



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR THE CAYMAN ISLANDS OPPOSES THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
OF OVERWATER BUNGALOWS IN THE SOUTH HOLE SOUND MARINE RESERVE IN LITTLE CAYMAN**

9th August 2021 – The Little Cayman District Committee (LCDC) of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands (NTCI) has recently launched a petition in response to the proposed construction of the overwater bungalows in the South Hole Sound Marine Reserve in Little Cayman as this is a matter of critical importance. The National Trust is aware that Planning and Coastal Works applications have been submitted for approval for this construction and are deeply concerned about the precedent this would set and damage this would cause in the Marine Park Zone.

The aim of the petition is to provide a means for any person having cause, to make comment on the Coastal Works Permit Application filed for this proposed construction. As such the Petition signatures will be submitted to Cabinet as part of the response to this application. In addition, anyone may submit their input directly to Cabinet by emailing the Chief Officer of the Ministry of Sustainability and Climate Resiliency at coastal.works@gov.ky. The deadline to do this is 13 August 2021. The NTCI urges all concerned about the protection of our Marine Park System to file their objections to the granting of this application and construction in South Hole Sound.

The National Trust finds it profoundly troubling that serious consideration should be given to construction in a Marine Park, particularly by a for-profit, private commercial concern. The National Trust believes that it should be self-evident that a National Park must be off limits to construction under all circumstances and portions of it must not be given away for private use.

The location for the proposed construction is a Marine Protected Area which should not be disturbed but instead preserved for the people of the Cayman Islands and the marine species for which these areas were legally created over three decades ago. The overwater construction will cause material damage to an otherwise untouched seabed. Several causes for concern arise such as, it is expected that the drilling necessary to place the support posts for the dock will cause sedimentation and turbidity that could severely impact the nearby coral reef. These posts would potentially change water flow and ultimately the surrounding shoreline. Changes in light and shadow to the nearshore ecosystem could disrupt the delicate balance of that habitat. There is no way to mitigate this damage. The ongoing operation of a commercial business in the South Hole Sound Marine Reserve will degrade the Reserve constantly. And the debris pollution that will result from the inevitable, future catastrophic storm event will spread far and wide throughout the Reserve.



Finally, all the people of the Cayman Islands, to whom this Park belongs, will no longer have the use and quiet enjoyment of the area taken for the development.

"We call on our Government to act in the best interest of our country and all its citizens and residents and preserve the integrity of the South Hole Sound Marine Reserve and deny the overwater component of the Planning application and the Coastal Works Permit application for construction in the waters of South Hole Sound.", says Gregory S. McTaggart, LCDC Chairperson.

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About the National Trust for the Cayman Islands

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is a non-governmental organization whose mandate under the National Trust Law (2010 Revision) includes the preservation of the historic, natural and maritime heritage of the Cayman Islands for present and future generations.

About the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme

The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme began in 1990 with only 30 dedicated Blue Iguanas and the primary goal to restore the wild population to 1,000 Blue Iguanas, encouraging viable population in the long-term. Having met its primary goal in 2018, the initiative formally transitioned to the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme in 2019 with a new focus of sustainably conserving the native species of Grand Cayman.

About the National Trust's Environmental Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' environmental programme was founded on the concept that the protection of native plants and animals is best achieved by protecting the natural areas in which they depend.



About the National Trust Conservation Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' conservation programme strives to protect Cayman's native species and the habitats in which they live, and includes the endemic Blue Iguana of Grand Cayman, the Sister Islands Rock Iguana and Cayman's native bat species.