

Residents Response to Uniting Kingscliff Development Proposal

My name is Andrew Eke and I have reviewed the concepts for Uniting's proposal and provide the following feedback that I hope can be considered through the consultation phase of the project.

I am a resident of Drift Court and lived in Kingscliff and the Tweed Shire for over 30 years.

Through working in the development industry for almost 20 years, I understand the factors that influence the feasibility of these types of projects and the decisions through would have informed this phase of the project to achieve "highest and best use". I also acknowledge the intended land use is largely consistent with the current land use over the site and I have no objections to aged care, seniors living land use. I do however have concerns regarding the layout and scale of the proposal and its impacts on the surrounding residents. In addition, I raise a number of likely issues or constraints with the proposal they should be considered through further detailed planning and analysis of the proposal.

I thank you in advance for listening to the public concerns over the past few months and understand that the consultation process is continuing. I also welcome the feedback that these issues raised are being considered in development refinements. I expect that surrounding residents would be more than willing to assist in refining the development proposal in addressing their concerns and potentially offering a letter of support to the proposal which would greatly assist in the state planning approval phase. That said, the concerns I raise below are considered major to the surrounding residents and recommended to be addressed.

1.0 Built Form – Height and Scale: While I am not an architect or town planner, I do have concerns with the proposed setbacks and scale of the buildings along the edges of Drift Court Properties and Lorien Way specifically.

While it was stated by the project team that " the proposal complies to the minimum requirements for set-backs", these would be the minimum requirements and based on my review of neighbouring properties the proposal will have a significant impact to its immediate neighbours including privacy, amenity and acoustic impacts. I also understand that any potential dispensations relating to achieving such proposed height, bulk and scale must pass relevant strict criteria. The ability for the proposal (as presented to the public) to comply with any dispensation requirements lacked any detail and was conveyed by representatives as a forgone conclusion that it would be accepted by authorities. I witnessed first-hand the stress and anxiety to neighbouring residents that the proposal was conveyed by representatives as "getting the green light" for what was shown on the consultation plans.

I am aware that other immediately adjacent residents have also provided details of their concerns on this matter and reiterate the importance of addressing these issues as part of the design refinement.

Can I please recommend further consultation material and information is provided in far greater local context and considers the impacts to the residents in more detail.

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission

2.0 Vehicular and Pedestrian Access Concerns

The traffic arrangement will be constrained by the existing safety and operational constraints at Kingscliff Street as well as minimising 'new' impacts to Lorien Way and Beach Street.

2.1 Kingscliff Street Access Limitation

The driveway crossover to Kingscliff Street currently only provides a 4.5m wide single lane driveway as well as a 'line marked' pedestrian connection to Kingscliff Street. The existing configuration and operations of this driveway are considered sub-standard and already result vehicles conflicting along the one-way sections (including service vehicles) and observed queuing on Kingscliff Street back into Beach Street roundabout. This presents an existing safety issue for traffic and pedestrians that needs to be considered as part of any development over the site.

The proposal will see an increase in traffic generation using Kingscliff Street including an increase in service vehicle movements (in both size and scale).

Providing a pedestrian pathway connection to the east of the site to connect to Kingscliff town centre and foreshore will be essential to meet the needs of the facility's residents and staff. This pedestrian connection also needs to consider the specific needs of the aged residents including pathway width, DDA compliance, grades and separation from traffic areas.

I therefore see a critical issues with the current proposal being able to achieve the required access from Kingscliff Street. Given the existing safety and operational concerns with the existing arrangement, as well as the need to maintain pedestrian connection to service the vulnerable users of the facility. Any substantial increase in traffic using this access will be an unacceptable to Council and the community. The maximum traffic volumes utilising the Kingscliff Street access should therefore not exceed the current volumes under the current one-way scenario. In addition, the Kingscliff Street access handle must also maintain a pedestrian connection that can service the development.

2.2 Lorien Way Access Limitation

While a new and alternate rear access is proposed via Lorien Way, this proposed rear access does also exhibit constraints that may influence the traffic generating potential for the site.

Lorien Way is a local collector street and connects to Beach Street at the north. While I acknowledge that some additional traffic can be accommodate through a driveway crossover to Lorien Way, Lorien way does incorporate high levels of on-street kerbside parking and numerous priority-controlled intersections. This is also particularly relevant for the intersection of Beach Street / Lorien Way at the northern extent, where driveway sight lines are regularly compromised and near-misses are common place. This on-street parking does have the potential to impact driver sight lines at the intersections and also for driveways along Lorien Way. Lorien Way includes medium density dwellings and subsequently exhibits a high degree of on-street parking utilisation. Any loss of on-street parking as a result of the driveway crossover needs to be considered and addressed. One option to investigate may be to formalise on-street parking line marking and kerbside allocation along Lorien Way in consultation with Council. On-street parking loss however will need to be off-set and I question the ability to do this....

It is unclear from the proposal concept whether the plans is to provide a driveway crossover or new intersection design (i.e kerb returns).

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.
Conflicting
needs still exist
in the proposal
as previously
advised.

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

The traffic impact assessment should consider the existing traffic and parking operations along Lorien Way. This also needs to consider the future traffic growth potential associated with nearby land releases. For example, Beach Street is expected to see a substantial increase in traffic growth once full development of the Kingscliff Locality Plan is realised to the west.

