

Your say

OUR low-key, laid-back town of Airlie Beach in the Whitsundays is one of the planet's really special places.

It faces north to the islands and the Great Barrier Reef and nestles in a narrow valley between a palm-fringed crescent beach and steep, rainforest-clad mountains.

It is so special, in fact, that inevitably the big southern developers have found it.

Our council is planning to give a large piece of public foreshore land to a foreign group for the construction of a multi-storey hotel.

Whitsunday Shire Council's strategic plan for our little low-rise village limits the height of foreshore buildings to 9m and yet the proposed waterfront Outrigger development is planned to be 16m plus — a structure that would dominate the shoreline.

Residents believe this will set a precedent for a Noosa-style wall of buildings between the town and the sea.

As part of the process and to add insult to injury, the council plans to turn Airlie Creek, the small stream that runs through the centre of town, into a culvert to replace the space the develop-

ment will eat up. How's that for lateral thinking?

The project was first conceived to fund the man-made Airlie Lagoon swimming pool and parkland, pictured. But a recent shire council meeting heard that, even without the development, revenue for the lagoon's funding exceeded budget by \$37,900.

What Airlie's community lacks in numbers it makes up for in tenacity. Our protest group Save Our Foreshore has so far collected more than 4000 signatures against the development and an incredible 1200 formal letters of objection to the DA.

Councillors are also divided on the issue. One has accused our group of being made up of people with vested interests who spread lies about the development and harass the public.

How weird is that? We ARE the public!

It's our right and our duty to use every opportunity to speak out against a local government that ignores its own policies and the wishes of its electors.

If anyone out there loves Airlie Beach and wants to help, they'll need to object to the Whitsunday Council in writing before May 24.

Suzette Pelt
Airlie Beach



Have your say on an issue that is affecting your neighbourhood. Send your submissions to Village Green, GPO Box 130, Brisbane 4001 or e-mail williamsb@qnp.newsltd.com.au