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WHITSUNDAY REGIONAL COUNCIL IMPLICATED IN PUBLIC LAND GRAB

It has been revealed that the Whitsunday Regional Council has breached the Land Act by re-zoning the Paluma Road Urban Bushland public reserve into commercial industrial land.

Suzette Pelt, President of longstanding Whitsunday community group Save Our Foreshore, which has dealt with many public land grabs over the past 14 years, says they have uncovered what they believe is a serious breach of the law under the Land Act.

‘This latest land grab continues a pattern by successive Whitsunday councils of illegal attempts to take public land for private commercial development’. Suzette says. ‘Nothing changes with these councils’.

‘The public land in question, which is a reserve designated as Urban Bushland for community use on Paluma Road is just another example’.

Community members are rightly angry that their concerns have been fobbed off by both the local councillor Ron Pedderson and council. Judging by a letter from council in response to their concerns dated 20 December 2019, they believe that council appears to be in denial. (attached Section 1 f).

‘We have had the status of the land confirmed by the Department of Natural Resources. And council, as the trustee, is only the manager. They cannot change its use or its purpose, yet according to their letter, it’s clear that they believe that as Trustee, they can do what they like’.

‘There is no interaction between the town planning legislation and the Land Act. They are two entirely different pieces of legislation. It is pretty basic and we’re calling for an investigation into how this happened and got this far despite several levels of scrutiny in the first place’.

‘It also begs the question as to what else in this town plan is not above board.’

“Save Our Foreshore” or SOF as many people know the group, has an interest in preserving public lands and has a long track record of successfully campaigning with the community for preserving public lands, particularly foreshores.

For more information please contact:

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Save Our Foreshore is an association registered under the Incorporated Association Act. It is a community organisation created by citizens of the community of Whitsunday in 2004 having a particular interest in ensuring that public access to the coast and amenity of coastal public lands are preserved and enhanced for the long term benefit of their ecological, scenic and recreational values as enjoyed by the Whitsunday community and visitors to the area