This issue combined with the constraints at Kingscliff Street is considered in my view a critical constraint of the site that needs to be addressed in the Traffic Impact Assessment

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

2.3 Pedestrian network connectivity to the surrounding community

Kingscliff Street currently exhibits deficiencies in pedestrian pathways and crossing facility to connect residents on the western side to the shared pathway along Marine Parade. This includes limited crossing points at Beach Street and Drift Court to name a few. The proposal will generate an increased need to provide high quality pathways, in particular for an aged demographic and vulnerable users.

In addition to pathway connections, the pathway condition along Kingscliff Street is poor and there may be opportunities for the proposal to work with Council in facilitating some of these pedestrian improvements in the surrounding area.

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

I would expect the subject site was chosen for its proximity to key lifestyle facilities within Kingscliff Town Centre. For this to be realised and if Uniting Care was serious about providing active transport accessibility to the site for its residents, visitors and staff, I recommend that the pedestrian facilities around the site be further considered as part of the proposal, committed to and outlined in accurate detail.

Height

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

Further to the points raised in Item 1, I cannot overstate the community sentiments to height in Kingscliff.

The proposal beyond 3 levels is outside the communities expectations and inconsistent with the surrounding area. While I personally do acknowledge the benefits of height in certain areas in Kingscliff and note that the increase density and subsequent heights could be investigated in certain locations, it would be expected that this would only occur within the immediate town centre area along central sections of Marine Parade and Pearl Street. The proposal to maximise and increase height on the subject site is well outside the town centre, would be a stark contrast and have significant visual and amenity impacts to the surrounding established neighbourhoods along Beach Street, Lorian Way, Blue Jay Cres and Drift Court.

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

In particular the immediate neighbours have both established and also recently constructed homes in line with the height and setback requirements. The visual renderings displayed as part of the consultation behind these established homes has caused significant distress to residents who fear a loss of existing privacy, natural light and amenity as a result.

I recommend the placement and height of buildings associated with the proposal be carefully reconsidered in order to address these concerns.

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

Acoustic and Amenity impacts

My specific comments relate to the frontage along the south-eastern boundary in proximity to the existing Uniting Church (adjacent to properties 37, 39 and 41 Drift Court). I am aware of existing acoustic and amenity issues associated with the existing operations. These include:

- Light glare from vehicles and security lighting across the facility
- Regular service vehicle movements
- Alarms going off on a regular basis.

The existing nature of the facility was an 'expected factor' when the development of the Drift Court community was completed in 2017/2018 and as such, the dwellings were each individually designed to consider these impacts from the existing Uniting Aged Care and Church neighbour. However, the proposal appears to have no such regard when considering the impacts it will have on these dwellings.

Specifically for 41 Drift Ct, the proposed service area will be located directly adjacent to indoor living space, outdoor living space and also several bedrooms. Typically to address this impact would require greater separation of the service area as well as Acoustic fencing. Any acoustic fencing would also still need to be set back sufficient distance to maintain sufficient light and amenity.

Alternatively, it would be better suited to located the service area further away from existing residential dwellings, more central to the site or with a basement area.

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

Existing Church, Flooding and impacts to site levels.

The proposal plans show the retention of the existing Uniting Church in the eastern corner of the site. While I welcome this commitment to retain the church in its original form, I fail to see how this can realistically occur on a civil engineering perspective given the existing and proposed heights of the internal ground floor and roadway. By retaining the church, this will create a low point on the site compared to the new buildings and roads in the northern area of the site.

In addition, the boundary to Drift Court properties is adjacent to an approx. 1.0m wide easement (on Drift Court properties land) which is around 1.5m below Drift Court. During the 2022 April flood, this area was significantly inundated. Further details on the flooding and civil interface with neighbours is required to understand how the development will not adversely impact its neighbours on a similar flood event.

Consistency with Uniting Care's vision

Not Addressed
in SSDA
Submission.

Overall, I was disappointed that the proposal was provided to the public without any comprehensive assessments or reports to back it up and also the way in which it was conveyed. I witnessed first hand many nearby residents undergo significant stress and anxiety based on the proposal put forward. Many of whom do not have a background in the planning or development industry and walked away questioning whether to immediately sell or move based on the proposal. I personally viewed this outcome as a negative exercise for the community and not upholding the Uniting Care's Ethical Principles as outlined on their website, including:

- Take accountability or making the biggest positive difference for people.
- Give preference to the interests of the most disadvantaged.
- Listen, understand and then act with courage, empowering people through self-determination.

- Adopt and apply the highest professional standards within our constraints.
- Address organisational sustainability so that we can continue our mission.
- Seek transparency in communications with our stakeholders.
- Acknowledge that our decisions seek equity recognising that equity and equality are not always the same.

I do however acknowledge the recent correspondence received as of (19/04/2023), that the concerns are being reviewed by the consultant team. Hopefully with the constructive and targeted input provided above to some of the items, the team can consider a revised development proposal that meets the needs of Uniting Care, but also addresses the site specific issues and needs of its existing neighbours. In doing so, I would welcome providing further feedback to assist.

Sincerely

Andrew Eke

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