Dear Sir/Madam,

Development Application Enquiry: MCU013287

Re: Submission to Development Application for Preliminary Approval under Sections 241 and 242 of SPA for Material Change of Use Proposed Master Planned Residential Community and to Vary the Effect of a Local Planning Instrument RCC Ref: MCU013287 Serpentine Creek, Scenic and Orchard Roads, Redland Bay

Redlands2030 make this written submission objecting to the above development application. The critical points and the basis for our objections are:

1. Redland City Council should not consider this (MCU) a properly made application. Any alternative view defies logic. The land is rural land by any plain English definition and this is further confirmed by the provisions of the SEQ Regional plan, Councils own planning scheme, the Redlands2030 Community Plan, and the Redlands Rural Futures Strategy.

2. The State Government’s response/advice confirms the Shoreline application should not have been accepted as being properly made because the site of the application is rural land.

3. Council’s support, by way of a vote of the elected councillors, would be a breach of their requirement to the Local Government Act, that elected officials must act in the public interest. A vote in support of the Shoreline application would require almost all Councillors to break their pre-election commitments on the question of whether they (individually) would support an expansion of the Urban Footprint.

4. The requirement that the proposal must be in the overriding public interest is not proven. Land owner or commercial interests are not part of the equation.

5. The proponents’ attempt to use opt-in polling as a measure of community support fails. The only City wide community surveys relevant to the test of “overriding public interest” is that done to develop the Redlands 2030 Community Plan which remains the best measure of “over riding public interest” in the City.

6. The full cost of the infrastructure and the proportion to be met by Council and the State should be disclosed and agreed (publicly) by all parties before an approval of an application that locks in long term funding requiring either increased rates or increased debt for both ratepayers and taxpayers.

7. Social and environmental costs of the proposal have not been quantified. Glib admissions of an increase in travel times have been attributed to the proponent but the full and accumulated economic costs to be imposed on the community are unknown. Some issues to emerge include increased travel time and possibly decreased land values across the city.

8. Council’s Urbis Land Supply Study says there is no need to bring new land suitable for residential development into the Urban Footprint at this time. The Urbis report
recommends that Council determine the scale and location of any new Urban Residential land to be added to the residential land supply based on government costs, optimising development yields, and timing requirements.

9. The development pattern and the location of the Shoreline proposal is contrary to the Queensland Plan (especially in terms of the nature of residential development and the intent to halve population growth in the SEQ region).

10. The Shoreline proposal threatens the lifestyle, quality of life and livability of residents of the city. The impact of urban sprawl on these attributes such as traffic congestion has not been fully addressed. Importantly, any analysis should be done independently, by Council. Reliance on the Shoreline proponents’ “sales pitch” is not a sound basis for Council to make a decision in support of the application.

11. The proponents’ economic and job scenarios are unlikely to be realised. The projections appear to be extremely optimistic and based on untested assumptions.

12. Assumptions that the project will be a catalyst for improved public transport is fanciful. It seems there is no commitment by the Government that new services will be provided or who will pay.

Redlands2030 is a community network established to promote and facilitate community involvement in local affairs via the website www.redlands2030.net as well as a Facebook page www.facebook.com/Redlands2030 and an electronic newsletter.

Redlands2030 has publicly raised the following questions about the proposed Shoreline housing development in Southern Redland.

1. Why should Council consider a proposal for urban development that is outside the urban footprint in the Redland City planning scheme and the South East Queensland Regional Plan?

2. Have the proponents made valid assumptions about the amount, type, location and timing of requirements for new accommodation in the Redlands?

3. Is the assumed level of local employment (in Southern Redlands) plausible?

4. What is the likely cost to the community (Redland City Council and State Government) of providing infrastructure for this development?

5. In particular, should this development be allowed to proceed without a full assessment of the need for road upgrades and agreed responsibility for funding these?

6. Have environmental issues been adequately considered?

7. Has Shoreline’s public consultation been genuine and effective?

8. Why has the Redland City Council given the Shoreline developers a massive discount in fees for assessment of this development application?

