

Keeping Watch

Quarterly Newsletter No 1, January 2017
Page 1



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope you've had a great start to 2017. Last year was the busiest year ever for Development Watch since its incorporation 13 years ago AND 2017 is looking even busier. Major issues include Sekisui's conflicting proposal for Yaroomba, Planning Scheme amendments proposed by Council to facilitate development on a Twin Waters' flood plain, and of course, the infamous Bunnings for the western entrance to Coolum Beach. All these matters have been dealt with in the past but history is repeating itself. There is also a proposal for a development on what was the third stage of Element ("Allura").

Our New Year's Resolution: To convince the Local and State Governments to "Respect the Primacy of our Planning Scheme". Let's hope our resolution comes to fruition!

Lynette Saxton, President

YAROOMBA BEACH ... What can you envisage here?



Development Watch was extremely disappointed when it realised Sekisui House did not get the message last time round!

Japanese developer Sekisui House is proposing a 5 star hotel on the beachside across the road from the Palmer Coolum Resort. Development Watch will agree to another 5 star resort, however, we will not agree to an increase in building heights for either Stage 1 or the following stages. The Planning Scheme allows 8.5 metres = 2 storeys. Sekisui want 24 metres = 7 storeys, more than 3 times the allowable height! We would agree to a world's best practice 5 or 6 star low rise eco resort. These types of resorts are very popular and would fit in perfectly with the surrounding area. Westin Hotels in fact have several around the world.

AGM – 9 FEBRUARY 2017 - 6.30pm Coolum Meals on Wheels, Santa Monica Avenue, Coolum Beach. We hope to see you there.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS FOR 2017 are now due. Please access our website (www.developmentwatch.org.au) for payment options (\$10/year) and to complete a Membership Form. We rely on community support to continue our work and new members are always welcome.

Keeping Watch

Quarterly Newsletter No 1, January 2017
Page 2



YAROOMBA BEACH (CONT.)

The law allows any developer to apply for a development which is outside the Planning Scheme. However, Council should only approve such a development if it is in the public interest. The “public”, in our view, first-up are the local community who have to live with the proposal.

Development Watch attended Sekisui’s Listening Point on the first day it opened. We also perused the proposal on their website. We do not agree with the way Sekisui have run their consultation process. They have made a point of avoiding any questions in relation to building heights. We have provided Sekisui with our feedback.

Major Concerns:

Apart from destroying the scenic amenity of the Yaroomba area, a message will be sent to developers that they too can follow the same process and ask for an increase in heights in other parts of Yaroomba, Coolum and the North Shore.

The proposal is in stages and buildings higher than 24 metres could be sought by Sekisui at a later date.

Sekisui have stated that they would be happy to see the Palmer Coolum Resort “**redeveloped**”. They have also stated it was not viable. How would they know? It would not have operated for more than 20 years if it was not viable. What does all this mean!

Sekisui had stated they would lodge their Application in early January. Then they said February. Now they are saying April. We are currently attempting to convince Sekisui to accept our invitation to a Public Meeting prior to lodging their Application.

Sign petition against building height increases at Yaroomba on our website www.developmentwatch.org.au

BUNNINGS – AN APPROPRIATE ENTRY STATEMENT TO OUR TOWN?



Bunnings lodged three Applications to construct a Bunnings next to the State School at Coolum. Each Application was for a different sized store. To their credit,

Council refused all Applications and Bunnings are appealing all decisions in the Planning and Environment Court. Development Watch, along with other residents and business owners have joined Council as co-Respondents.

A Bunnings store and fast food outlets are not an appropriate western entry statement to our town. Fast food outlets are also not appropriate so close to the Coolum State School. Traffic is a major concern. We will keep you posted.

Keeping Watch

Quarterly Newsletter No 1, January 2017
Page 3



“ALLURA” COOLUM – HAD TROUBLE FINDING A PARK LATELY?

The former stage 3 of Element on Coolum is now called Allura. The development consists of 44 townhouses (with 10 businesses) not higher than two storeys. Whilst we commend the developer for not pushing the limits in relation to building heights, we do have concerns regarding the deficiency in carparking spaces, cars backing out onto Heathfield Street and other issues. Our concerns were raised with the developer in two pre-meetings prior to lodgment of the Development Application.

We were disappointed that the developer did not heed our concerns and equally disappointed that Council compromised on these issues when it handed down its Negotiated Decision Notice (despite Council staff recommending refusal). Whilst it would be great to have a development on this site, it will be disastrous for Coolum from a parking and traffic point of view.

We will keep you posted.

STOCKLAND AND BUILDING ON THE FLOODPLAIN AT TWIN WATERS WEST – WHY IT COULD AFFECT US?

In 2009 Council (with DW by its side) went to the Planning and Environment Court as a result of an Appeal by Stockland to build on this site. This Court case cost ratepayers a lot of money. The site is a designated flood plain. Council has now changed its mind and is seeking to Amend the Planning Scheme in favour of a development by Stockland on the site?? We have grave concerns regarding this proposal and the message it will send to developers regarding other flood plains such as the cane land on South Coolum Road and the western side of the Motorway. We do not know at this stage if Council will proceed with the Amendment and send it back to the State for final approval. We hope not.

RELOCATION OF COOLUM COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LOSS OF MAGNIFICENT MELALEUCAS

CRA attempted to resolve this issue without success. It relates to the relocation of a building that is a part of Coolum's history and the loss of some magnificent trees. In relation to community engagement, Council received only 21 submissions – 11 for and 10 against. This community engagement process was clearly deficient.

DW has now written to Cr Robinson and asked that he re-conduct the community consultation process to include residents of the wider Coolum central area so that he can obtain an accurate view of what the residents of Coolum want. We hope he accedes to our request.

Keeping Watch

Quarterly Newsletter No 1, January 2017
Page 4



DO YOU OWN PROPERTY WITH A VIEW OF THE MOUNT COOLUM GOLF COURSE?

A developer has attempted to do a deal with the Mount Coolum Golf Club in order to exchange some Golf Course land along Suncoast Beach Drive with some State owned land on the south western side of the course. A new Club was proposed to be constructed in Suncoast Beach Drive.

Council has recently stated it would not allow this but the Golf Club has stated in its latest newsletter that it intends to lobby the Council further. See our website www.developmentwatch.org.au under Mt Coolum Golf Club for the newsletters.

In our opinion, the current position of the Golf Club is the best on the site with the beautiful view of Mount Coolum, it is higher up and catches the breeze and flooding is not an issue. We also believe residents views of the Course should be protected. Yes, the Club does need updating but perhaps they could think of others ways to do this eg. fundraising and/or working with its members and the local community to obtain discounted trade services etc. Perhaps the Council could be lobbied to provide Golf Courses, Bowls Clubs etc with discounted rates in order to preserve them - they are important to locals and tourists.

PEREGIAN SPRINGS GOLF COURSE

This Course has had a reprieve for hopefully 5 years with the developer now not proceeding with an Application to rezone the Course in order to develop it. However, the developer is still trying to rezone land adjacent to the course in order to develop it. When does it end!

CLOSING COMMENT

We fully understand people and businesses who benefit financially from development must make the most of the current economic climate (which by the way seems to be happening right up and down the east coast of Australia). DW is not against development. We do not want development, however, at any cost. Planning Schemes are there for a reason and ours is still in its infancy and should be respected.

We have never been busier than in the last two years. We are in the process of working with other community groups in an attempt to send a message to Council to let the Planning Scheme do its job and provide the certainty it was meant to provide.

Thankyou for reading our newsletter. Development Watch is run entirely by volunteers.