

K - Response to Community (Information Day)

K - RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY (INFORMATION DAY)

REVIEW OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS - (AS SUMMARISED BY ELTON CONSULTING)

ECOLOGY

Flora & Fauna

- Retreat and decline, habitat destruction, weed infestation, native plantings, threats to biodiversity, sand fly nuisance. Addressed in Section B1.

Threatened Species

- Habitat reduction, large number of threatened species. Addressed in Section B1.

Forest Area

- All forest should be protected. Addressed in Section B1.
- Much forest retained, all EEC's retained.

Ecological Impact

- Generally anti-development. Addressed in Section B1.
- Most of the site conserved in perpetuity including virtually all EEC's and substantial areas of dry forest.

Wildlife Corridor

- Maintains the uninformed and erroneous notion of east-west corridor. Addressed in Section B1. Corridors only achievable along creek lines due to highway and clearing west of highway.

Protection of the Site

- Desired complete conservation without any recognition of means of doing so. Addressed in Section B1. Most of the site is able to be conserved in exchange for modest development.

Environmental Values

- Statements do not reflect reality. Addressed in Section B1.

Key Threatening Processes

- Addressed in Section B1.

Threat of Domestic Pets

- Addressed in Section B1.

Environmental protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

- Management by community not proved. Addressed in Section B1. Proponent is not averse to dedication and management by State Authority or Council.

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

Ongoing Management

- Addressed in Section B1 as above.

Monitoring

- See Section B1. Management by State, conservation area dedicated.

Protection of Area

- Fencing proposed, water treatment proposed, tree retention proposed. See Section B1.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Adequacy

- Most of the claims made here are untrue. These issues relate to assessment and are addressed in B1 and elsewhere in report.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Location

- Assertions are incorrect. The development area was selected based completely on environmental values. It is not pristine forest, not affected by flooding, does not require additional buffers.

Design

- Lot sizes have been increased.
- Native plantings and tree retention proposed.
- Walkways to be designed with government authorities. See Section B1.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Public Consultation

- This process was provided by experts in the field. There is no obligation for group discussion. Comments not "dismissed", timing and location were impacted by factors beyond our control, there is no point of common ground between "no development" advocates and proponents.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

- Stormwater management addressed in C5 and appendices.

PLANNING

- A variety of conflicting opinions were raised. These are addressed in previous Environmental Assessment Report.

FLOODING, COASTAL PROCESSES

- Addressed in B5 and previous reportage.

K - RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY (INFORMATION DAY)

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Vegetation retention recommended Wider policy issue.
- See Section B5.

PUBLIC ACCESS

- Addressed in EA, B1 and C2 and will be designed with state authorities prior to DA.

TRAFFIC AND ACCESS

- See RTA upgrade.
- No ratepayer cost. Addressed in B2.

ABORIGINAL CULTURE

- Consultation ongoing and will continue.

NOISE

- Road noise will be assessed with DA and in context of more detailed RTA proposal.

The following table outlines the main issues raised through the public consultation process.

Elton Consulting adopted a systematic approach to coding feedback to ensure that all issues were adequately covered. In this assessment feedback was sorted into an issue framework with primary and secondary issues. Detailed comments are provided to further demonstrate the issues raised. The coding categories used to analyse the feedback were based on the groupings used by the DoP in their assessment of public submissions. The documented feedback is listed in descending order from the most frequent issues raised to the least.

Primary issue	Secondary issue	Detailed comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human activity will cause flora and fauna to retreat away and cause a decline in populations over time The proposed development will destroy key habitats and contribute to the further fragmentation of the fauna species There is an existing bat colony on site that will cause problems for future residents, the EA does not address the impact of bats Birds, wind and water can cause weeds to spread into native forests and overtake the species on which wildlife is dependent All plants planted in association with the proposal should be native to ensure they do not cause weed problems to the surrounding conservation areas Australia's biodiversity is severely under threat, land clearing and the resultant habitat loss is leading to an increase in endangered or vulnerable species The area has always been avoided by locals because of the presence of sand flies. Irritation from fly bites would make the living conditions unacceptable for future residents. Research should be undertaken about the frequency and impact of sand flies The threatened species and communities that appear on site are irreplaceable, the development would destroy critical threatened species' habitat The 'South Moonee Forest' is home to at least 16 threatened species such as the Swift Parrot and Regent Honeyeater. The site has the highest count of land based threatened species along the mid north coast The purported koala colonies on site are fictitious and do not exist Two species of butterflies only known to the Coffs Coast are found on site Once an endangered community is broken up and impacted by scattered development, there is no chance provision for a sustainable environment to support the remaining native species Endangered species are not unique to the area
	Flora and fauna	
Ecology	Threatened species	

