



Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

Mail: PO Box 105
Coolum Beach QLD 4573

Email: mail@oscar.org.au

6 January 2021

Ms. Emma Thomas

Chief Executive Officer
Sunshine Coast Regional Council (SCRC)

Email: ceooffice@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms. Thomas

Subject: Welcome to the Sunshine Coast, SCRC community consultation and meeting request

Members of the Organisation Sunshine Coast Association of Residents (OSCAR) welcome you to the Sunshine Coast Regional Council as CEO. We wish you well as you settle into the position here.

OSCAR Inc. is a non-partisan and not-for-profit umbrella/peak organisation covering resident and community organisations on the Sunshine Coast and Noosa Local government Areas (LGAs) in South East Queensland. OSCAR is committed to open and transparent processes in local government, sustainable development, protection of the SCRC and Noosa Planning Schemes and rates set as low as possible consistent with efficient and effective delivery of local government services.

OSCAR participates in almost all community consultation conducted by Sunshine Coast Regional Council. We currently have a representative on the Climate Hazard Adaptation Strategy (CHAS) Community Advisory Group (CAG) and in 2019 had a representative on the Biosphere Nomination Working Group. We look forward to participating in the Mass Transit Business Case community consultation in 2021 and continuing our participation in the Waste Strategy development. OSCAR has also been a key player in the community opposition to the intense residential development and wave pool at Coolum West which SCRC also opposes.

OSCAR along with five other community groups have undertaken extensive advocacy re Coolum West, to the State Government before the recent State Government election, including: the Queensland Premier; Kate Jones when Minister for State Development Innovation and Tourism, with whom we met; the then Minister for Environment and Science, Leeane Enoch; Minister Cameron Dick as Minister for Planning; Anthony Lynham when Minister for Natural Resources; and the then Minister for Local Government Stirling Hinchliffe. Following the election and movement of Ministerial responsibilities we have written to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning seeking an urgent meeting and similarly to Ministers Hinchliffe and Scanlon.

OSCAR is currently a Co-Respondent supporting SCRC's refusal in the Stockland Twin Waters West versus Sunshine Coast Regional Council case currently in the Planning and Environment Court.

As indicated in a letter to all at SCRC, 2020 has been a year like no other and all at SCRC are to be congratulated on how programs and projects have been conducted throughout 2020 under demanding and frustrating times.

Similarly in that letter to all at SCRC we wrote:

SCRC is also to be congratulated on the release of the Draft Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy (CHAS) for consultation. This has been a mammoth effort under very difficult circumstances of COVID-19. We appreciate being part of the Community Advisory Group (CAG), with Susie Chapman as our representative. As the CHAS is refined following the analysis of community feedback to the draft we would hope that the CAG will continue to have input and comment. OSCAR did, however, feel that as the CHAS is a generational document and process, that there should not have been any other community consultation processes in competition for community time and consideration.

Not included in that letter is our great disappointment at the decision by SCRC to have so many items out for community consultation at the same time. We understand that COVID has had an

impact on Council, but I am sure that we do not need to remind Council that the impact on Community groups has been at best similar to that of the SCRC and at worse a greater impact. OSCAR has continued to meet monthly via Zoom, with very good attendance by members. Member groups who meet face to face and bi-monthly have found it extremely difficult to respond to SCRC consultation processes. Further to that our member groups as is OSCAR, are democratically run and therefore seek input from member groups when making submissions to Council.

This has been almost impossible throughout this year. We understand that there are many consultation processes planned for 2021. OSCAR requests that SCRC prioritise those projects and not run concurrent consultation processes.

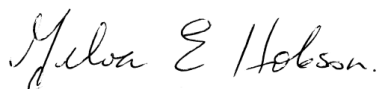
OSCAR also considers that it is unnecessary for any further Planning Scheme Amendments, given SCRC is moving into the development of a new Planning Scheme over this term of Council. We do not understand the urgency of the latest amendments.

Our concern is not limited to our member groups but we are very concerned that Councillors, particularly those newly elected, are expected to absorb, often at short notice, serious strategic policy development and issues, planning and infrastructure matters and then vote on such issues. Councillors must be aware that they should not vote on any matter unless they are fully informed. Councillors should not be expected to sit up to all hours of the day and night reading council papers and then not having time to engage with their constituents relating to major issues.

As said in the letter to all at SCRC, we do congratulate Council on maintaining Live-streaming of Council Ordinary Meetings and we hope that this is now a permanent feature of council operations. Similarly, we acknowledge increased transparency in the way confidential sections relating to matters under discussion and confidential items in total are being dealt with. This level of transparency is much appreciated and we look forward to fewer confidential items overall into the future.

We would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss these and other significant issues and share the views OSCAR has on these.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Melva E Hobson".

Melva Hobson PSM
President OSCAR