

# Sapphire

## Impact on Social Infrastructure Requirements

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For Sapphire Beach Developments Pty Ltd

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## Summary and Conclusions

This report addresses the issues raised in the Director General's Requirements, item 10.1:

*Discuss how the proposed modifications will change social and economic context of the project in terms of infrastructure requirements, public transport, community services and facilities (including schools and medical services).*

The impacts of the proposed development on community facilities:

1. The increase in population is small and well within forecasts and planned increases in the site vicinity.
2. Total demands on facilities will be a small proportion of total capacity.
3. For all sectors contacted and those assessed from public information, there is sufficient capacity for the additional population.

The previously assessed impacts of the closure of the Pelican Beach Resort, *Sapphire Resort, Economic Impact Assessment*, (June 2006, SGS Economics & Planning):

1. The closure of the hotel will be more likely to shift demand to other hotels in the region operating below capacity, with net loss of jobs likely to be about 10. Total tourist visitation to Coffs Harbour is unlikely to be affected. The additional clientele gained by the remaining hotels may contribute to their ability to reinvest and upgrade their establishments.
2. The conference and events sector will lose only 3-4% of the delegate days capacity with event displaced captured by the remaining venues, although 1% of events may be lost.
3. As total visitor numbers are not expected to be affected significantly by the closure, employment and turnover in restaurants, attractions, transport, retail and other tourism supported activities are likely to remain unchanged.
4. Given the small overall change from the closure, the multiplier effects of the closure are also expected to be negligible.

These conclusions remain valid even with the changes proposed to the project.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The site

The subject property is located between the Pacific Highway and the ocean in Sapphire Beach. The site is 6 km north of Coffs Harbour. The majority of the site is zoned Residential 2E, Tourist.

The site includes three lots with a total area of 41 503 m<sup>2</sup>. The site currently contains the Pelican Beach Resort, a resort hotel built in 1986. The resort comprised 114 suites in a building that steps down the steep slope to the beachfront. It included a swimming pool, tennis courts, outbuildings, grassed area and direct access to the beach. However, the building is becoming dated, was not trading profitably, and would require major reinvestment to remain competitive as tourist accommodation. The resort was closed in April 2007, as it was not viable and considered to have no future as tourist accommodation.

There is a former restaurant building, now vacant, on the 'top' of the site adjacent to the Pacific Highway (western boundary). There is vacant land directly adjacent to this, and an area of grassed land on the lower area adjacent to the beach and resort (north east corner).

The site includes an area of about 2500 m<sup>2</sup> on a very steep slope (roughly centred toward the north side of the site) zoned as Environmental Protection 7A Habitat and Catchment, which is mostly covered in native vegetation and some weeds.

It is proposed to redevelop the site with a subdivision of 39 parcels for individual residential housing. This format will allow the flexibility to offer either visitor accommodation or permanent residences according to the relative demand for each. It will also provide premium standard housing for future residents of Coffs Harbour.

### 1.1.1 Policy context

The proposed redevelopment of the site is subject to the following planning controls:

- State Environmental Planning Policy Major Projects 2005
- State Environmental Planning Policy No 71 – Coastal Protection
- State Environmental Planning Policy 65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Buildings (SEPP 65)
- State Environmental Planning Policy – The Building Sustainability Index BASIX 2003
- State Environmental Planning Policy 11 – Traffic Generating Developments (SEPP 22)
- NSW DoP Mid-North Coast Regional Strategy
- North coast Regional Environmental Plan 1988 (NCREP)
- Coffs Harbour Settlement Strategy-'Our Living City' Settlement Strategy 2008
- Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2000 (LEP 2000)
- Coffs Harbour Residential Tourist Lands Development Control Plan
- Coffs Harbour Off-Street Parking Development Control Plan

- Coffs Harbour Subdivision Development Control Plan
- Coffs Harbour Access and Mobility Development Control Plan

Most of the subject site is zoned Residential 2E.

