Chapter 19 – Matters of National Environmental Significance
- Chapter 20 – Cumulative Impacts
- Chapter 21 – Environmental and Social Monitoring and Management Plans

The appendices are listed in Table 1-2.

Table 1-2: List of Appendices to the Kur-World EIS

Chapter Name	Appendix Number and Name
Chapter 1 - Introduction	Appendix 0 – Terms of Reference: Cross Reference
Chapter 3 – Site Description	Appendix 1 – Soils and Geology
Chapter 4 – Project Description	Appendix 2A – Reference Design Drawings Appendix 2B – KUR-World Plan of Development
Chapter 6 – Land Use	Appendix 3A- Regional Plans Fact Sheet Appendix 3B – Applicable Land Use Definitions Appendix 3C – Visual Impact Assessment Appendix 3D – Native Title Tenure Assessment



Chapter Name	Appendix Number and Name
Chapter 7 - Infrastructure	Appendix 4A – Effluent Irrigation Study Appendix 4B - KUR-World Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Technical Report Appendix 4C – Energy Load Profiles, Space Type Load Profiles and Detailed Operational Waste Forecast
Chapter 8 – Flora and Fauna	Appendix 5 – Flora and Fauna
Chapter 9 - Water Quality	Appendix 6 – Water Quality
Chapter 10 – Water Resource	Appendix 7 - Hydrology
Chapter 11 – Social and Economic	Appendix 8A – Social and Economic Baseline Appendix 8B – Economic Impact Assessment Appendix 8C - Indigenous Community profile Appendix 9 – Stakeholder Engagement Plan Appendix 10 – Regional Supply Capacity Appendix 11 – Stakeholder Engagement Results
Chapter 12 – Air	Appendix 12 – Air Quality Impact Assessment
Chapter 13 – Transport	Appendix 13 – Traffic Modelling Data
Chapter 14 – Noise and Vibration	Appendix 14 – Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
Chapter 17 – Cultural Heritage	Appendix 15 – Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment Appendix 16 – Indigenous Social Issues Paper Appendix 17 – Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management Plan
Chapter 18 – Hazards, Health and Safety	Appendix 18 – Hazards, Health and Safety Assessment Appendix 19 - Flooding Technical Report.
Chapter 19 – Matters of National Environmental Significance	
Chapter 21 – Environmental Monitoring and Management plan	Appendix 20 – Proponent Commitments



1.6 References

The Coordinator General (2016) Draft Social Impact Assessment Guideline.

The Coordinator General (2016) Terms of Reference for an environmental impact statement: KUR-World Integrated Eco-Resort.

