

# PART 1

## SHORT SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES AND HISTORY OF SITE

# short summary of planning issues

## What does the Planning Scheme 2014 allow?

The Strategic Framework places the site within a Tourism Focus Area, one of 22 such areas on the Sunshine Coast. This designation recognises the Palmer Coolum Resort as an important tourism focus area on the Sunshine Coast. It does not mean the Sekisui site must be developed for tourism purposes.

Sekisui could continue with its current approval, which was granted under the superseded planning scheme (Maroochy Plan 2000); or

It could construct residential buildings with a maximum height of 8.5 metres (two storeys).

## The Coolum Local Plan Code states -

- ❖ *The area should remain a low key coastal community ...*
- ❖ *... uses which **enhance the beachside character** ... are encouraged ...*
- ❖ *[Development on the site] is configured in a **series of beachside villages** and other precincts that **sit lightly on the landscape**...*
- ❖ *Development is designed and sited to **protect significant ... views either to or from important landscape features***

## Some of the Conflicts

- ❖ does not meet these outcomes and fundamentally conflicts with the character, scale and intensity of development intended for the site under the planning scheme
- ❖ conflicts with the character outcomes sought by the planning scheme's Strategic Framework
- ❖ will significantly impact on the area's scenic amenity. The estate will be visible from iconic vistas.

The site is adjacent the Palmer Coolum resort, which now sits idle. It would be reasonable to expect the intensity of development approved on the subject site would also be sought on that land. If Council finds reasons to support the current development it would be difficult to oppose a similar style of intensive development on the Palmer Coolum site or other out-of-centre areas of the Sunshine Coast.

The 220 room hotel represents just 6.6% or a 1/15<sup>th</sup> of the proposed residential yield. The minor tourism component is proposed to justify the gross over-development of the site but the application cannot be considered to be a tourism-focused development in line with expectations under the planning scheme. The hotel's setting within a high-density residential estate is not the style of resort sought for Yaroomba and would likely compromise its function and role and its viability in the local tourism sector.

## HISTORY OF SEKISUI'S DEVELOPMENT SITE AT YAROOMBA

The site on which Sekisui has applied to construct a high-density residential development with a hotel tacked onto the end of it, was once part of the prestigious Hyatt Regency Coolum Resort. Here is a brief history of the site.

TIME (est.)	EVENT
mid to late 1980's	Kumagai Gumi developed the Hyatt Coolum Resort; which incorporated an 18-hole golf course, tennis courts and time-share holiday apartments. The resort was very successful during this time.
Sept 2003	Lend Lease bought the resort property - Hyatt continued to manage resort
Dec 2005	Lend Lease lodged a Development Application (DA) that included a proposal to re-develop the entire Hyatt property, primarily to permit the construction of over 600 residential dwellings. On the land east of David Low Way, it sought approval to replace 6 golf holes with a residential development in buildings from 2 to 6 storeys.
Aug 2006	3680 objections were lodged against the Lend Lease DA
Feb 2007	Lend Lease DA approved but only to 4 storeys, with over 300 conditions.
Mar 2008	Next Council election none of the 7 councillors who voted to approve the Lend Lease DA were re-elected.
Aug 2010	Lend Lease only proceeded with part of its approval and later on-sold the undeveloped balance of the land to Sekisui. This included the proposed development site. Sekisui can develop this site in accordance with these approvals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A maximum of 315 dwellings, of which 175 may be apartments</li> <li>• 138 of these apartments are to be contained in six 4-storey buildings, sited near the old Hyatt Beach Club</li> <li>• Other dwellings to have a maximum height of 2 or 3 storeys, depending on location</li> </ul>
July 2011	Palmer purchases the resort "from Lend Lease"
Oct 2013	With the full support of the then State Premier, Campbell Newman, Sekisui announced a development proposal for its site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2,300 apartments in buildings to 12 storeys</li> <li>• 300 houses</li> <li>• 450-room hotel</li> <li>• 35,000 sq m retail space</li> </ul>
May 2014	After several years of work, Council adopted a new planning scheme (Planning Scheme 2014). It allows the Sekisui site to continue development in accordance with the existing Master Plan approval. Otherwise, any new development is to be assessed against the constraints of Planning Scheme 2014
Aug 2014	Campbell Newman received over 7000 letters objecting to his demanding the Council to amend the Planning Scheme 2014 to benefit Sekisui
Sept 2014	The community became aware that Council had been having secret meetings with Sekisui in order to amend the Planning Scheme 2014 to facilitate approval of a future DA. If the amendment was approved, Sekisui announced its intention to apply for the following (a revised version of what it had previously proposed): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,470 apartments in buildings to 10 storeys</li> <li>• 250-room hotel</li> <li>• 3,000 sqm retail</li> </ul>
Early April 2015	Sekisui further revised its development proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,350 apartments to 10 storeys</li> <li>• 250-room hotel</li> <li>• 3,000 sqm retail space</li> </ul>
27 April 2015	As a result of considerable community pressure, Council voted not to amend the Planning Scheme
May 2016	Sekisui House began an intensive targeted marketing campaign. It comprised "workshops", "surveys and a public display at a shopping centre. This campaign placed all emphasis on its hotel/resort proposal and no emphasis on its planned high-density (approx. 1077 dwellings) residential development
May 2017	Sekisui lodged its Development Application for a high-density residential development and a hotel. It requests approval for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approx. 1077 dwellings in buildings to 7 storeys; and</li> <li>• 7 storey 220 room hotel</li> <li>• 3,000 sqm retail space</li> </ul>

