

Development Watch Inc

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4 November 2021

Cr
BY EMAIL

Dear _____,

Re: SPECIAL MEETING 8 NOVEMBER 2021 TO DECIDE ON WHETHER TO ASK THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO DECLARE THE AIRPORT A PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREA

We are concerned that the short notice of this meeting will not allow Councillors to prepare for the meeting nor will it allow the community to raise concerns with their respective Councillors.

Please find **attached** our submission on the SCA Draft Master Plan dated 6 August 2019 where we raised many concerns.

We also **attach** the SCA's Response to Submissions. This Response did not address our concerns but merely referred to things like "further analysis is required", "will consider opportunities to best benefit the region", "additional assessment will be undertaken", "could include", etc etc

Further, we noted the following extracts from this Response –

[Master Plan consultation process](#)

"We are satisfied we have run a robust consultation process regarding land use matters as outlined in the Draft Master Plan."*

"Sunshine Coast Airport Pty Ltd acknowledges the need to work closely with the community ..." *

[Land use – General](#)

"Sunshine Coast Council oversees development in accordance with the Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014. Approval of the Draft Master Plan by Sunshine Coast Council does not automatically grant Sunshine Coast Airport Pty Ltd

development approvals. The Airport will make all statutory applications to the relevant bodies, including Council, at the appropriate time.*

Land use – Airport North Precinct

*"Freight and logistics requirements at the Airport **will evolve over the next 20 years***... "*

*"Freight facilities are likely to be established in the **Gateway Precinct*** in the short to medium term. In order to ensure the Airport is appropriately positioned to cater for the anticipated growth of freight, additional assessment will be undertaken to **determine whether freight facilities will be best positioned in the Airport West or Airport North Precinct in the medium to longer term.**" **

*"Following community and stakeholder feedback to the Draft Master Plan during the public submission period, **Sunshine Coast Airport Pty Ltd acknowledges there is still further traffic analysis required to assess the practicalities of locating freight activities in the Airport North Precinct.**" **

Land use – Airport West Precinct

*"The Airport West Precinct, as referenced in the Master Plan, **provides for many development opportunities.** * Sunshine Coast Airport Pty Ltd **will consider opportunities to best benefit the region, subject to resolution of environmental considerations and the necessary regulatory and planning approvals.**" **

Land use – Gateway Precinct

*"The types of ancillary commercial businesses that may be located on the Airport site **could include short-term accommodation and retail businesses and are intended to complement the focus of the precinct and the community surrounding it.**" **

* **Emphasis added**

In conclusion we ask -

- 1) Why the rush for a special meeting that puts pressure on our elected representatives to come across the sometimes complex issues and where such meetings greatly reduce the councillors' abilities to communicate with their constituents in a meaningful way and to address their concerns.
- 2) PDAs do reduce the ability of the current council and future councils to adequately address community issues that are relevant now or might occur over time.
- 3) PDAs are typically utilised to greatly accelerate developments where possible "hurdles" are envisaged by the developer/approving agent. Appropriate community consultation and meaningful engagement with interested parties should not be seen as a hurdle.

- 4) There still remains no comprehensive master plan for the site. A starting point would be a master plan highlighting proposed development and then consider the most appropriate process to deliver it.
- 5) The lease is for 99 years and this may in fact be the last time the Council/community actually has a chance to influence what the airport/ancillary developments look like.
- 6) The operation of the airport and the associated aviation/freight/retail business should not be considered in isolation. Broader impacts such as traffic, liveability and environmental considerations should be points for negotiation over the various stages of development. The community/region might lose this leverage in a one off PDA arrangement.
- 7) Claims of conflict of interest being owner and approving agent are overstated. At the very least various models of appropriate control over the development should be fully explored in any paper to Councillors. A PDA maybe be one suitable way but councillors should be aware of other mechanisms to build firewalls between functions.
- 8) The CHAS has yet to be finalised and will be crucial in considering development around the airport.

After winning the tender for the airport, Palisade presumably would have entered into a confidential commercial agreement with Council. What did this agreement actually stipulate/promise in relation to the development of this land. If it was just assessment through the Planning Scheme then "caveat emptor" prevails.

Covid has delayed projects worldwide and we are sure not every project should now be seen through the lenses of PDAs.

Finally, to declare this land a PDA would remove the right of the community to have any say whatsoever on future development in and around the airport. Whilst the land has been leased to Palisade it is still Council owned land and the right of the community to have a say in this case is even more important than a development on privately owned land.

Yours sincerely,



Lynette Saxton
President, Development Watch Inc.