

The Sippy Downs and District Community Association Inc strongly supports the concept of a traditional town centre/university town for Sippy Downs.

Specific elements of the plan supported by the Association are:

- streetscapes that are “vibrant” and people friendly
- streets that are designed to attract pedestrians and cyclists
- provision of green space and public open space
- inclusion of community facilities
- controls on the type and extent of development in the Town Centre and associated precincts, including building heights, density and floorspace
- public transport access

The two areas of concern to the Association are:

- the ability of the vision of the Town Centre plan to be delivered given the range of developers involved and likely long timeframe for completion
- delivery of the essential road infrastructure and traffic management in light of the likely staging of development

Traffic and road congestion is already a problem in Sippy Downs and while the new Dixon/Claymore Road interchange will greatly assist traffic management to and from the Sunshine Motorway and between Sippy Downs and Buderim, there will still be considerable pressure on Stringybark Road and particularly Sippy Downs Drive. Traffic in this area was the main issue raised by the majority of residents who attended the two Saturday information sessions conducted by Council at Chancellor Marketplace in June 2007.

If the expansion of Sippy Downs Drive to four lanes will only occur once the Town Centre commences and developer contributions to infrastructure are made, how will this be managed when developments are staged over a number of years?

The viability of the network of local and access roads designated in the Town Centre plan is dependent on completion of all elements of the plan, i.e. the Town Centre core and the adjoining precincts. The majority of roads that are central to traffic management are entirely new. Again, if development of the entire Town Centre is staged over several years at a minimum, there is the potential for traffic problems to be created by lack of completed infrastructure.

Should one or more developers not proceed in the short or medium term, what impact will this have on the road network, traffic flow and the ‘people friendly’ environment? For example, if the initial Town Centre core development occurred on one side of Stringybark Road only, ‘A’ street will presumably only be partially built. Equally, the efficient flow of traffic from ‘A’ street is dependent on development of the business precinct to the east and the western residential precinct.

Currently, Sippy Downs Drive is totally inappropriate for pedestrian and cycle use. Combining a pedestrian/cycle friendly street environment with a four lane road carrying

heavy traffic will be a challenge at best and will be unachievable if the entire road is not upgraded at the same time. Pedestrian access from the University of the Sunshine Coast will not meet the needs of the existing Chancellor Park community which will be a major market for the Town Centre.

We feel strongly that Council needs to give consideration to ensuring that key road infrastructure, including Sippy Downs Drive and the major local access roads in the Town Centre, are delivered in a timely manner.

It is also essential that the entire Town Centre development, including the community centre, is designed to be accessible by the disabled. Public transport and appropriate links via the University and bus routes are also essential.

The SDDCA believes that the community facilities designated in the plan are essential both to the success of the Town Centre and the health of the Sippy Downs community. We urge the Council to ensure that the location and design of these facilities are optimised. Inclusion of a public library branch and Council enquiry/payment facilities will greatly enhance the community centre, as they will attract people throughout the week – people who will also use the Town Centre retail and commercial outlets.

We believe that environmental sustainability, including energy use, water and waste management, is also essential and must be rigorously imposed on developers. The Association's Environmental Sub-Committee Chairman, Craig Rattle, has made a separate submission that addresses these issues in more depth.

We understand from our discussions with the Council's planners that the restrictions on retail floor space are based on the projected population catchment for Sippy Downs and neighbouring districts.

The SDDCA supports a level of retail development in the Town Centre and adjacent precincts that will be sustained by the appropriate catchment population, including planned residential developments in Buderim and at Palmview. Given the concerns expressed by the community about road and traffic issues, it is particularly important that the retail and commercial components of the development are scaled appropriately.

No residents who have provided feedback to the SDDCA have expressed a desire for additional major retail outlets, but there is strong support for a competitor supermarket to Woolworths. There is also demand for fresh food outlets (e.g. delicatessen, fruit and vegetables) which are in low supply in the area.

There is also demand for entertainment options, particularly cinemas.

The Association fully supports the ban on 'drive through' fast food facilities in the Town Centre.

The SDDCA applauds the emphasis on pedestrian traffic within the Town Centre core, but most residents will still rely on their cars to travel there. We believe that underground parking should be encouraged wherever possible, both for convenience and aesthetic reasons.

We understand that with multiple development applications for different parts of the Town Centre, it will take some years for the entire vision to be realised. However, we would be concerned if partial developments occur – for example, construction of a supermarket without the ‘sleeving’ retail. This would be contrary to the vision of the Town Centre as laid out in the plan.

The Association thanks the Maroochy Shire Council, particularly Cr Christian Dickson and the management and staff of the Planning Department, for the opportunity for input into the Sippy Downs Town Centre planning and public consultation processes.