

To: The Independent Planning Commission
Fr: Kathy Norley, President of South Golden Beach Community Association
RE: SSD 8169 North Byron Parklands and MOD3 of the Concept Plan
Date: 10 December 2018 (more added on 20 December)

I made most of these points when I addressed the IPC on 10 December, but there are some here that I did not have time to address that day and two (at the very end) that I added after the hearing. I am sending this so that our concerns will be on the record.

This meeting is about permanency for North Byron Parklands. Some of our members like the festivals. Others would like to see them go elsewhere. But we agree that if any further approvals are given, important issues need to be addressed. I would like to call attention to some of them, stressing that Byron Shire has approximately 14,500 rate payers and a population of approximately 34,000—fewer people than currently-allowed daily attendance at Splendour in the Grass. So we are especially concerned about the proposed *permanency* for this development, a point that many at the hearing did not address.

1. Our local council has been pushed aside with this development. All the power has been held in Sydney, and the Department wants to keep it that way. That's not right. If you give further approvals, our local council should be directly involved in overseeing this development, including compliance. And they need funding for that work, either from the state or from Parklands, and not the paltry amount that is suggested in the Department's Assessment Report. It's important to remember that a multibillion dollar overseas business owns 51% of two of the festivals, and we 14,500 rate payers are struggling to fill our pot holes and maintain the other infrastructure festival-goers use when they are here.

2. When MOD3 was approved in 2016, we were concerned about the number of event days going from 10 to 20 although the additional 10 days were to be for minor, non-music, community events with no more than 1,500 attendees per day. Well, those 10 additional days are now 8 days for festivals with 5,000 to 25,000 people per day and 2 days for minor community events of less than 1,500 people, which may or may not be non-music focused. The Department says there's no increase because the *number of days* is the same as the MOD3 approval, but in fact, this proposal is for a significant intensification! This will overwhelm us.

3. This site should not be given permanency. Most of the traffic to and from the site uses one two-lane road that services the locals to the north and south, trying to get to school, work, errands, appointments, hospitals, etc. The prospect of 50,000 piling onto this road is extremely unnerving.

Communications have failed with 25,000 on site. NBP say they have rectified the situation on their site, but we remain concerned about the burden on our mobile, computer and eftpos for the duration of these festivals, which includes the punters leaving the site and adding to the burden of the networks we use.

Fire and flood are of major concern. But according to this DA, fire and flood plans will be finalized after this DA has been decided. That rationale is terrifying for residents that live near the site.

Rubbish is taken away by contractors but it is appalling what is left behind, and should be outlawed. Some of it goes to different charities but not the majority. This is adding to the waste that our governments are now trying to cut down.

Healthwise, this is a pandemic waiting to happen. We have a saying after Splendour, it's called the "Splendour Flu" and the "Splendour bug". When swine flu was raging in Australia we got it here after Splendour. Our health services went down and our community was hit quite severely.

4. The plans to dispose of human waste on the site are of great concern to us. The property is right next to SEPP Wetlands, a critically important Nature Reserve, and other areas of high value vegetation. Our council has raised major issues about festival wastewater. So did GHD, the independent expert that the Department commissioned to advise them. We see that the Department did not include some of GHD's recommended consent conditions that are meant to protect health and safety. Why not? In the last flood, Parklands' storage tanks floated away on the floodwaters, and the area where they will place their sewerage went underwater.

5. Parklands has said that there are virtually no koalas on their property, but koalas were recorded on the site in 2016—near the proposed conference center, accommodations for 120 people, and public bar. The koala population north of the Brunswick River is in dire straits already, and this development threatens them further. We don't see how the remaining koalas will survive the significant increase in event days and event scale along with the vegetation clearing that will go along with the proposed development.

6. Parklands has been allowed to self-monitor their compliance for five years, and the Department recommends this continue. We think neutral, independent observers must also be involved. Compliance monitoring has not been effective under the Department, and we have no confidence that their effectiveness will improve in future. They have admitted that they have other priorities, and that seems clear since they have issued only one compliance report on this development since 2012. And even that didn't address all the issues that have concerned us.

7. It is a sad truth that these festivals bring an element that turns our country town into a drug haven. That brings in people that sell drugs of all types. Our youth, like any other, are targets for these untoward people. There have been deaths at this festival site and at other comparable sites (only yesterday one death, 3 in serious condition). Please check with our surrounding hospitals that are the drop-off points for the many punters that leave the triage unit on site, with the many dire medical conditions that we are not privy to, and clutter up our hospitals, especially in our peak time of Christmas. This is of grave concern to this shire. Or speak in confidence to the doctors who are on site during festivals.

8. Live Nation, a US company, owns 51% of the two main festivals that are operated at Parklands (Splendour and Falls). So Parklands is already feeding revenues to an overseas conglomerate with a market cap of US\$8.9 billion. If this approval is given, we can expect many more Live Nation events at Parklands and more profits sent overseas.

9. Finally, the Department is recommending *permanent* approval not only for the development but also for significant increases in activity over what we've had so far. The

Department is recommending a permanent festival precinct in our shire, comparable to Centennial Park or The Domain in Sydney. And they want a quick approval with all the details to be worked out later. We do not have the infrastructure to support a Sydney-sized festival or a satellite city festival precinct on top of the 2 million visitors we already get to this shire every year, knowing that there is another festival site 10 minutes down the road.

Also, one of the festival owners spoke in Parliament, saying if they did not get permanency they would have to move the festival. Well, maybe that's a good idea! There are plenty of other places that would be better for this satellite city! We think permanent approval is extremely unwise, and should not be granted.

Finally, two points I did not make at the IPC hearing:

- The representatives of the traditional custodians of the land said at the hearing that they had not been consulted during this whole process. They are legitimate representatives of the relevant indigenous community, and their concerns should be addressed first and foremost.
- We are aware that there are some sensitive receivers that do not have agreements with Parklands. In the existing (trial) conditions, C16 and C18 of the Project Approval were included by the PAC to protect sensitive receivers from noise impacts generated from the festivals. For example, the Department directed Parklands to attenuate for noise at one particular receiver's property, but that never happened because of demands that Parklands placed on the property owners. Although the Department has been aware of the non-compliance all along, it has claimed that it can do nothing about it. And we now see that the 2012 PAC consent conditions designed to protect sensitive receivers have been removed from the SSD 8169. We implore the IPC to ensure that the rights of sensitive receivers are specifically protected with regard to noise, dust, fire, security, trespass and other issues that arise because of festival activity should any future approval be granted.