



# Lindeman Great Barrier Reef Resort Project – Overcrowding Fact Sheet

## Will the project lead to overcrowding in the Whitsundays?

Lindeman Island is one of 74 islands in the Whitsunday Island Group located north of Mackay and east of Airlie Beach. The island is located approximately 35 kilometres south east from Shute Harbour on the mainland and some 13 kilometres from Hamilton Island.

Lindeman Island was one of the first islands in the Whitsunday Island Group to be used for tourism purposes following the establishment of a camp at Home Beach by Angus Nicholson in 1923. Since this time further facilities have been constructed on the Island including an airstrip, resort rooms, dam, boat jetty and golf course, with a jetty, boat turning basin and boat channel constructed in 1966. The resort and jetty were redeveloped by Club Med in the 1980s and in 1992 when the existing 225-room resort was constructed. The resort operated successfully for many years as a 3-star facility, mostly targeting the family market but also targeted the singles market in its early years.

A key element of the redevelopment strategy is creation of a variety of accommodation options and a wide range of supporting amenities within the resort. This strategy responds to the demand by visitors for a greater choice of facilities and activities in one location. It is of particular importance to an island resort because it will provide a critical mass of facilities and experiences needed to attract visitors.

From a policy perspective the continuation of tourist development at Lindeman Island is supported by high level policy documents such as the State's Ecotourism Plan 2016 – 2020, the Draft Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2016 and the Whitsundays Plan of Management. The State's Ecotourism Plan 2016 – 2020 seeks to "*facilitate investment in tourism products that showcase the Reef and address issues with existing unoccupied island resorts*" (p8). The Draft Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2016 in its Strategic Framework states "*Tourism development that maintains sensitive environmental and landscape character values is encouraged on Lindeman, Brampton and Keswick Islands*" (p3-6). The GBRMPA Whitsundays Plan of Management also maps the surrounding marine park as a "Developed Setting". The "Developed" (Setting 1) areas are described by GBRMPA as "*Areas in this setting are immediately adjacent to urban areas and resorts. They are the access points to the Planning Area and a focus for intensive tourism and recreation. The areas are heavily used by a wide range of craft, and contain permanent facilities (for example, marinas, jetties and boat ramps).*"

On average over 858 visitors and staff will be on the island each day totalling around 313,170 person days per year. These numbers are not significantly larger than the numbers generated by the previous 225 room resort due to the change in the positioning of the resort. The operation of the previous resort did not result in overcrowding of the island or of the Whitsundays.

The project will lead to the rejuvenation and reopening of an existing unoccupied tourist resort which has been designed to maintain the sensitive environmental and landscape character values of Lindeman Island and will not result in overcrowding in the Whitsundays.