A previous report, *Sapphire Resort, Economic Impact Assessment*, (June 2006, SGS Economics & Planning) dealt with issues arising in the Coffs Harbour Local Environmental Plan 2000 (LEP 2000) concerning the objectives of the 2E Tourist Residential Zone and the Coffs Harbour Residential Tourist Lands Development Control Plan and its objectives. The findings of that report remain valid as far as the impact of the closure of the existing hotel, namely that:

1. The closure of the hotel will be more likely to shift demand to other hotels in the region operating below capacity, with net loss of jobs likely to be about 10. Total tourist visitation to Coffs Harbour is unlikely to be affected. The additional clientele gained by the remaining hotels may contribute to their ability to reinvest and upgrade their establishments.
2. The conference and events sector will lose only 3-4% of the delegate days capacity with event displaced captured by the remaining venues, although 1% of events may be lost.
3. As total visitor numbers are not expected to be affected significantly by the closure, employment and turnover in restaurants, attractions, transport, retail and other tourism supported activities are likely to remain unchanged.
4. Given the small overall change from the closure, the multiplier effects of the closure are also expected to be negligible.

This report addresses the issues raised in the Director General's Requirements, item 10.1:

*Discuss how the proposed modifications will change social and economic context of the project in terms of infrastructure requirements, public transport, community services and facilities (including schools and medical services).*

## 1.2 Structure of the Report

The report is presented in the following sections:

Section 2 details the current use and economic role of the site and the proposed development.

Section 3 establishes the population trends to put the development in context

Section 4 looks at existing services serving the area including current and available capacity where information is readily available

Section 5 presents the conclusions of the report

## 2 Current and proposed use

### 2.1 Current resort operations

#### 2.1.1 Description

The Pelican Beach Resort was established in 1986. It has 114 rooms. The resort was rated as three and a half star accommodation. The resort was closed in April 2007, as it was not viable and considered to have no future as tourist accommodation.

The former resort employed 26 full time and 3 part time permanent staff, and casual part time staff ranging from 50 to 75 depending on the season. Estimated average full time equivalent employment was between 45 and 50.

The existing building is a single large structure, stepped down the hill in 3 and 4 storey sections. The orientation does not take best advantage of ocean views for some units that have garden outlooks. A proportion of the units have excellent ocean outlooks and terraces.

### 2.2 Size and scope of the proposed development

The proposed project is for a residential subdivision with 39 parcels. The estimated final dwelling count is 39, all expected to be single household dwellings. Some may be offered for seasonal accommodation. The potential number of persons housed is estimated to be in the order of 100 people, based on an occupancy of 2.5 persons per dwelling as most residential houses will have three or four bedrooms.



## 3 Population trends

### 3.1 Population growth – wider context

The population of Coffs Harbour has grown considerably due to the immigration of lifestyle seekers. Coffs Harbour had a population of over 70,000 in 2008. Growth rates have been above the area's average and the state's average from 1991 to 2004, although the gap in growth rates is narrowing.

It is expected the population of Coffs Harbour will continue to grow considerably in the future. The draft Settlement Strategy 'Our Living City', anticipates growth to 99,000 persons by 2031. Growth in Coffs Harbour will exceed growth in the surrounding region and NSW significantly. The wider Mid-North Coast Region is earmarked for substantial longer term growth as well, although at a lower rate than Coffs Harbour. The table below shows historic population growth.

**Table 1.** Estimated resident population in Coffs Harbour, Mid-North Coast and NSW, 1991-2008 (in persons and in % growth per annum over interval)

	1991	1996	2001	2004	2008
Coffs Harbour	50877	57283 2.4%	61770 1.5%	66529 1.5%	70371 1.4%
Mid-North Coast	240753	262985 1.8%	275274 0.9%	291865 1.2%	299848* 0.9%
New South Wales	5732032	6038696 1.0%	6371745 1.1%	6731295 1.1%	6984172 0.9%

\*2007, latest published

Source: Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, NSW; ABS Estimate Resident Population by Age and Sex 3235.0

A breakdown between the urban and rural areas of Coffs Harbour shows that for most of the period from 1991 to 2008, growth was strongest in the urban area (not shown in the table).

Examination of the changing age profile reveals that net in-migration has been strongest in working age, 25-34 age groups, often bringing accompanying children under 15. Nearly as strong have been those aged 55 to 69 as a proportion of these age groups, but the numbers moving in this age group are smaller.

In contrast to these incoming age groups, there continues to be a strong departure of young adults, aged 15 to 25 characteristic of regional areas seeking education and employment opportunities and life experiences elsewhere. At least some of the in-migration in the 25-39 year age groups would be some of these returning. However, while in-migration of 25-39 year olds is strong, it has not been strong enough to make up for the out-migration of younger age groups. Consequently, the last decade showed a relative decline of people aged 25-39 years.

This pattern of change is shown in the figure below. The figure also reveals a shift of the graph to the right, which means the population in Coffs Harbour is aging.

