**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

National Trust Responds to Cayman Compass Editorial, 5 December

**December 6, 2018 –** The National Trust for the Cayman Islands was disappointed to read the Cayman Compass Editorial “[Save the Planet, lose the support of the people](https://www.caymancompass.com/2018/12/04/editorial-save-the-planet-lose-the-support-of-the-people/)” on December 5, 2018.

Individuals and environmental groups – both large and small – have the right to voice their concerns using any platform they choose. Freedom of speech is at the core of every democracy; we should never seek to slight those who are using this freedom for good – in this case, to address concerns of protecting our ‘beloved isles’. Holding our government accountable by asking questions, requiring transparency or campaigning for parts of our islands which it is believed should be protected is also a fundamental principal of our democracy, however minor or major the proposed issue is perceived to be.

The National Trust is legally obligated to fulfil its mandate of protecting environmental and historical places of significance in the Cayman Islands. The Trust will also speak up when the need arises on behalf of its members as it strives to ‘protect the future of Cayman’s heritage’.

The National Trust, like many environmental groups and individuals, recognises the need for sustainable economic development but not to the detriment of our natural heritage; this is what makes the Cayman Islands unique and is the primary reason people choose to visit. Sustainable development is the key to the long-term prosperity of our islands.

The draft [National Tourism Plan 2018-2023](https://cnslibrary.com/wp-content/uploads/Draft-National-Tourism-Plan-August-2018.pdf) calls for the Tourism industry’s growth to be “managed in a way that is socially, commercially and environmentally viable”. Furthermore, the stated vision of the Plan is: “Protecting our environment, celebrating our cultural heritage while ensuring a vibrant tourism economy that benefits all Caymanians”. At this critical time, it is more important than ever that each development project is assessed for sustainability and that environmental, as well as economic factors, are considered during any approval process.

The National Trust is encouraged that so many voices – young and old – are speaking up. It is, after all, our collective responsibility to value and protect our historic, natural and maritime heritage for this and future generations.

ENDS

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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.