9. Why has the Council given Shoreline privileged access to information?

10. Is the community being given sufficient time and information to understand this proposed development?

11. Which Councillors (and Mayor) will have a conflict of interest in decisions about this proposed development?

12. What did Councillors (and the Mayor) have to say about this proposed development when they were campaigning for election?
We think that these questions should be carefully investigated by Redland City Council.

In the short space of time available for public review of Shoreline’s proposal, Redlands2030 has prepared comments on some of these issues to assist Council in assessing the Shoreline proposal.

These comments are attached and form part of this submission.

Chris Walker
12 Benjamin Court, Cleveland, 4163

Steve MacDonald
104 Channel Street, Cleveland, 4162

Spokespersons for Redlands2030

28 November 2014
Urban footprint

Redland City’s urban footprint was clearly established in the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031. While environmental considerations played a part in this, a more compelling reason for the shape of the urban footprint is the need to focus urban settlement on areas well served with established infrastructure.

When the Local Government Reform Commission reviewed city boundaries, its report recommended that Redland City remain a separate local government authority in part because of the large non-urban area separating Redland City from Logan City and Brisbane. So the large non-urban area around Redland City helps to define the reason for Redland City being a separate city rather than a suburb of Brisbane or Logan City.

URBIS Australia was engaged by the Redland City Council to advise if the City has enough land for future development.

Their report dated August 2014 notes that there is:

• Significant oversupply of land (particularly on the islands) for detached residential dwellings; and
• A potential undersupply of land for attached residential dwellings in the long term.

To cater for the potential long term undersupply of attached dwellings, the report recommends a number of options, including:

1. Incentivise the reconfiguration of urban residential lots where capacity exists to increase dwelling yield from these lots. This could be facilitated through reduced minimum lot sizes and relaxations on infrastructure charges. Also a fast track planning approval process could be set up.

2. Convert appropriate areas of Low Density Residential land to Urban Residential land. This will thus increase the dwelling yield from the existing land supply. Investigations will be required to identify the scale, location, and timing of any rezoning.

3. Extend the Urban Footprint to bring new land suitable for residential development into the Footprint. In this regard investigation areas have already been identified that may be appropriate for this. This will require further investigations on which areas are most suitable in this regard. We recommend that analysis be undertaken on this land to determine government development costs and timings. We also recommend that an assessment be made on the scale and location of new Urban Residential land to be added to the Redland City Council land supply based on government costs, optimising development yields, and timing requirements. (bold added by Redlands2030)

One of the limitations of long range forecasting (such as 27 years to 2041) is that things change (often dramatically). Typically, land supply projections for Councils and developers are 10 – 15 years, with longer projections subject to wider margins of error and change. The Urbis report does not do that.

Supply of land and housing is relatively static as they exist and are able to be counted. Areas of land zoned for urban, numbers of subdivision allotments, etc, can all be counted. Demand, especially market demand, is more elusive and fickle. For example, the market acceptability of higher density living in Brisbane has changed dramatically in recent years. Teneriffe, Newstead
and Woolloongabba are good examples of targeted areas for higher density in Brisbane, showing there is now a greater acceptance and indeed healthy appetite for higher density living.

Urbis did not (and probably were not asked to) consider the community goals and aspirations as documented in the Redland’s 2030 Community Plan. Land supply calculations and projections are only one tool in developing a future plan for the Redlands. So, let’s look at planning for future growth in the Redlands in perspective.

It is probably fair to say that higher density housing has not been on the development radar or particularly popular with potential owners in Redlands. However, as the region’s population ages, then higher density and smaller living units will likely be more acceptable as people’s desire to remain in the Redlands drives housing choice.

Already we have seen the State Government setting targets for higher density living across SEQ, and acknowledging in The Queensland Plan that the people (not the politicians or the planning technocrats) have said they want future growth to “go up, rather than out”.

The Urbis report does not consider these likely policy / demographic trends except to dismiss the Qld Treasury’s population and dwelling unit targets (Scenario 1) as unachievable, and to propose alternative lower targets (Scenario 2) – without any statistical rationale. The State Government has provided these targets to Councils in SEQ since 2005 in the SEQ Regional Plans. But apparently they are now wrong.