Much of the movements of young adults is tidal – a departure in the late teens or early twenties and a return in the late twenties to early thirties. Lifestyle migrants fall into two broad groups:

- The family aged household seeking a smaller city environment to raise their family
- The late fifties/early sixties household, with considerable purchasing power and assets, originated from Sydney or other major urban centres.

Relatively fewer relocate when they have teenage children as social and schooling connections and career pressures make relocation harder.

A few lifestyle migrants relocate their business – and many of their staff – when moving to the area. This contributes to the economic growth of the area and is essential if population is to be retained.

The prognosis on population growth has considerable consequences for the future housing market. The demand for housing is going to be strong while the types of dwellings sought are changing. Australia's typical household size is decreasing to an estimated average household size of between 2.2 and 2.3 persons in 2021. Coffs Harbour experienced a considerable drop in household size from 2.7 persons in 1991 to 2.5 persons in 2006.

Business owners relocating to the region are relatively wealthy individuals who would have a particular interest in higher value water front dwellings or those with an attractive natural environment and views of the sea.

In keeping with the principal focus of this report of the effect of the development on the availability of services, the analysis of population and demand for services will be assessed in the context of the local area, being the area within 5 km of the site, indicative of the catchment area for the scope of services considered.

### **Coffs Harbour key growth areas**

To accommodate future population growth towards a desired residential pattern, Coffs Harbour identified key growth areas to catch residential growth to 2030. Within northern Coffs Harbour Moonee/Sapphire Beach is expected to accommodate for 1,500 additional residents, which implies a population growth of 38 per cent from 2004 to 2030. Population within Sapphire Beach is estimated to reach 1800 from the estimated 1670 in 2004. Developing residential dwellings, as the Sapphire development proposes, would be consistent with Council's strategic residential aims.

The new development represents less than 20% of the additional dwellings constructed in the LGA in one year. Furthermore, the development is able to absorb 6.5% of expected and planned population growth in the Moonee/Sapphire Beach area until 2030.

All 39 lots will be developed in one stage but construction of houses and their occupation will occur over a number of years. Recently lodged and granted approvals show development is mainly concentrated in coastal areas. The more luxury coastal dwellings are particularly sought after by lifestyle migrants.

## 3.2 Current population

The current population in the surrounding area is summarised in Table 2, along with the proportion of increase represented by the expected population of the proposed site. The populations are based on data at the Census Collector District (CCD) level from the 2006 Census (usual residents) and are summarised according to how far from the site each is. For the larger CCDs, the distribution of population within the CCD was taken into account based on the distribution of housing as evident from aerial photos (Google Maps 2009).

**Table 2.** Population near the site and increase from project (2006)

	<b>Population</b>	<b>Increase</b>
Within about 1 km	446	21%
Within about 2 km	3334	3%
Within about 5 km	7325	1%

Source: ABS Census 2006 Basic Community Profiles at Census Collector District (CCD) level

As can be seen from the table, within about 1 km of the site the increase in population is significant, but within the context of the wider area, the increase is very small.

It is likely that the development will attract a similar profile of resident to adjacent residential areas. The profile by age for the surrounding areas is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Population near the site and increase from project (2006)

	Within about 1 km	Within about 2 km	Within about 5 km
aged 0-4	5%	4%	5%
aged 5-9	7%	7%	6%
aged 10-14	7%	8%	9%
aged 15-19	8%	7%	8%
aged 20-54	39%	43%	45%
aged 55-64	16%	15%	13%
aged 65-74	12%	8%	8%
Aged 75+	6%	7%	6%

Source: ABS Census 2006 Basic Community Profiles at Census Collector District (CCD) level

The profile of the population by age shows that approximately 10% of the population is primary school aged and another 10% secondary school aged. This suggests that of the 100 new residents, there will be about 10 additional primary and 10 additional secondary school students. There are likely to be about 5 pre-school aged children.

At the other end of the spectrum, over one third of residents in the 1 km radius are over age 55 and 18% are over age 65. There is a significant pattern of a higher concentration of older residents along the coastal strip near the site compared to either inland or further away from the site along the coast. Assuming similar composition of future residents, we would expect about 30-35 new residents aged 55+ of which about 15-20 would be over 65. In all there are over 850 residents aged 55+ within about 2 km of the site so this represents an increase of about 4%.

