

Development Watch Inc

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The Chief Executive Officer
Sunshine Coast Council
Locked Bag 72
Sunshine Coast Mail Centre
Qld 4560

By e-mail to: pmpfeedback@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Whittaker,

Re: DRAFT SUNSHINE COAST COUNCIL

PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

Thank you for the opportunity to make submissions on the draft Sunshine Coast Council Parking Management Plan.

Development Watch (DW) is a community group based in Coolum on the Sunshine Coast. One of our primary aims is to encourage policies and planning practices that preserve and enhance the quality of life in the Coolum district for both residents and visitors. We have prepared this submission with this aim in mind.

Development Watch commends Council for undertaking a strategic planning initiative in relation to such an important community resource as parking.

We submit as follows:

Council describes its aims for the Parking Management Plan as:

In line with Sunshine Coast Council's vision 'to be Australia's most sustainable region – healthy, smart, creative' – Council is developing a draft Parking Management Plan and draft Local Area Parking Plans to proactively manage parking demand, supply and administration.

In commenting on the Draft Plan, Development Watch would like to raise the following:

1. The Plan documentation canvasses at considerable length in generality the policy options and directions which could be pursued, but is seen as somewhat lacking of sufficient specific quantification of current demand levels and definitely lacking quantified, soundly based projections of future demand. This reflects in the Plan's somewhat vague 'targeted actions' in terms of what and when.
2. The draft Plan reports at some length on innovations which could be available in the key areas of Parking Information and Technology. But the Plan disappoints in its

aims to be smart and creative by failing to recommend any specific actions to proactively implement innovative solutions.

3. The draft Plan acknowledges the important roles that public transport could play in moderating parking demand but it devotes insufficient effort to reviewing the role and adequacy of current public transport and key initiatives which could be taken to enhance. In particular, Development Watch draws attention to current bus fare levels (eg \$4.60 – or \$3.20 Go Card to bus from nearby locations like Yaroomba into Coolum – 3 minute trip) which serve to discourage potential users. This fare could sensibly be reduced to a nominal fee. Development Watch also criticises Council policy decision to abandon previous practise over Xmas/New Year and Easter of providing free public transport at those particularly busy times. Development Watch questions whether Council is currently using the Transport Levy of \$27 per property effectively.
4. Turning to the draft Local Area Parking Plan for Coolum Beach, Development Watch raises the following considerations:
 - a. The Plan suggests that the existing parking supply is 'generally adequate for current demands on typical days'. Development Watch believes that this statement understates the serious undersupply of parking in Coolum on many days during the year. Parking demand in the foreshore area has consistently and demonstrably exceeded capacity day after day during the summer season just concluded. The problem is not '5 or 10 years' away. It is very real now.
 - b. The Plan states that 'the unrestricted on-street parking around Birtwill Street is under used despite it being within walking distance to many local destinations.' Again, Development Watch disputes this assertion. In our experience, it can be almost impossible to find a park in Birtwill St around lunch time and after work on many days during the year.
 - c. The draft Plan proposes that to respond to anticipated demand in the 'Medium to long term (5+ years)' Council should investigate additional parking on Jack Morgan Park. Development Watch is concerned that there should be no intrusion of parking into Jack Morgan Park. Development Watch urges that Council search out more palatable options to expand parking provision in this area – and more immediately. For example Development Watch questions whether greater practical combined use of the Bowls Club site could be made in this regard.
 - d. Development Watch notes and commends Council's proposed measures to increase parking capacity in Williams St and Elizabeth St. These measures should also be extended to Heathfield Rd. But Development Watch draws attention to Council's recent decision to approve very crowded small-lot housing on the balance of the Element site, bounded by Heathfield Rd, Williams St and Elizabeth St. This decision allowed the developer to forego an obligation to provide as many as 30 otherwise mandatory parking spaces. If it goes ahead, this development will severely stress parking capacity in the area. Maybe Council should instead consider resuming part of the Element site for public parking.

- e. The Coolum Local Area Parking Plan draws attention to the fact that Tickle Park public off-street carpark is consistently operating at capacity. Development Watch submits that Council needs to take immediate steps to alleviate this unsatisfactory situation. In this regard Development Watch suggests Council investigate installing park and ride facilities on the unused State land adjoining South Coolum/Coolum Yandina Roads with free shuttle bus to Tickle Park to service peak holiday demands.
- f. Consistent with Council's commendable goals to be healthy, smart and innovative, Development Watch suggests Council consider restricting use of Tickle Park parking area to only smaller vehicles – and incorporate some electric car recharge stations.
- g. As the Town Plan acknowledges, Coolum Beach is very much the key 'coastal village' locality of the Shire. Development Watch considers that Council is not taking sufficient steps to acknowledge and enhance the 'coastal village' look and feel of paving and parking in Coolum. Development Watch urges the adoption of greater measures to 'soften' the layout of areas like Tickle Park carpark and adjacent Jack Morgan Park by introduction of more landscaping and less linear regimentation of the parking layouts.
- h. Development Watch draws attention to Council's failure to include the current unsatisfactory parking arrangements adjacent to Coolum State School in the Local Area Plan. The current daily congestion around the South Coolum Rd roundabout causes regular accidents and creates a most unsafe environment for parents and children. Development watch urges immediate consideration of measures to separate school access and parking by closing off the South Coolum Rd extension at the roundabout and directing school access to that area from Park Crescent and/or Barns Lane. These proposed measures and the School Precinct generally should be included in the Coolum LAPP.

Our Organisation appreciates the opportunity it has been given to comment on this important draft Parking Plan. We ask that the Sunshine Coast community be afforded the opportunity for further consultation as you finalise the Plan and move to implementation.

Yours faithfully,

Kathy Dwyer,
Secretary, Development Watch Inc.