

Northern Rivers Urban Design Awards -Public Domain Entry
The Byron at Byron Resort and Spa



- Showing a broader initiative with the benefits able to be translated elsewhere. The project has attracted interest from authorities as an exemplar for future tourist development both internationally and in Australia
- Providing a valuable contribution to Byron Bay Golf Club through the export of treated effluent for irrigation, a popular recreational area for local community

Project Summary

This Project Summary deals with the Public Domain issues of the Byron at Byron.

Outline

This project is a five star resort in a most unlikely setting – next to land periodically inundated with a large mosquito population with a degraded rainforest at its centre and alongside a busy road. The design solution was to leave the cars out the front, turn away from the road, and embrace the rainforest – a strategy not otherwise attempted in temperate Australia before

Significance

Despite the initial concerns of the Byron community – the local community has long been in favour of sustainable development with strong activism against commercial development common within the region. The Byron at Byron Spa and Resort project has fostered environmental and cultural understanding as well as a sense of place both inside and outside Byron Bay.

This has been achieved by:

- The resort occupying a small footprint on the rainforest site with only 1.2 hectares used for resort facilities of the 17 hectares of developmental land
- Demonstrating that it is possible to design and operate a high quality tourist facility that embraces the immediate natural environment without having to resort to an inappropriate style or model
- Bringing economic benefits (in the form of employment etc) without the overly consumptive disadvantages. Resorts often viewed as large consumers of community services which is usually acceptable due to the economic benefits that a resort brings to the local community
- The nature of the openness of the buildings – there are few doors and visitors are free to permeate the building easily and access the verandah spaces
- The opening of the restaurant to the public as assisted in encouraging visitors to view the resort
- The verandah –effectively functioning as a main street - provides opportunities for observation and interaction and a platform for viewing the rainforest
- Demonstrating that it can be good business to enhance a part of the natural environment to attract visitors. The resorts role in the rehabilitation of a natural resource has attracted guests
- Preserving and enhancing the site for future generations without relying on government contributions
- Providing ongoing management and measurable results of regeneration and site watering systems that will prove a valuable community contribution for sustaining native habitats and will be of inherent value to future generations in drought cycles

Design and Execution

- The central facilities building is by necessity a north south axis
- 3m wide western veranda shields the building from the afternoon sun
- 6m wide eastern veranda engages the buildings' connection with the rainforest and provides opportunities for dining and relaxing
- Steel is used a primary expressive element in the architecture with a series of identical steel portal frames at 6m centres
- The units' primary structure of dividing walls and suspended concrete flooring with a secondary structure of balconies, stairs and walkways in coloured steel indicate contrast. Framing, shading and decorative elements expressed as timber allow the Central Facilities building to enclose an interstitial space between natural introduced landscapes and to simultaneously shield and reveal the natural habitat;
- The restored rainforest is inserted as the centrepiece viewed from the Central Facilities and the units



Roles of those involved:

Consultant	Function
Haysom Architects	Architect, Interior Designers
Aspect North	Civil, Geotech, Wastewater, Environmental, Surveyor and Planner
Mosquito Consulting Services Pty Ltd	Mosquito Control
Maunsells	Environmental Engineers
Cardno MBK	Structural Engineers
Stevens Landscape	Landscape Architects
Rothwell Pumps	Irrigation Consultant
Chris Power	Environmental Planning
Town Planner	Planning Initiatives