Of course, history could continue to repeat itself. If Sekisui gains approval, it could build Stage 1 (a 7-storey hotel and 2 x 7-storey apartment buildings) then sell the undeveloped balance of the site to another developer. This new developer could make application for a new high-rise development that would further increase the heights and population density. On and on it goes!

News

# Town plan

WHILE the immediate fate of Sekisui House's Yaroomba development is settled, plenty of questions were raised when councillors strongly rejected planning scheme amendments to accommodate the controversial proposal.

Mayor Mark Jamieson, in explaining the council's process over the past two years, said the then-LNP State Government would have approved of the council slipping a planning scheme amendment into the town plan back when Sekisui House first delivered its proposal.

"Construction may have even commenced by now," Cr Jamieson told the packed public gallery.

In a lengthy special meeting at the Caloundra chambers, councillors sent a resounding statement to Sekisui that its current proposal was not acceptable.

Following the advice of council planning officers, councillors voted 10-1 in favour of upholding the current planning scheme.

Division 3 councillor Peter Cox was the only one to vote in favour of allowing amendments to the planning scheme.

Cr Jamieson reiterated his commitment to economic development before taking aim at the

tactics of local community groups.

He also took a swipe at the media, and even a fellow councillor, before voting in favour of the advice of the executive officers.

Heavily criticised for the way the Sekisui House saga had been dealt with, Cr Jamieson told the meeting that, having met with then-Premier Campbell Newman in January last year, he was certain the proposal would have been "called in" and rubber-stamped.

"Councillors, you should be under no illusions that the former State Government would have intervened in this project," he said.

"In a meeting at Parliament House, January 2014, which I attended with former Premier Newman and senior Sekisui House executives, the Premier said he'd call the project in to ensure it went ahead.

"I advised those in attendance against such a move as the community would have been outraged, and rightly so, as they were entitled to have their say about their future.

"I cautioned Sekisui House needed to engage with and win the support and confidence of the local community through the design and development of such an important site at Yaroomba.



# will not be changed



ABOVE: The planned location. BELOW: An artist's impression of part of Sekisui's proposed Yaroomba development.



## Mayor Mark Jamieson

I think you go to the well once in terms of proposed amendments to the plan, and that's now been done and dusted.

"They both heeded my advice, which again was a win for the Sunshine Coast community, because council still had control of the process, through which the community would have their say."

Member for Maroochydore Fiona Simpson said Cr Jamieson's comments were "old news" given the commitment she had been given and made public, also in January last year, by Mr Newman that under no circumstances would he call the

development in.

"I got his commitment that the LNP wouldn't call it in," Ms Simpson said.

"I'm not aware of any conversations between the mayor and the former Premier since I had that commitment.

"I'd be surprised if they're (Cr Jamieson's comments) not referring to old news.

"Quite frankly it's inconsistent with the commitment that I received."

Former Infrastructure, Planning and State

Development Minister Jeff Seeney declined to respond to questions on the matter of whether Sekisui House was set to be called in, but hinted that it had not been on the former government's agenda to his knowledge.

There had been questions about whether a council meeting would go ahead after Sekisui House contacted the council last Friday morning to revoke its request for amendments to the planning scheme.

Cr Jamieson said there was no reason why the meeting could not continue and was pleased the issue had been dealt with for the time being.

"It (the amendment consideration) happened to relate to a piece of land in Yaroomba owned by Sekisui House, but ultimately it's a decision for council about our planning scheme, so given the importance of the issue in the minds of so many people on the Sunshine Coast, council's decision was to press on as we did," he said.

A number of councillors spoke to the motion not to amend the planning scheme at the meeting, including Christian Dickson, whose portfolio includes regional planning.

Cr Dickson said while he still believed there was a better use for the Yaroomba site, he could not support the Sekisui House

proposal to amend the planning scheme as it stood

During his lengthy address, Cr Jamieson admitted he felt Sekisui House had failed to "put their best foot forward" with the polarising proposal, and lamented their efforts to engage with the community.

He hinted that the Japanese development firm would not be afforded the same drawn-out process in the future.

"I think you go to the well once in terms of proposed amendments to the plan, and that's now been done and dusted," he said.

Previously a supporter of the contentious proposal, Cr Jamieson conceded that the site in dispute was perhaps not ideal for intense development, as evidenced by the report handed down by council executive staff.

"I accept those developments need to occur in the right places," Cr Jamieson said.