Forest area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No development should occur that impacts the 'South Moonee Forest' All the last remaining intact coastal forest on the Coffs Coast should be protected and rescued The development of the site will impact and fragment the remnant forest All turpentine forest has been earmarked for development. The portion of turpentine forest that would be conserved is unsustainable The removal of tall forests in virtually all of the high land will impact on the richness and interconnectedness of the contained eco-systems No development should occur on uncleared land, there is no little virgin forest left
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any development will have a negative impact on the nearby significant natural resource of native flora and fauna Any development will upset the natural water flow and air quality currents An increase of unauthorised tracks made in native forests by residents would impact the conservation land The development would have a negative impact on the adjacent habitats and areas including the Solitary Island Marine Park Any development on the site would put the entire area at risk
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is part of a wildlife corridor essential for the maintenance of biodiversity in the area The wildlife corridor needs to be maintained to enable movement of native species and ensure their survival The development would destroy an important regional and bio regional active east west wildlife corridor The narrow wildlife corridor proposed to remain is not sustainable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government should purchase the site and include it in the Moonee Nature Reserve or part of the Regional Park. The owner of the site should be paid compensation for the land The area should not be developed but made into a nature reserve adjoining Split Solitary Marine Park and Moonee Nature Reserve A conservation reserve should be created in perpetuity to protect the natural values of the site The strip of land that runs parallel with the dune system must be conserved, if it was developed it would cause changes to hydrology, increase habitat fragmentation and threaten the SEPP 14 wetlands
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environmental Assessment Report does not reflect the high conservation values of the site The proposed development is not on the 'least environmentally sensitive' parts of the site. The whole site is highly environmentally significant
Ecological impact	
Wildlife corridor	
Protection of the site	
Environmental values	

<p>Key threatening processes (KTPs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation/land clearing is listed as a KTP Impact of weed infestation from residential gardens, roads and tracks is a KTP
<p>Threat of domestic pets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 150 cats and 120 dogs would be introduced to the area and would impact on already threatened flora and fauna species Domestic cats must be prohibited in all houses in the area, dogs should be confined to the back yard and always on a leash when walking An in depth analysis is needed in the Environmental Assessment Report on the impact of the increased population and domestic pets on a virtually undistributed area
<p><i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site should be compared with the EPBC Act 1999 standards Experience has shown that the use of community volunteers is not effective as it falls to a dedicated few who can not properly manage the bushland There is no documented evidence that a conservation area managed by surrounding residences has been successful Consultation with environmental groups, scientists and the community should be undertaken to provide direction and recommendations about the conservation area and how to protect it A guarantee is needed that the remaining forest will be kept in perpetuity The owners should enter a "conservation covenant" It is hypothetical to propose that some future residents would agree to managing the conservation area, residents would have conflicting interests between access and protection No amount of legislation can provide for the ongoing involvement of community members in protecting and maintaining conservation areas Community association levies will never be sufficient to cover the long term maintenance and protection of the area The environmental bond period should be extended to a minimum of ten years to ensure that the proposed management activities are carried out in an appropriate manner The vision presented for conservation is far sighted and thoughtful, but it may be difficult to get 300 new households to manage it
<p>Ongoing management of the area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no clear indication of how the conservation area would be monitored and who would be the authority managing the site. A guarantee is needed over the responsibility for ongoing monitoring of the management plan with legal powers to ensure the plan is adhered to in the long term Increased policing is needed in the area and heavy penalties for infringements such as dumping rubbish
<p>Conservation Management Plan</p>	<p>Monitoring and authority over the plan</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A guarantee is needed that the conservation area will not be incrementally developed over time Fencing is needed to prevent people from clearing the land and from accessing the conservation area Protection of the water quality of the creek is imperative Retention of native trees is needed and buffer zones around sensitive areas 	Protection of the area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The environmental assessment was completed to support an already determined outcome The Environmental Assessment Report should be assessed by an independent review panel The environmental studies should consider more than one source of information There is mistrust in the process undertaken to arrive at the conclusions in the Environmental Assessment Report Thorough studies undertaken by different government departments have been ignored in the Environmental Assessment Report The Concept Plan does not address green space within the area The Environmental Assessment Report does not respond to previous studies by government departments and Council to maintain the northern part of the site as a wildlife corridor. The Environmental Assessment Report does not align with any other reports and there is insufficient supporting documentation The Environmental Assessment Report failed to reference the Regional Forest Agreement of the North East Forests – in particular the status of the Turpentine Forests The environmental assessment studies appear to be flawed, and do not list the Swift Parrot as being found on the site There are eight endangered ecological communities on site, but the flora and fauna study only lists seven The Environmental Assessment Report does not include a hydrology study, or water quality monitoring for Stingray and Sawmill Creeks and SEPP 14 wetlands, or analysis of the impact of accidental exposure of acid sulphate soils on the Solitary Islands Marine Park The area that would be developed is not determined by any application of environmental values. The proposed areas of development are environmentally significant The present proposed development location represents pristine forest area, alternative areas need to be considered Residential development in Coffs Harbour should only be on existing cleared land Coastal Inundation Mapping for Coffs Harbour indicates that the proposed residential development precincts are affected by the six metre flood contour, making the site unsuitable for development The Government is investigating a 'green zone' where elevation is necessary. The site would fail the 	
Environmental Assessment Report	Adequacy of the environmental assessment	
Proposed development	Location	

six metre elevation level required

- The development should be further away from the wetland with an increased buffer zone

