
Submission to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC)

Re: Uniting Kingscliff Seniors Housing Redevelopment

To the Independent Planning Commission,

I am writing to object to the proposed Uniting Kingscliff Seniors Housing Redevelopment and to express my deep concern that the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's assessment has not adequately addressed the substantial and legitimate issues raised by local residents, including myself.

As the owner and resident of a Lorian Way property which directly borders the Uniting site, I am one of those most immediately and personally affected by this development. I previously lodged a detailed submission outlining significant concerns about traffic, overdevelopment, height anomalies, flooding risk, and the detrimental impact this proposal would have on the quiet, coastal character of Kingscliff.

Having reviewed the Department's assessment report, I am dismayed to find that these concerns remain unresolved and, in many instances, have been minimised or dismissed rather than genuinely addressed.

1. Traffic and Safety

The Department's report concludes that traffic impacts will be "acceptable" and that proposed access points and upgrades will "mitigate" congestion. This assessment does not reflect the lived reality of Lorian Way, which is a narrow residential street currently used primarily for local access, pedestrians, and cyclists.

The addition of constant vehicle movements — including staff, visitors, service and delivery trucks — will dramatically alter the safety and amenity of the street. The proposed entry and exit via Lorian Way are unsuitable for the scale of development. The Department's reliance on traffic modelling that averages vehicle movements over long periods fails to acknowledge the concentrated peaks and ongoing disruption to residents.

In short, there are no meaningful safeguards for pedestrian and cyclist safety, nor any realistic assurance that congestion at the Kingscliff Street roundabout will not worsen. The Department's conclusion that impacts will be minor is simply not credible to those of us who live here and know how limited the existing road network already is.

2. Overdevelopment, Height, and Scale

The Department accepts building heights of up to four storeys as “consistent with the site’s context.” This is demonstrably untrue. The immediate surroundings — including Lorient Way — consist of low-rise, small-scale residential dwellings that form part of Kingscliff’s distinctive beachside character.

Allowing four-storey buildings within this low-lying area represents clear overdevelopment. The bulk, height, and density of the proposed structures will dominate the local skyline, overshadow adjoining properties, and permanently alter the visual landscape. The report acknowledges minor exceedances of the height control but dismisses them as acceptable, ignoring the cumulative impact of multiple tall buildings in one compact site.

This development belongs in a high-density urban precinct, not a quiet coastal town known for its relaxed scale and village atmosphere.

3. Flooding and Stormwater Risk

The Department’s report states that “flood impacts have been appropriately mitigated” through engineering design. Yet it provides no detailed explanation of how neighbouring properties — including mine — will be protected from redirected surface water and stormwater runoff.

Kingscliff is a known flood-prone area. Increasing the impermeable surface area of this site with large-scale buildings and carparks poses real risks to adjacent homes. The Department appears to have relied on the proponent’s own consultants without independent peer review or site-specific assurance for neighbouring properties.

This is unacceptable. As a resident whose property sits at a lower elevation, I remain unconvinced that the flood mitigation measures are sufficient or enforceable, and I fear the future consequences of poor drainage design on my home.

4. Construction Noise, Duration, and Amenity

The assessment acknowledges “temporary construction impacts” but deems them “manageable.” For those of us living metres from the site boundary, four years (previously noted as six) of continual heavy construction is not “temporary.” It represents years of lost peace, mental strain, and daily disruption.

The Department has not imposed any specific, enforceable conditions on noise, dust, vibration, or working hours beyond standard guidelines. There is no mechanism to ensure compliance or recourse for residents affected by breaches.

For me personally, as someone who works from home and purchased this property precisely for its quiet environment, the impact will be devastating. The stress of enduring years of construction — followed by permanent traffic and noise from the operational facility — will severely diminish my quality of life and wellbeing.

5. Loss of Local Character and Amenity

Perhaps most distressing is that this development represents a fundamental shift in what Kingscliff is and should remain: a small, peaceful, human-scaled beachside town.

The Department's assessment claims that the proposal "responds to the existing character of Kingscliff." It does not. The bulk and design are urban in nature, completely out of step with the surrounding neighbourhood. The density, scale, and intensity of use will overwhelm the local infrastructure, from roads and parking to cafes and community services.

For those of us who chose Kingscliff for its tranquility, this proposal destroys the very reason we live here. I had planned to retire in this home — a quiet haven surrounded by birdlife and greenery — not to find myself behind a sprawling multi-storey development catering primarily to high-end housing demand rather than genuine aged care needs.

6. Lack of Meaningful Mitigation

Despite acknowledging community objections, the Department's responses are largely generic — promising "buffer planting" and "acoustic treatments" without detail or guarantees. In my own case, the plans still show no vegetated buffer behind my fence line, unlike other neighbours. Instead, there are six 15-minute loading bays directly behind my property.

This is not mitigation — it is a direct increase in noise, traffic, and disturbance. Such inconsistency and disregard for immediate neighbours highlight the inadequacy of the Department's assessment.

Conclusion

The Uniting Kingscliff proposal, in its current form, represents a significant overdevelopment that will irrevocably damage the fabric and amenity of our town. The Department's assessment fails to resolve the legitimate concerns of residents and instead prioritises the developer's objectives over community wellbeing.

I respectfully urge the Independent Planning Commission to reject the proposal in its current form, or at minimum to require substantial reductions in building height and density, the relocation of loading zones away from residential boundaries, enforceable construction and noise conditions, and comprehensive flood and traffic mitigation measures.

I moved to Kingscliff — and invested in this home — because it offered peace, safety, and a genuine small-town environment. I simply ask to retain that. Please protect the quiet, coastal character of this community for the residents who already call it home.

Yours sincerely,
Caroline Davidson