The Urbis report does not deal adequately with land take up and the timing of the “demand” (or otherwise) for residential land. Population growth in the Redlands is relatively slow; approximately 1.2% per annum. Recent take up rates of land for residential purposes has been similarly slow. As additional land is required in the future to cater for population growth and residential housing, the demand is so slow that the existing land zoned for residential purposes would be adequate till 2035, at least. That’s 20 years, or more. A lot can happen in a volatile housing market over 20 years.

So, why does this report even consider the expansion of the Urban Footprint, particularly as the supposed shortfall is in detached dwellings? A smarter planning and more cost effective response would be to target existing centres of Cleveland, Capalaba, Alexandria Hills, Wellington Point and Victoria Point for higher density and renewal opportunities.

The touted investigations to extend the Urban Footprint are premature, and unnecessary. The Urbis report is highly qualified and does not present a compelling case for urban expansion.

In planning for Redland’s future growth, Council must accept that:

- there is an existing urban land supply for attached and detached housing till 2035 and beyond. There is no current demand for additional land releases or to expand the Urban Footprint for at least 20 years
- there is greater demand for targeted higher density living choices at Redland’s existing centres
- the State Government’s policy directions (The Queensland Plan) towards higher density living and less demand for growth in SEQ prompt a critical (or peer) review of the Land Supply Analysis. The assumptions in the Urbis Report have been superceded by the Qld Plan, and are now wrong
the real impacts of urban sprawl on lifestyle, livability and financial legacies for Redlanders must be considered in the broader planning decisions to be made. No single technical assessment tool should be used as an excuse to promote urban sprawl or as a surrogate for planning for communities.

The community aspirations in the Redland City Council 2030 Community Plan 2010 are fundamental to future planning in Redlands.
Shoreline’s legal opinion that it is in the urban footprint

The purpose of an urban footprint is to designate land suitable for housing and related facilities. Anyone proposing urban development in other areas such as rural land has to show an overriding need for development in the public interest.

Among the great many documents submitted by Shoreline to the Redland City Council is a [legal opinion](#) which suggests that Shoreline’s proposed development falls within the urban footprint. The arguments put forward in this opinion appear weak at best, and seem to rely on provisions of the Vegetation Management Act (VMA). This seems an obscure approach and does not get around the fact that the principal head of power for planning comes from the Sustainable Planning Act (SPAct).

Real people might use the well known [duck test](#) when considering if the Shoreline land is rural or urban.

*if it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck*

The Council might have saved the community much angst by clarifying this fundamental issue before putting Shoreline to the trouble of submitting its voluminous application for a material change in use. This would have also saved the community considerable effort in reviewing a development application that appears to be based on a doubtful legal foundation.

In this instance the State Government appears to have already determined that Shoreline’s land is rural.

In a [request for information](#) the Government has written to Shoreline pointing out (Item 1):

*As the proposed development is identified within the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area under the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031, Division 2 of the State Planning Regulatory Provisions (SPRP) apply to the department’s assessment of the development application.*

*The applicant must provide detailed justification demonstrating the proposed development application complies with the assessment criteria contained in Table 2E of the SPRP, including:*

*a) the locational requirements or environmental impacts of the development necessitate its location outside the Urban Footprint; and*

*b) there is an overriding need for the development in the public interest.*

In this request for information the Government explains the sort of criteria that might demonstrate “overriding public interest”. These include “that the community would experience significant adverse economic, social or environmental impacts” if the proposal “were not to proceed”.

Has Council obtained legal advice to confirm that Shoreline's proposed development is not within the established urban footprint?

Why has Council not deferred consideration of the Shoreline proposal until after the City Plan 2015 has been finalised? When finalised (after the community has had a chance to be consulted) the City Plan 2015 would be the best way to clarify the areas in Redland City that are suitable for urban development, and those which should remain less developed.
Election promises about urban footprint

Redlands2030 thinks that it is in the public interest to note that the subject of urban footprint extension was discussed prior to the last Redland city Council election. All of the people elected to Council office made comments and commitments on this issue.