- The developer over many years has transformed large areas of Coffs into attractive living areas

- The block sizes are too small, the number of blocks should be decreased with larger block sizes

- The development is balanced with a percentage for the environment and a percentage for the people

- Native species need to be replanted in the new development

- The location of walkways and board walks over wetlands has to be appropriate

Design

- The 'consultation/feedback' session was disappointing, there was no group discussion or meeting with the local community

- Comments made to the consultant team at the CIFS seemed to be dismissed

- Calling the CIFS an 'information' session was misleading as it suggested oral information and feedback

- At least one hard copy of the full Environmental Assessment Report and Concept Plan should have been available to view at the CIFS

- The timing of the CIFS did not seem to adhere to the statutory requirements as it was held outside the public exhibition period

Consultation process

Public consultation

- The location of the CIFS was inappropriate

- Community consultation should have been undertaken more frequently during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment Report

- There was no contact with the local community during the environmental assessment to gain an understanding on the development

- A consultation presentation is needed by both parties on the environmental impact

- There was a lack of transparency and structure around the consultation process

- Impact of stormwater runoff into the native vegetation

- Encroachment (via tracks and runoff) will impact on the network of water ways in the area. Wetlands will receive run off

- The SEPP 14 wetland is of national significance and is not designed as a retention pond for stormwater runoff

- Water quality degradation in Stingray and Sugarloaf Creeks

- The management of stormwater is of paramount importance

- The heavy downpours experienced in the area will cause damage to the binding of the retention

Stormwater management

systems, that are presented in the stormwater design concept

- The dwelling numbers nominated in the Coffs Harbour Development Control Plan (DCP) will be achieved by other developments
- The land is already zoned for residential, so it should be developed
- The site was supposed to be 'purchased for protection' according to consultation undertaken in 2004-05 when the DCP was developed
- The Coffs Harbour Council Vegetation Strategy outlines that all high to very high value vegetation with a low level of disturbance is to be protected. The Moonee DCP identifies the site includes high to very high vegetation areas
- The Draft Local Environmental Plan (LEP) amendment 24 to the LEP 2000 was to rezone this site to 7A Protection Habitat and Catchment
- The concept of urban consolidation suggests the proposal is premature and should be postponed
- The 75 percent area proposed for conservation is flood prone so development would not be able to occur on this part of the site, development would occur on 100 percent of land not subject to flooding
- Large areas fall in a high drainage category and would be inundated by flooding and tidal surges. Water from heavy rainfall flows north into Moonee Creek, making the site critical to the dissipation of floodwater from the eastern side of the coastal range to the west of the Pacific Highway at Sapphire
- The frontal dune system would easily be eroded by the anticipated sea level rises and predicted increases in storm frequencies and intensities. The proposed development could be exposed to serious consequences

Flooding, coastal processes

- All forest should be conserved as a carbon sink

- It is environmentally unsustainable to clear native forest, in light of Government targets to stop clearing and reduce carbon emissions

- With the current threat of global warming, native vegetation should not be cleared

- The proposed walkways through the conservation area and wetlands are inappropriate for such a pristine site and would fragment the area

- Walking tracks encourage dog walking and bike riding and would negatively impact on the endangered species that live and forage in the forest

- Raised walkways and footpaths are needed to access the beach and headland

- The upgrade of the Pacific Highway will impact greatly on the site unless appropriate mitigation measures are adopted

- The increased population will lead to an increase in traffic. A serious upgrade of the Pacific Highway is needed. A national highway bypass is needed for the Coffs area

Climate change

Public access

Traffic and access roads

* Mechanisms are needed to ensure that ratepayers do not pay for the provision of an access road if the RTA closes the access from the Pacific Highway before other developments have provided the necessary alternative

Aboriginal cultural heritage

* Ongoing consultation is needed with the local Aboriginal community to ensure heritage items are not destroyed and to determine the best way to value these items

* Better communication with the true traditional owners is needed to protect the remains of the two middens

Over development

* Extensive development is already planned to the north and south in adjoining lots, which significantly address future population projections for the area

* There is already plenty of urban land on the drawing board for the Moonee area

Noise

* The environmental assessment needs to take into account the impact of ongoing noise from the access road as well as other machinery associated with the housing development