

## Dear No Helicopters Here supporters



**It's been a big two weeks.**

Our petition and full page open letter to Mr Cronin leading up to his [presentation](#) at the recent Mission Beach Community Association (MBCA) meeting has triggered media attention.

A Cairns Post article 'Petition fails to fly' was followed by several letters to the editor being printed.

The newspaper [article](#) and an ABC Far North [interview with Ray Cronin](#) gave an insight into Mr Cronin's apparent lack of empathy for our community's concerns.

Mr Cronin is quick to let us know the compromise agreement he entered into with C4 has given him legal approval. He described the open letter appeal to locate his helicopter aerodrome to a place where it will not impact on residents and our important wildlife as being too late. "The gate is closed and the horse has bolted".

As Mr Cronin put it, if he hadn't taken advantage of what he terms 'a gap in the market' someone else would have. With that logic, one that is often used by developers, we might just as well all start importing fentanyl, because if we don't, someone else will.

Full updates can be found on our website [here](#)

## Petition fails to fly

ARUN SINGH MANN

A FAR North businessman has responded to a petition begging him to cease a development by saying most communities would fight to keep services like his, not have them barred.

The longstanding battle between Kestrel Aviation and Mission Beach's conservation group C4 has reignited with an online petition attracting over 300 signatures by Friday, requesting the aviation company to not build its new court approved chopper base.

Mission Helicopters' boss Ray Cronin, which operates under Kestrel, had his application to build a two-helicopter hangar, a landing pad, and fuel storage facility at 2224 Tully-Mission Rd approved by Cassowary Coast council in January 2021.

However, the decision was appealed by C4 and taken to the Planning and Environment Court where in February, Mr Cronin's application was approved, but with noise conditions limiting his flight frequency.

Throughout his campaign, C4 had maintained helicopters were damaging to Mission Beach's nature-based reputation, would disturb residents with noise, and were intrusive on cassowary and wildlife habitat.

"Residents and visitors are attracted to experience the low-key village atmosphere, peace and quiet, and to be immersed in nature, with the best chance of seeing a cassowary in the wild," part of the petition read.

"These qualities underpin our community 'sense of identity' reinforced over decades of consistent messaging during community feedback for projects affecting amenity, character and the natural environment."

"We ask you to locate your business at a site where it cannot disturb and disrupt Mission Beach residents, our peaceful residential lifestyle, and our sensitive and important wildlife."

In response Mr Cronin said the petition wouldn't be swaying his decision to build.

"There is a process for a reason. You apply to the council and if it fits the requirements, they approve it," Mr Cronin said. "And then you have the right to appeal it, which C4 did, we went to court, we did the independent noise trials and it's been approved again."

"In my experience, most communities fight to have services like this kept in their town. If a council or state body wants to remove a rescue helicopter, they're going to have a battle on their hands."

## Community Left in the Lurch

We were surprised and disappointed not to have been contacted by the ABC for comment during their interview with Mr Cronin. We were told the conservation voice has been heard already.

Now that Mr Cronin has informed us in his [presentation](#) at the MBCA meeting of his true intentions, we think it is certainly newsworthy.

Apart from his disclosure of the full list of helicopter activities he plans to operate from 224 Tully Mission Beach Road we would have been able to tell the ABC how all levels of government have let the Mission Beach community down. We have documentation through correspondence with relevant government departments.

The community's voice has been ignored from the outset of the assessment and approval process beginning with the local council.

Our concerns about the helicopter DA were outlined in the high number of submissions lodged with the Cassowary Coast council but the councillors were ordered by the then CEO not to talk to their own constituents while the DA was being considered.

The councillor responsible for the Mission Beach region voted against the DA receiving more than 200 emails and a petition with almost 400 signatures objecting to the proposal to place a heliport in the heart of our villages. Her voice was drowned by the councillors NOT from Mission Beach.

The Mission Beach Community Association, after canvassing its members, wrote a letter to Council strongly opposing the development. All this has been ignored.

The potential impacts on the cassowary were not assessed by the state. Despite multiple conflicts with the planning scheme and the development being inconsistent with reasonable community expectation, the Minister found none of this was of state interest enough for the development to be called in for reassessment.

The Federal Government is also failing the community by not requiring Mr Cronin to refer his development to be assessed under the EPBC Act despite it ticking all the boxes in the cassowary significant impact guidelines.

The community voice was once again ignored when C4 and Mr Cronin entered into a private compromise agreement to avoid a court hearing against the development.

Being legal doesn't mean it is proper. The community has every reason to feel let down and to continue to voice their legitimate concerns.

### Why can't you move your helicopter base Mr Cronin?

The No Helicopters Here supporters are appealing to Mr Cronin to please move his industrial helicopter aerodrome to place where it cannot disrupt residential areas and wildlife.

We also remind Mr Cronin of his obligation to refer his development to be assessed under the EPBC Act.

# Please sign the petition

**\*\*WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT\*\***

Imagine an industrial helicopter aerodrome operating next to you.

Imagine visiting Mission Beach for a quiet get away and hearing helicopters anytime of any day from early morning to late afternoon.

**If this can happen at Mission Beach, it can happen anywhere.**



We invite visitors and local residents who value Mission Beach for its intrinsic values to let Mr Cronin know it is unacceptable to place an industrial helicopter aerodrome in the heart of our village.

**Please sign the petition,  
Leave a comment and encourage others.**

Each signature and comment is automatically sent to Mr Cronin. Let him know why you think his development is such a bad idea.

## Keep it in the news

A full page with our open letter to Mr Cronin will be printed in the Cairns Post tomorrow Friday 26th August.

***We have another favour to ask.***

**It would be a great help if you could write a letter to the editor to reinforce the message.**

A copy of the open letter is attached for your reference  
It's easy to write a letter in a word document then copy and paste into the newspaper contact forms.

Send a letter to the [Cairns Post here](#)  
Send a letter to the [Townsville Bulletin here](#)

***It's only with your help we can help keep Mission Beach special!!***