The Bayside Bulletin interviewed all candidates standing for election to the Council. The Bulletin's questions included *“would you support extension of the urban footprint?”*

Here is what the current Mayor and councillors said, before the last election, as reported in April 2012 editions of the Redland Times (13th, 20th, and 27th) and Bayside Bulletin (17th and 24th).

**Cr Karen Williams  Mayor of Redland City** – The Mayor said of the urban footprint that it was one of her top ten priorities. Her priorities were published 8th March 2012 and in respect of the urban footprint she said she would: *support … community’s position on the “urban footprint”*. In the Redland Times (27 April 2012) she iterated that *“if elected, she would listen to the people” and do what they wanted when it came to developing rural areas outside the urban footprint.”*

**Cr Wendy Boglary Division 1 – Wellington Point, Ormiston** – I support responsible and controlled development in the existing urban footprint as per the SEQ Regional Plan. If, in the future, changes to the existing footprint were to be considered, I would ensure there was an extensive community consultation with all planning and financial implications researched.

**Cr Craig Ogilvie Division 2 – Cleveland, North Stradbroke Island** – Absolutely NO. We are/will be paying big money for infrastructure needed for the last lot of sprawl and the community doesn’t support the impact on amenity, lifestyle or environment. The priority should be managing growth.

**Cr Kim Hardman Division 3 – Cleveland South, Thornlands** – No.

**Cr Lance Hewlett Division 4 – Victoria Point, Coochiemudlo Island, Thornlands, Redland Bay** – To encourage local employment opportunities we need to review our urban development plans to include areas in which “clean” industry and manufacturing can be carried out and to encourage and support potential investors and business back without burdening them with enormous
fees and excessive red tape.

**Cr Mark Edwards** Division 5 – Redland Bay, Bay Islands – Efficient use of existing footprint for fiscal benefit; does not mean high density; development in line with expectations and comply with town planning guidelines. Community input. Development proposals outside footprint must benefit city.

**Cr Julie Talty** Division 6 – Mount Cotton, Sheldon, Thornlands, Victoria Point, Redland Bay – I support responsible and controlled development in the existing urban footprint and I will be guided by the community’s views before making any decisions.

**Cr Murray Elliot** Division 7 – Alexandra Hills South, Capalaba – No. No. No. The only way to have a better transport system and reduce road gridlock is with higher densities around transport hubs. This is already happening in CBD and around smaller shopping centres under the present planning scheme. It would be foolish to do otherwise.

**Cr Allan Beard** Division 8 – Alexandra Hills North, Birkdale South – No. The urban footprint is big enough to accommodate future growth for at least 20 years. I will, however support a greater range of housing options. Carefully manage infill development. I would love to see developers present proposals to construct eight-10 dwellings on a 4000 sqm lot instead of 10 on 400 sqm lots.

**Cr Paul Gleeson** Division 9 – Capalaba – Yes, but only if it’s sensible, controlled and meets the desires/wants of the local community.

**Cr Paul Bishop** Division 10 – Birkdale North, Thorneside – I do not see why we need to extend the urban footprint. I believe we need to adapt it, to consider long-term needs. Make best use of available land, services and infrastructure.

Five Councillors Ogilvie (absolutely NO), Hardman (NO), Elliot (No. No. No.) Beard (No) and Bishop (I do not see why we need to..) were all very firm in their views that they would not support extension of the urban footprint.
While five Councillors had views in which they put great reliance on community expectations i.e.

- Boglary (as per the SEQ Regional Plan and only after ensuring extensive community consultation with all planning and financial implications researched)
- Gleeson (yes but it meets the desires/wants of the local community)
- Talty (I will be guided by the community's views)
- Edwards (in line with expectations and comply with town planning guidelines. Community input. Development outside the (urban) footprint must benefit the city)
- Mayor Karen Williams (Support the state government’s and community’s position and “listen to the people” and do what they wanted when it came to developing rural areas outside the urban footprint).

Cr Hewlett maintained “we need to review our urban development plans in which “clean” industry and manufacturing can be carried out”. He seemed to be more concerned with investor and business aspects rather than residential development. On that basis it seems he was not an advocate for residential development outside the urban footprint.

Our Council decides motions on a majority vote. Any vote is taken after Councillors with a conflict of interest advise of that conflict and absent themselves from the deliberative vote.

