

Submission No. 8

11.1.19

16 May 2014

The Research Director
State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee
sdiic@parliament.qld.gov.au

Submission from the Sippy Downs & District Community Association Inc

The SDDCA makes the following submission on the **Sustainable Planning (Infrastructure Charges) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014**. Our submission focuses on the elements of the Bill relating to infrastructure charges, with particular reference to the proposed greenfield development at Palmview, immediately adjacent to the Sippy Downs community. We draw on our previous submission on the Infrastructure Charges Framework Review 2013 (August 2013).

The SDDCA, which represents a community of around 8,000 people, has a particular interest in issues relating to planning and infrastructure. Our association has lobbied extensively and worked closely with government at all levels to achieve best practice outcomes in our region for sustainable development that is supported by appropriate infrastructure and services.

The majority of Sippy Downs residents live in the Chancellor Park estate. The development was court-approved rather than being negotiated between council and the developers and poor infrastructure planning was a result. Rather than being a single master-planned community, Chancellor Park was developed in several stages, each with different developers, resulting in significant infrastructure problems. Our aim is to ensure that the Palmview development, which will house a population double the size of Sippy Downs (approx. 17,000 people), provides appropriate infrastructure to meet community needs, without impacting adversely on the surrounding district.

The SDDCA supports the Bill's objective of establishing *"a long-term local infrastructure planning and charging framework that is certain, consistent and transparent and which supports local authority sustainability and development feasibility in Queensland"*.

The interests of local communities – both existing and future ratepayers and residents – are dependent on local authority sustainability, in order to ensure affordability and appropriate levels of service and facilities. Where development does not provide appropriate infrastructure, communities and councils are adversely impacted.

The SDDCA supports the use of infrastructure agreements, particularly for large developments. They provide certainty for the community that a major new development will deliver appropriate and properly staged infrastructure.

The proposed Palmview development illustrates this. This is a greenfield site, with no existing infrastructure, including roads, water etc. It will have a significant impact on the Sippy Downs, particularly in view of the latter's own infrastructure issues. These include lack of community and sporting/recreation facilities and roads and traffic problems.

There is an infrastructure agreement in place for Palmview, negotiated as part of the structure plan drawn up by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and signed by all parties.

SDDCA submission on the Sustainable Planning (Infrastructure Charges) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

The SDDCA supported this agreement because it provided certainty to the community that infrastructure will be provided by the developer at appropriate stages of the development.

The infrastructure agreement also ensured that the development would be sequenced so adverse impacts on the Sippy Downs community would be minimized.

The Palmview structure planning process attracted over 1,200 public submissions and a parliamentary petition. The community feedback demonstrated strong support for the appropriate provision of infrastructure and sequencing of development.

The primary Palmview developer now wishes to vary the infrastructure agreement, for commercial reasons. In order to avoid paying for an essential road link (Claymore Road at the eastern end of the development) it wants to commence development at the western end, adjacent to its existing Bellflower estate. This would place unsustainable pressure on the Sippy Downs local road network, as the only road access would be via Springhill Drive and University Way, which are not designed for the additional traffic volume.

The sequencing of development specified in the Palmview structure plan, allows the Springhill Drive link to be opened up only after other access roads into Palmview are built, spreading the traffic load to the benefit of both existing and future residents. Council and the community believe this sequencing of development and infrastructure is essential to ensure the viability of Palmview.

The Claymore Road link is essential for Palmview and demonstrates the need for local authorities to be able to condition key infrastructure as part of the development approval process. As noted above, the only other available northbound access point is via Springhill Drive and University Way, which cannot support the additional traffic. Claymore Road will provide access from Palmview to the Sunshine Motorway, Bruce Highway and the rest of the Sunshine Coast.

Further, we are concerned that the Palmview developer wishes to avoid providing other key infrastructure, including green space/recreational land. We believe their intent is to place sporting fields and facilities on flood-prone land. The final Palmview Structure Plan and associated infrastructure agreement ensured that all of the required blocks were above a minimum acceptable level (minor flooding on playable areas) with all hard stand and community facility/sporting buildings being above the Q100. Our understanding is that in other areas, including Meridan to the south of Palmview, sporting facilities have been created on land subject to flooding and are inaccessible for lengthy periods following wet weather.

If the Palmview developer could site recreational land/green space on flood-prone land in order to maximize residential development, it would be to its financial benefit at the expense of the community.

Without the infrastructure agreement the Palmview developers would be avoiding provision of essential infrastructure, to the detriment of its own residents and the surrounding district. There would be enormous community backlash. This would extend beyond the immediate Sippy Downs area, as all Sunshine Coast council ratepayers would be impacted by the additional cost burden, should council have to provide infrastructure required for Palmview.

Sippy Downs & District Community Association Inc
www.sippydowns.qld.au | info@sippydowns.qld.au | PO Box 7002, Sippy Downs, 4556

While we recognise that development at Palmview is governed by an existing infrastructure agreement and not subject to the Bill, we believe it is an example that is relevant to future developments – and potentially to Palmview itself, should the infrastructure agreement need to be renegotiated for any reason.

It is critical to ensure local authorities retain the power to require developers to provide appropriate infrastructure and condition development approvals accordingly. We are concerned that the proposed changes to infrastructure charging will disadvantage councils to the benefit of developers. Local authorities need to be able to manage their infrastructure over the long term, for the benefit of their ratepayers.

Prue Lovell
President, SDDCA

██████████
████████████████████

15 May 2014