These estimates will be used as the basis for estimated demand for additional services. Note that while for some services (schools) this new resident population will be an increase in full, for others such as health care, the existing tourist visitors will already create some demand. However, while lost from the site, much of this tourist demand will just be displaced to other accommodation in Coffs Harbour. Thus we have assumed for all services that the new population will represent a net increase.

## 4 Services available

The section considers the availability of:

- Schools
- Pre-schools and long day care
- Hospitals and health care
- Transport and
- Parks and open space

It has not assessed libraries, sports clubs, tertiary education, employment assistance or religious facilities.

### 4.1 Schools

As noted in section 3.2, the new development should add about 10 new primary school and 10 new high school students to the area.

#### 4.1.1 Primary Schools

The nearest public primary school is at Korora with an enrolment of 545 students. While the distance (2.5 km) could be walked by older school children, pedestrian routes and access are not good for this and most children would depend on parents driving them to school or the school bus. There is a school bus stop right outside the entrance to the site. The developer has committed to build a shelter at the stop. The school maintains relatively high enrolments – although it was down slightly this year – as it has a good reputation in the area. Grades five and six are quite ‘tight’ at the moment but the school administration stated that ten additional students would not be a problem.

There are three other public primary schools within about 10 minutes of the site, located to the south within Coffs Harbour. The total enrolment of all four schools is about 1900 students. The nearest school to the north of the site is in Sandy Beach, about 17 km or 26 minutes north of the site. These are listed in Table 4.

The additional 10 primary aged students represent an increase of less than 2% for Korora or less than half of a percent across the four nearby schools. In addition there are a number of private schools located in or near Coffs Harbour.

**Table 4.** Primary schools near the site

<b>School</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Enrolment</b>	<b>Distance</b>
<b>Public Primary Schools</b>			
Korora Public School	3 Korora School Road, Korora	545	2.5 km, 6 mins
Tyalla Public School	Joyce St, Coffs Harbour	448	5.4 km, 8 mins
Narranga Public School	Robin St, Coffs Harbour	608	6.8 km, 9 mins
Coffs Harbour Public School	Salamander St, Coffs Harbour	305	6.9 km, 11 mins
Sandy Beach Public School	Saye Close, Sandy Beach	347	17.2 km, 26 mins
<b>Private Primary Schools</b>			
St Augustines Primary School	Gordon St, Coffs Harbour	633	6.1 km, 8 mins
Casuarina Steiner School	Gentle St, Coffs Harbour	150	5.2 km, 8 mins
Coffs Harbour Christian Community Primary School	27 Caracoa St, Coffs Harbour	240	7.1 km, 11 mins

Source: NSW Dept of Education Schools Locator;

## 4.1.2 High Schools

There are three high schools in Coffs Harbour (Table 5). Sapphire Beach is within the Coffs Harbour High School catchment. Both the Coffs Harbour High School and Orara High School report no difficulty in accommodating additional students with no grades currently suffering overcrowding. Both have gradually rising enrolments. An additional 10 students would represent an increase of just over 1% for either school or less than 1% if divided between them.

**Table 5.** High schools near the site

<b>School</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Enrolment</b>	<b>Distance</b>
<b>Public High Schools</b>			
Coffs Harbour High School	High St, Coffs Harbour Jetty	818	7.6 km, 12 mins
Orara High School	Joyce St, Coffs Harbour	634	5.4 km, 8 mins
<b>Private High Schools</b>			
John Paul College	Hogbin Drv, Coffs Harbour	1100	9.2 km, 14 mins

Source: NSW Dept of Education Schools Locator;

## 4.2 Pre-schools and long day care

There are a large number of long day care and pre-schools in Coffs Harbour, with five within five kilometres of the site. As noted earlier, there are likely to be only about 5 pre-school children in the new development, and not all of these will require or be suitable for day care. There is likely to be sufficient capacity to meet the additional demand.

## 4.3 Health Care

### 4.3.1 Hospitals

#### **Coffs Harbour Base Hospital**

A new Base Hospital at Coffs Harbour has recently been completed costing \$80.6m. The new hospital will provide upgraded core services and enhanced services in the areas of mental health, aged care and rehabilitation and some clinical support services and primary and community care services. Coffs Harbour Base Hospital provides emergency, critical care medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics, mental health, limited rehabilitation and a range of clinical support services. The Emergency Department is a 24 hour service.

#### **Baringa Private Hospital**

Baringa Private Hospital is an 80 bed facility servicing the Coffs Harbour and surrounding areas. Baringa Private Hospital is of modern hospital design, and has equipment for comprehensive diagnosis and treatment.