With five already firm in their view that they will not support an extension of the urban footprint there is likely to be close scrutiny on the views of those who are placing reliance on “community views”

So what are the community's views about expansion of Redland City's urban footprint?

Some guidance can be found in the **Redlands 2030 Community Plan** which is the most comprehensive and contemporary assessment of what was referred to by Councillors themselves as: community expectations, desires, wants, views, expectations or community position.

Councillors can also take some guidance on community attitudes from the State Government’s recently finalised **Queensland Plan**. Developed following extensive community consultation, it proposes directing half the State’s population growth away from the south east (and so away from the Redlands). It will also manage urban sprawl by having cities that “will go up not out”.

Of course another way to find out about the community's views would be to have a consultation process about the question of expanding Redland City's urban footprint.

If Council thought there was a need for more urban land supply this could be dealt with properly by drafting changes to the planning scheme (City Plan 2015) and subjecting it to public consultation. This would be despite a **Council Report from URBIS Australia** confirming there is no need for more residential land within the next twenty five years.
Community consultation about the Shoreline Proposal

The Material Change of Use (MCU) Application of concern is that the community is being asked to respond to the Shoreline development application and its 185 documents within a short time frame. While the amount of information submitted is not the fault of Shoreline the assessment task is huge and Council is abusing community goodwill in not making it easier for the Community to examine the documentation. The information can only be accessed through reading some 185 documents. These documents, provided by the proponent, are extensive and there is no rational order or overall index.

It probably “ticks off” legal obligations, but Redland City Council is seemingly hiding behind legalities and voluminous reports in the public exhibition phase. It is an abuse of “due process”. A community faced with a development application of such a massive scale is entitled to have its local council (and their elected representatives) assist and facilitate community consultation.

As always there are some community minded people prepared to persevere and penetrate the arcane document of a big Material Change of Use. Redlands2030 appreciates that some people are so minded.

The myriad community concerns about the massive Shoreline development will not surprise anyone. All even remotely involved in the development industry in Redlands, and a broad cohort of the community, know that this proposal could change the City forever.

Shoreline is on the southern edge of Redlands City near the boundary with Logan City. The land is outside the Urban Footprint (designated in the award winning SEQ Regional Plan) and to some commentators it is a classic example of “coastal sprawl”.

Importantly the Shoreline development is at odds with the Redlands 2030 Community Plan, an important record of community values. But even more, the strategic intent of the development is bound by the SEQ Plan and the related State Planning Regulatory Provisions.

Given the scale, environmental and economic impacts of major urban development sites (anywhere) the legalities of decision making needs to be sound. But there is growing concern that the Redland City Council is too ready to comply with the wishes of Shoreline's proponents rather than assessing if this proposal is in the public interest.

A proposed development of this scale should be the subject of extensive community consultation about its costs and benefits to the community. This could be done properly by including the proposal in the draft City Plan 2015 and subjecting it to community consultation next year.

Some Redland City Councillors, including the Mayor, said before the last election that they would act in accordance with “community views” on the issue of urban footprint extension. Most other councillors said up front that they opposed any extension to the urban footprint.

So for those councillors who will be guided by “community views”. Do Redlands residents support Shoreline’s proposal to convert a large area of rural land into more urban footprint?

Shoreline has produced a “Community Attitude Survey”. A careful reading of the survey report reveals that it is an opt-in survey which has no statistical credibility for representing the overall views of the Redlands community.
The limitations of opt-in surveys and Shoreline's misuse of its opt-in survey results are discussed below.

Opinion polls and attitude surveys are good ways to find out what a community thinks.

A properly designed survey of randomly selected participants can predict the views of a total population with a high degree of accuracy.

But the key words are “properly designed” and “randomly selected”. Professional pollsters, academics and market researchers strive to use sampling methods and polling questions that minimise the likelihood of biased findings.

There are other ways of doing surveys. News media sites, including Redlands2030, sometimes use “opt-in” surveys or polls. Questions are published and people can opt to respond.

These straw polls are not recognised as accurate predictors of what a community might think, feel or do. What they are useful for is to find out if some people are interested in a particular issue in order to promote further discussion or investigation.

