

OBJECTION TO: SSD-83069459 - Mixed Use Development 4-8 Bells Boulevard Kingscliff

I strongly object to the request to increase the height control for the site and the proposed building height (of up to 21m) of this development (as per the concurrent planning proposal and the EIS). 21m is more than a 50% increase in the prescribed maximum height of 13.6m (not 13.8m as stated in the application). 13.6m is the maximum allowable height (where zoned) across the Shire and Tweed Coast, with the exception of the Tweed Heads city precinct. Seeking an increase of more than 50% beggars belief, given the application of building heights across the Shire, particularly the coastal precincts and the reflection and protection of these in our planning frameworks.

The proposed building heights are completely incompatible with the context and character of not only the surrounding built (resort) environment and low rise residential neighbourhoods, but across Kingscliff itself. The proponent's justification of the need for a five-storey development at 21m is laughable, particularly when you consider that across Kingscliff there are quality, **four-storey** residential developments (completed and underway) at **13.6m**. This point in itself makes a mockery of the proponent's contention that this proposal provides a natural transition from the three-storey Salt development and that *'The proposed design takes into, respects and is consistent with the existing built form character as outlined in the Kingscliff Locality Plan' (EIS p3)*. No building beyond 13.6m exists in the Shire outside of Tweed Heads, let alone one at five-storey's. The building heights proposed simply and obviously do not 'respect' existing built form and character.

I also attended the public consultation meeting held by the proponent and can advise that (despite what has been presented in the application's consultation report), there was no excitement at all in the room regarding the proposed building heights presented by the proponent. Certainly, my written feedback made it clear that while there was merit in the proposal, building heights were not up for negotiation. Discussions with many of the attendees during and after reflected the same. There is no love in our community or support for increasing building heights.

The Development Overall

The overall development has merit; it is attractively designed and provides a very welcome diversity of housing types (1, 2 and 3 bedrooms) and mixed use of retail and residential. A question remains however as to whether or not the development will simply just facilitate investment properties (leading to the scourge of short-term rentals) and not directly impact and meet the need for housing and permanent rentals. I would hope this is taken into consideration during the assessment process.

Impacts on infrastructure (traffic, parking and services) also need to be clearly and carefully considered and, importantly, acted upon in regard to the legislated obligations contained in our planning frameworks without compromise.

Conclusion

Our community has fought long and hard over many decades to maintain the low-rise character of the Shire and particularly the Tweed Coast. It is why people are attracted to the area and why it provides opportunity for residential developments and growth that are balanced with the need to provide housing and services for current and future generations without 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater' in the form of excessive height and density. In this way maintaining the prescribed height limits goes right to the heart of the character, fabric and amenity of the Shire, both now and envisaged. This proposed development in its current form runs completely counter to this.

There are positive aspects to this proposal, which can be fully achieved without trashing the hard fought for building height limits and the character, fabric and amenity of our coastal villages plus disregarding and not respecting our (highly consultative) planning frameworks. Approval of this proposal as it stands, would also set a dangerous precedent in relation to building heights, which are always under threat from inappropriate development.

The proponent has a chance now to adjust the proposal. They purchased the property 'eyes wide open' in 2024 and clearly knew what the community wants and expects in relation to the genuine provision of housing and the planning frameworks to work within, particularly building heights. This site could certainly accommodate a development that is compatible with the character of the surrounding precinct and Kingscliff and still be a 'win' for the proponent and meet housing needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an objection to this development. Please let me know if you have any queries or require further information.

Peter Newton
Kingscliff