#### **Coffs Harbour Health Campus**

Community Health provides a range of services free of charge to individuals, families and communities. The service aims to promote the health and well being of clients through education, assessment, implementation of care, and referral to appropriate services as required.

### 4.3.2 Aged care and nursing homes

Coffs Harbour has a significantly higher proportion of older persons than NSW as a whole.

There are a range of services available to help within the Aged Care & Rehabilitation Service which are located at Coffs Harbour Health Campus. These include the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT), Aged Care Transitional Intervention Program (ACTIP), Veterans Home Care Assessment and Coordination (VHC), and Residential Respite Coordination. These services provide care to older persons at a level equal to or above that provided across the state.

There are 22 accommodation establishments listed in the Coffs Harbour *Information Directory for Older People*, ranging from retirement villages to hostels and nursing homes. As noted earlier, the number of people aged 65+ will be about 15-20. Of these, only one or two would likely require nursing home support in any given year.

Discussions with the administrators or managers from nursing homes showed that there is available capacity in a number of homes around Coffs Harbour. One nursing home that reported generally being full is making provision to expand by an additional forty bed.

Nationally, provision of additional nursing home capacity as growth in the numbers of older persons accelerated around the country will prove challenging unless the funding arrangements ensure that provision is financially viable. However, it does not appear the Coffs Harbour is particularly disadvantaged in this respect at the present time.

### 4.3.3 Other health

Coffs Harbour appears to be well supplied with doctors, dentists and most health support services including specialist support for many fields.

## 4.4 Transport

The Pacific Highway passes the site entrance and provides the main access to the town of Coffs Harbour and its amenities.

There is no public transport provided directly to the site. The nearest **busways** bus route is about 4 km to the south of the site. As mentioned earlier, there is a school bus stop right outside the entrance to the site. The developer has committed to build a shelter at the stop.

Existing residents are heavily car dependent, although some use alternative means of transport for work and other purposes. Data on journey to work are summarised in Table 6. Notably all areas listed have relatively similar profiles for method of travel to work. Overall level of car dependence (as drive + as passenger) is relatively consistent at 70%-72%. The area within about 1 km of the site has a slightly higher proportion of those that work at home and also fewer that did not go to work. Those travelling by bus from all but a small part of the areas covered would be using a company supplied or other private bus as most areas are not serviced by public transport.



**Table 6.** Method of travel to work

	Within about 1 km	Within about 2 km	Within about 5 km
bus	2%	1%	1%
car as driver	62%	64%	62%
car as passenger	10%	8%	8%
walked	2%	2%	4%
other	7%	5%	5%
worked at home	11%	8%	8%
did not go to work	7%	11%	11%
not stated	0%	1%	2%
total	100%	100%	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006 Basic Community Profiles at Census Collector District (CCD) level

While the site is not served by public transport, it is no different than the other development that extends north of Coffs Harbour along the coast. Should public transport be extended to the area, it is highly likely to use the Pacific Highway as the route, and then pass very close to the site.