The inaccuracy of opt-in polls is discussed in this readable report on research conducted at Stanford University: Study Finds Trouble for Opt-in Internet Surveys.

This report states that opt-in polls are used by market researchers because they are “fast and cheap”. However,

internet surveys based on self-selected or “opt-in” panels “were always less accurate, on average, than probability sample surveys”

The Shoreline Project commissioned its community attitude survey in 2013. This survey was conducted by Graham Young, the Executive Director of a small web design and internet marketing company called Internet Thinking.

Interestingly, Graham Young happens to be a strong supporter of the Shoreline Project. On 19 November he made a submission in support of the Shoreline development application.

While that is his right as a citizen, it begs the question of how impartial he may have been as a community attitude analyst.

The Shoreline Community Attitude Survey is clearly an example of an opt-in survey.

In his report Graham Young makes the following statements about the methodology used to obtain responses.

The survey was made available to citizens of Redlands by a variety of means between May 14, 2013 and June 23, 2013, resulting in 632 completed, or substantially completed, surveys. Surveys were distributed by a number of means:

1. An online version of the survey was available on our website. The website was publicised in all of our material, and in advertisements that were run in the Victoria Point Cineplex between May 20 and June 22, 2013.
2. A hardcopy version of the survey was distributed to 47,500 households as an insert in the local paper *The Bayside Bulletin*.

3. A display was erected at the Victoria Point Cineplex to complement the advertising with a box for submission of surveys.

4. Surveys were mailed to tenants of Fox and Bell.

5. A link to the survey was emailed to clients and associates of Fiteni Homes, and to an email list of businesses in Redlands.

6. Surveys were also made available at the Community Information Day held at the RedlandBay Community Hall on June 22, 2013

The survey was also incentivized with a weekly draw from respondents for a free double movie pass, with a grand draw at the end of the process of a family weekend at South Stradbroke Island.

Considering the Redlands’ has 147,000 residents (2013) of which 100,000 are electors, the bottom line message is that a very small proportion of Redlands residents opted to participate in this poll.

In fact, less than one half of one percent (<0.5%) of the Redlands electorate indicated support for the Shoreline proposal.

With such a small sample using a ‘troubled’ survey method, it is most unlikely that the responses to Shoreline’s opt-in survey accurately reflect the attitudes of the whole Redland City community (the residents).

The validity of the Shoreline Community Attitude survey findings are considered limited to the small subset of the population (the respondents) who bothered to complete and submit the survey form.

Extract from Shoreline’s Survey Results Brochure confuses “Residents” with “survey respondents” (click to enlarge)

In most of the *Community Attitude Survey* report the author is careful to limit his claims of findings to “respondents”.

But in the Introduction (page 1) and in other summary documents put forward as part of its submission to Council (like the glossy *Survey Results Brochure*) Shoreline makes totally unsupported statements like:
“75% of residents supported the development”

As soon as the word “residents” is used instead of “respondents” statements like this become extremely inaccurate and misleading.

At this point in time the only document which provides an indication of the community’s views about urban footprint extension is the Redlands 2030 Community Plan which was developed with widespread community participation. This document (which still underpins all planning decision making in Redland City) contains a progress measure target that:

The urban footprint as defined by the South-East Queensland Regional Plan is not extended into rural or agricultural areas (page 39).

The community’s attitude to the Shoreline project, specifically, has not been properly investigated. The Shoreline community attitude survey is most unlikely to be a reliable indicator of community attitudes because it does not use a statistically valid method of selecting respondents.

One way to find what the community thinks would be for Council, or Shoreline, to get an experienced and independent market research consultant to conduct a statistically valid survey using random sampling methods and an unbiased set of questions. The questions would need to be worded to find out what people really think, rather than leading them to provide responses that support a preferred outcome.

Or Council could decide to have the question of urban footprint extension put forward for statutory public consultation as part of a planning scheme review, before any further time and effort is spent on assessing Shoreline’s proposal.
Economic impacts of Shoreline proposal

What happens when supply is greater than demand? Farmers, business operators and economists know that prices fall when you have excess supply. Is housing land any different to strawberries, coal or iron ore?

