NewVote

To: Yaroomba Beach Pty Ltd
        OSCAR Inc
        Sunshine Coast Business Council
        Friends of Yaroomba
        Save Yaroomba
        Coolum & North Shore Coast Care
        Development Watch
        Coolum Residents Association
        Marcoola Community Group Inc
        Sunshine Coast Environment Council

Copy to: Sunshine Coast Regional Council
           The Courier Mail
           Advertiser
           Sunshine Coast Daily
           7 News Sunshine Coast
           ABC Sunshine Coast

By email only

16 February 2018

Dear Stakeholders,

It is with great pleasure that I write to you today about NewVote's involvement in Development Application MCU17/0095, filed by Yaroomba Beach Pty Ltd. As discussed with many of you in person or over the phone, our online participation platform ("the app") will be be focusing on this issue over the next few months.

In an effort to be completely transparent, we have also copied local media and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council ("the Council") into this letter.

Context

As you are aware, we are a neutral party to this issue. We are a nonpartisan nonprofit organisation and a registered charity. We are disinterested in whether the public or the Council vote one way or another. Our purpose is to enhance and celebrate democracy. We have created a prototype to carry out this purpose, which is accessible here.

As key stakeholders in this issue, we seek your active involvement in the holding of NewVote's deliberation and public vote. The majority of you have already agreed to do so and we thank you for this. The balance of you, understandably, need to take this proposition to your boards for final approval and we look forward to your organisation's confirmation soon.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with relevant information, advise the preliminary work that needs to be completed, set out the timeline for the next few months and seek your feedback on our plan. Your active involvement in this process is respectfully requested.

If you are not familiar with the features of the app, you may find it useful to look at our Prototype Features page here or the prototype before continuing to read this letter further.

Issue name and Information Summary

On the app, we propose to name the Issue, "Yaroomba Beach "Sekisui" Development".

We have drafted an Information Summary which will appear under the Issue Name on the app. The purpose of the Information Summary is to provide a balanced and neutral narrative of the key facts that the public should know before engaging in debate and exercising their vote. The link to the current draft of the Information Summary may be found here.

You are each invited to provide your feedback on the draft Issue Name and the Information Summary. I have already received feedback from some of you and I look forward to receiving feedback from the others.

It is our hope and intention, although it is not essential, that all parties will be satisfied with the final version of the Issue Name and Information Summary.

Goals and Solutions

As you are aware, our platform does not simply call for a yes/no response.

We seek to add to the character of the democratic debate by providing an outlet where many competing interests, views, goals and solutions can be deliberated and, ultimately, voted on.

Our platform is not a complaints machine, we are positive and solutions focused. Our platform breaks down Issues into Goals and Solutions, each of which will carry a short description.

Having heard from each of you, a senior Council Officer and looked at the issue ourselves, we propose the Goals and Solutions set out in the table in Annexure 1.

Users may vote up or vote down any Goal and Solution. Users can also change their mind at anytime.

Please note the order in the table in Annexure 1 does not reflect the order that will appear on the app. The way that the Goals and Solutions will appear on the app is determined, by default, by the level of public support they receive. The user can also sort the order, for example, by Top, Controversial, Newest or Trending or filter the order by jurisdiction.

You are each invited to provide your feedback on the proposed Goals and Solutions.

Endorsements

As an organisation with a stake in this issue, we want your position to be clear to all NewVote's users. Accordingly, with the latest update of the app, you will have the opportunity to register your organisation.

The two major features of being a registered organisation on the app are as follows:

1. You will be able to 'endorse' Goals and/or Solutions your organisation prefers (your organisation will not have a 'vote' of its own, as only natural persons may vote); and

2. Your organisation's logo will appear in the description of the Goals and/or Solutions that you endorse, along with an explanation of why you support the Goal and/or Solution;

This feature is being added to the app now, it will be available on 23 February 2018. We will send you a step-by-step guide for this on a later date.

If you need assistance in setting up and using your account, please do not hesitate to ask for our assistance, using the contact details at the end of this letter.

Meet up

As many of you know, MeetUp is a web service that allows its users to advertise public events. We will be integrating MeetUp into the app so that any events that you may be holding in the next few months that relate to the Issue can easily be located for the general public in the one place.

This feature is also being added to the app now, it will be available on 23 February 2018.

