

A WORLD HERITAGE CLOUD FOREST IS NOT A THEME PARK

URGENT OPPOSITION NEEDED TO PROPOSED SPRINGBROOK CABLEWAY

SPRINGBROOK, QUEENSLAND —

OPPOSITION IS NOW URGENT TO THE RE-PROPOSED SPRINGBROOK CABLEWAY

As the 2032 Olympics loom, Council is revisiting the squashed cableway plan in a vain attempt to maximise tourist dollars

Springbrook has fought this battle before. In 2000, an earlier cableway was rejected after failing to meet environmental protection requirements, including concerns over water quality, catchment protection, waste, visual impacts and fire safety. Twenty-six years later, those risks have not disappeared—they have intensified under climate change, wildfire, invasive species, pathogens and rising visitation, with the IUCN now rating the Gondwana Rainforests' conservation outlook as of “significant concern.”

The re-proposed cableway is only one of a plethora of proposals in “The Springbrook Master-Plan” designed to gouge tourist dollars and exploit the fashionable rise in eco-tourism. Concerned residents, environmental advocates and community stakeholders are calling for urgent independent scrutiny of the proposed Springbrook Cableway before further planning decisions are made.

Springbrook National Park forms part of the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia—an internationally significant landscape recognised for its ancient evolutionary history, extraordinary biodiversity and ongoing ecological processes.

The City of Gold Coast is actively re-investigating a cableway to Springbrook and promotes projected tourism and economic benefits, including more than 243,000 additional visitor nights annually under one modelling scenario. Council's own project information confirms the proposal remains under investigation. But residents say THE fundamental question remains unanswered:

HOW MUCH MASS TOURISM CAN THIS FRAGILE WORLD HERITAGE LANDSCAPE ACTUALLY SUSTAIN?

“We are not opposed to responsible community planning,” said Dr Shé D'Montford, speaking on behalf of 735 concerned Springbrook residents. “Our concern is that irreversible decisions could be made before the environmental, hydrological, cultural and cumulative impacts have been independently assessed.”

Springbrook is not Kuranda.

Springbrook is a comparatively small, mountainous and environmentally sensitive landscape. It has steep terrain, landslip risks and limited local infrastructure. Community and conservation groups have raised concerns about habitat fragmentation, invasive species, wastewater, increased traffic, emergency access and the cumulative pressure of substantially increased visitation.

Council's 2020 pre-feasibility work reportedly estimated a cableway could attract approximately **580,000 visitors**, while conservation groups warn this could push annual visitation towards one million.

Residents are calling for **independent environmental, hydrological, cultural heritage, visitor carrying-capacity and CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS** before the project advances further.

The Commonwealth Environment Department has advised that no EPBC referral had been received at the time of recent correspondence and that a proponent has a legal responsibility to refer an action if it is likely to significantly affect a Matter of National Environmental Significance.

“Regarding the proposed Springbrook Cableway development, I am advised that no EPBC referral has been received to date. The proponent has a legal responsibility to make a referral if their actions have a significant impact on any Matters of National Environmental Significance. The Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water has offered to meet with the proponent to review their proposal and remind them of their obligations under the EPBC Act.”

Senator Corinne Mulholland

World Heritage properties are Matters of National Environmental Significance under Australia's federal environmental framework.

“Once an ancient rainforest ecosystem is damaged, we cannot simply rebuild it,” Dr D'Montford said. “Springbrook should not be sacrificed for a short-term tourism boom. This is World Heritage. It belongs to future generations.”

“Tourism has no inherent right to national parks; its role should be limited to carefully controlled support for public recreation, or in rare circumstances, to support conservation through adjacent communities. National parks must remain autonomous conservation assets, protected from political and commercial capture, and accessible to the public who fund and value them.”

Professor Emeritus Ralf Buckley Griffith University’s School of Environment and Science

TAKE ACTION NOW

Residents are urging Australians to contact their elected representatives and demand full transparency, independent environmental assessment and proper Commonwealth scrutiny before irreversible decisions are made.

SPRINGBROOK IS A WORLD HERITAGE CLOUD FOREST—NOT A THEME PARK.

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Sources

City of Gold Coast — [Springbrook Cableway project information](#)

UNESCO World Heritage Centre — [Gondwana Rainforests of Australia](#)

IUCN — [Gondwana Rainforests World Heritage Outlook](#)

Queensland Government — [Gondwana Rainforests World Heritage Area information](#)

ABC News — [History and current status of the Springbrook cableway proposal](#)

Gecko Environment Council — [Cableway No Way campaign](#)

Peter Beattie's 2000 statement to Queensland Parliament: [Queensland Parliament — Peter Beattie statement on the Springbrook cableway, 9 November 2000](#).

The history is also summarised by [ABC News — Springbrook cableway history and current proposal](#).