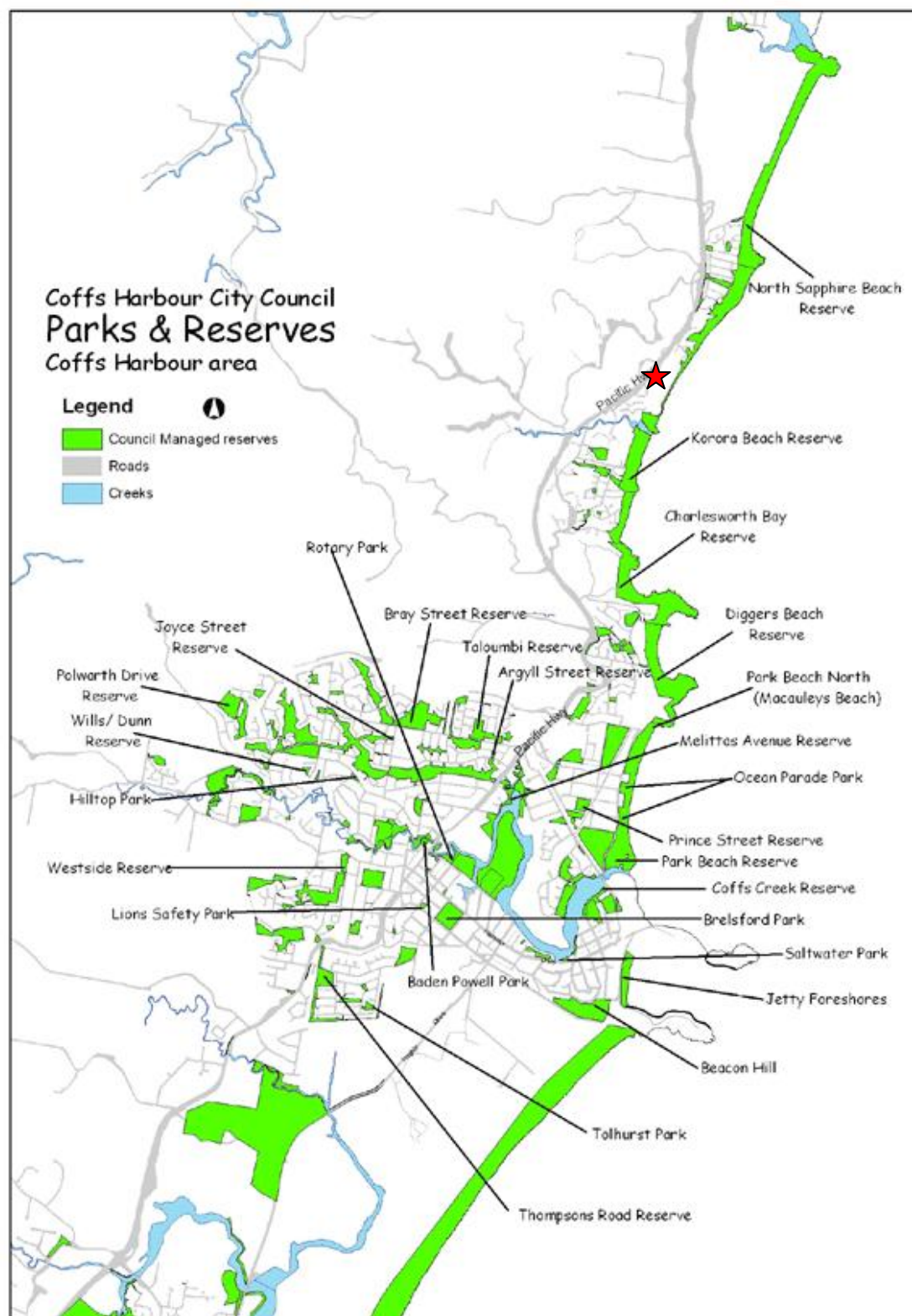
## 4.5 Parks and Open Space

The proposed subdivision is located with close access to the beach and sea frontage. It includes both open circulation space within the development, a vegetation reserve and a community foreshore. The coastal walk links to the more extensive waterfront walkway extending along much of the coastline, both to the north and south to the town of Coffs Harbour. The developer is providing a link for the coastal walk from the beach up the hill to Coachman's Close as a vital part of the coastal walk.

There is an extensive network of parks and reserves including active and passive recreational spaces within Coffs Harbour shown in Figure 1. There are also extensive State forests to the west of the site (Lower Bucca State Forest, Orara State Forest).

It is likely that the new residents will make similar or fewer demands on many of these parks and reserves than the tourists previously accommodated.

**Figure 1.** Coffs Harbour City parks and reserves



## 5 Sapphire Beach Development Impacts

### 5.1 Conclusions

1. The increase in population is small and well within forecasts and planned increases in the site vicinity.
2. Total demands on facilities will be a small proportion of total capacity.
3. For all sectors contacted and those assessed from public information, there is sufficient capacity for the additional population.

While the previously assessed impacts of the closure of the Pelican Beach Resort, *Sapphire Resort, Economic Impact Assessment*, (June 2006, SGS Economics & Planning) have not been reviewed in detail, we fully expect these conclusions to remain valid:

1. The closure of the hotel will be more likely to shift demand to other hotels in the region operating below capacity, with net loss of jobs likely to be about 10. Total tourist visitation to Coffs Harbour is unlikely to be affected. The additional clientele gained by the remaining hotels may contribute to their ability to reinvest and upgrade their establishments.
2. The conference and events sector will lose only 3-4% of the delegate days capacity with event displaced captured by the remaining venues, although 1% of events may be lost.
3. As total visitor numbers are not expected to be affected significantly by the closure, employment and turnover in restaurants, attractions, transport, retail and other tourism supported activities are likely to remain unchanged.
4. Given the small overall change from the closure, the multiplier effects of the closure are also expected to be negligible.