Security

Our app is secured with HTTPS and runs on Heroku's PaaS (platform-as-a-service). Passwords are hashed with SHA256 and salted on a per user basis. Passwords are not stored in our database or sent over the net in plain text, rather, they are stored on the database-as-a-service platform, mLab. We strip personally identifiable information when calculating votes. User data is never shared with other users.

We will be constantly monitoring registrations to ensure fake accounts are detected and deleted. As the voting period will not have a specified end date, we have an ongoing ability to ensure user registrations are legitimate and that one person equals one vote.

Our privacy policy is located here.

Launch and Promotion

We are, to-date, a self-funded organisation. We have not taken any money from any party related to this Issue.

We have a small budget to advertise the launch and the ongoing campaign. We will attend events and public spaces, such as markets, shopping centres and foreshores, to encourage engagement. However, we do not have the means to conduct a full-scale advertising campaign.

You are the key stakeholders in this Issue. You have access to hundreds, if not thousands, of local residents who are passionate about this Issue. Accordingly, for the largest part, we will rely upon you and the local media to spread the word to the Sunshine Coast community to get as large an engagement with the app as possible.

We will have an official Launch for the campaign, details of which will be provided later. Ideally, you will launch your campaigns on the same date, to maximise exposure.

Draft timeline

We are working towards the timeline set out in Annexure 2. Please let us have your feedback.

Next Steps

If you are an office bearer of one of the organisations that does not yet have board approval to participate, please seek that approval as soon as possible.

Please, all, provide your feedback to us on any aspect of this letter.

To the media and Sunshine Coast Regional Council, who are copied into this letter, we are keen to engage with you and look forward to meeting with you over the coming weeks and months.

Yours faithfully

Dion McCurdy / Director

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NewVote

www.newvote.org.au

Annexure 1

Table of proposed Goals and Solutions

Goals
Grow the economy of the Sunshine Coast Economic growth is a key factor for the region. Council should prioritise employment and economic activity, such as the creation of hotels and shops.
Make a public access to Yaroomba beach through the property The Yaroomba site currently does not provide public access to the beach. Council should prioritise a development application for the site that facilitates access by the general public.
Continued survival of the turtle population The Yaroomba site is one of the only areas in the Sunshine Coast region that supports a turtle population. The turtle population will be negatively affected by any increase in lighting, density and beach use. Council should prioritise a solution that ensures the continued survival of the turtles.
Increase in density of the area to be in line with infrastructure Development applications should only be approved where there is sufficient infrastructure in place to cope with the increased population in terms of roads, schools, health services etc.
Compliance with the Coolum Local Area Plan The Coolum Local Area Plan stipulates a maximum building height of 8.5 meters. Council should prioritise a solution that ensures the Coolum Local Area Plan is complied with.

Solutions
Council accepts the application "as is" The development application is in the public benefit - improving the local economy and allowing public access to the beach - it should be approved by Council.
Council negotiates with the Applicant to lower building heights and then approves the application The height of the buildings in the development application are too high, well above the Coolum Local Area Plan. Council should negotiate to lower the height of the buildings.
Council negotiates with the Applicant to reduce the density of residential housing and then approves the application The density of the development application threatens the turtle population and the road network. Council should negotiate to reduce the density.

Annexure 2

Proposed Timetable

Activity	Date	
	From	**To**
Finalisation of Issue Name and Information Summary	Now	28 Feb
Finalisation of Goals and Solutions	Now	28 Feb
Update of app (to include the Sunshine Coast Regional Council local divisions, registration of organisations and integration of MeetUp)	23 February	
Stakeholders: ● Familiarising with the Platform; ● Setting up organisational accounts; ● Endorsing preferred Goals and Solutions; and ● Preparing respective campaigns for Launch. NewVote: ● Test the app with you and your supporters (and make any last minute changes that you require); and ● Engage with Media to build up awareness of our Launch.	23 Feb	9 March
Official Launch Event (details TBA)	10 March	
NewVote's campaign: - attendance at events and public spaces to encourage engagement; - classes to assist people with using the platform; - continuous engagement with the media; and - engagement with individual Councillors and the Mayor.	10 March	Approx. May-June
Sunshine Coast Regional Council Meeting to consider application MCU17/0095. NewVote will present our report of the results to the Council.	Expected May-June	