The proposed Shoreline project needs to be fully considered by Redlands residents and the Redland City Council. One issue which could impact on many people is the impact of Shoreline’s proposed 4,000 new homes on property values in the Redlands.

Most residents of the Redlands accept that our City provides significant locational and natural advantages like proximity to Moreton Bay, a semi rural setting, social harmony, low crime rates, great lifestyle and livability. In fact the lifestyle qualities, favored by the community, are well articulated in the Redlands2030 Community Plan. These values are often echoed by the real estate industry in their advertising efforts to sell residential land. Just look at the property section of the latest edition of the Redland City Bulletin.

Redlanders enjoy higher amenity than people living in most other local government areas in South East Queensland. Landowners would like to think that this is reflected in higher property values than those in other parts of south east Queensland and want it to stay that way.

In March 2013 the Queensland Valuer-General issued new Site Valuations (dated as at October 2012) for properties in Redland City. The Valuer-General’s information sheet About statutory land valuations in Queensland outlines that Site Value reflects what land would be expected to sell for in its current condition (the current market value).

It was subsequently reported (Bayside Bulletin, 19 March 2013) the new median value for residential property in the Redlands was $242,500, practically unchanged from the previous 2011 valuations. Interestingly, the 2011 valuations represented a 4.9% drop from the prior valuations (Bayside Bulletin, 28 March 2012).

Official land valuations are used by local councils to determine who pays what rates. People with highly valued properties (like those in Raby Bay) pay more rates than people with lower property values.

Understandably there is a lot of confusion in the community about rates, rating value and the setting of rates. It is a common misconception that more ratepayers will mean cheaper rates. This is only true if the rating value of a property “skips” higher than its historic value compared to “other” land in the same local government area. It is the relative value within a Council’s area that is important for setting rates, not the absolute value.

Another misconception is that increasing land values will mean increased rates. This is only true if the rating value of a property “skips” higher than its historic value compared to “other” land in the same local government area. It is the relative value within a Council’s area that is important for setting rates, not the absolute value.

But as a group, Redlands’ property owners are obviously better off if their land is more valuable as determined by market forces.

After the new valuations were issued, the President of the Redland City Chamber of Commerce, made the following claims (reported in the Bayside Bulletin, 21 March 2013):
“Redland City’s median residential property value of $242,000 is ‘unacceptably’ high”

“Redland had the second highest median residential property value in Queensland, behind Brisbane at $310,000, because of inadequate supply of suitable land for housing.”

“It is unacceptable to have Redlands median value at $242,000 compared to similar areas such as Moreton $197,500, Sunshine Coast $205,000 and Logan $187,000”

The President of the Redlands Chamber of Commerce just happens to be Garry Hargrave who is also Principal of the Shoreline development.

In simple economic terms, the project would deliver a significant increase in the supply of residential property.

Presumably, this will result in Redlands’ median property value no longer being “unacceptably high”.

Good news for people who want to buy cheaper property. Not such good news for people who are already investors in property in the Redlands.

The impact of Shoreline on property values across the city is but one of many issues that neither Shoreline or Council have discussed with the community.

The scale and potential impact on Redlands economic, social and infrastructure costs by this proposed development is such that Council should be facilitating a robust community consultation process. An effective way for this to happen would be for Shoreline’s proposed development to be penciled into a future planning scheme review and subjected to community review when that draft plan is released for public consultation.

A change to the planning scheme of the magnitude needed to accommodate Shoreline should be justified through a full benefit cost analysis.

A full benefit cost analysis and community review process would enable the community to appreciate the real costs and benefits. We could also see who wears the costs and who collects the benefits.

**Employment**

In its proposal Shoreline includes assertions regarding the level of local employment. These assertions, including the reports by Giles Consulting International, appear to grossly overstate the likely level of local employment that might be enjoyed if the shoreline development were to proceed.

A fundamental flaw in the arguments put forward is that while there may be some jobs in the area around the proposed Shoreline development, people from other areas in the Redlands and elsewhere in south east Queensland would compete for such jobs. This would mean a likely increase in two way flow of road traffic between Shoreline and other areas.