Townsville City Council gives Castle Hill upgrade the green light

CLARE ARMSTRONG, Townsville Bulletin
March 29, 2018 12:00am

CASTLE Hill is getting a half-a-million-dollar facelift that promises to make Townsville’s iconic rock “even better”.

Townsville City Council last week approved the $540,450 upgrade to the lookout area and walking tracks on the popular landmark.
Infrastructure Committee chairman Cr Mark Molachino said the aim of the project was to improve access to the lookout and summit tracks and cater to the increasing number of visitors.

“The works include upgrades to the handrails and barriers along the walking tracks, new seating and updated signage to improve the experience for anyone using the Hill,” he said.

The upgrades are expected to be completed by the end of June.

“The work is quite specialised, upgrading the barriers and rails means drilling into the rock face,” Cr Molachino said.

Local councillor Ann-Maree Greaney said the improvements would “complement” the track upgrades previously completed using Works for Queensland funding.

“Council is committed to upgrading the city’s most loved spaces and with the help of the Queensland Government we have been able to do that with Castle Hill,” she said.

“This project will make Castle Hill even better for the thousands of people who walk up there every day.”

The $540,450 tender has been awarded to Naturform to carry out works.

The council received a $175,000 grant from the Department of Main Roads and Transport to support the project.

Mount Louisa local Mary Lloyd, 25, said she thought the upgrades would bring even more people up the Hill.

“I stopped going up for a long time because I sprained my ankle on a few occasions but since the last upgrade with the stairs I’m back to going up about four times a week,” she said.

“I think rails are a really good idea. I know a lot of people who don’t do the Goat Track at all because of how it was with the natural rocks.”

Ms Lloyd said she believed the more investment in the hill, “the better”.

“Having more seats will also be great. I love about halfway up now where there’s the two seats that look over Townsville,” she said yesterday.

“I just stopped today to do some meditation at that point and I see many people there stopping to look at the view.”