



Final CMC report into the 2009 South East Queensland Regional Plan, including land at Palmwoods

November 2009

The report in context

On 4 August 2009, following the publication of the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 (2009 SEQ plan), a newspaper article published by the *Courier-Mail* implied that the Honourable JP Elder, a professional lobbyist and former Deputy Premier of Queensland, had improperly influenced the review process of certain parcels of land included in the urban footprint contained in the 2009 SEQ plan.

Following the publication of the newspaper article, the Premier wrote to the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) requesting that we consider the circumstances of every instance in which an extension had been made to the urban footprint of the 2009 SEQ plan, to determine if any individual improperly influenced the review process.

The CMC's investigation has determined that there is no evidence of official misconduct on the part of any person.

The CMC examined and took into account the Premier's letter of 4 August 2009, which included the assertion that the Queensland Government had approved the extension to the urban footprint on the basis of the recommendation of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

This report details the CMC investigation.

Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Background | 3 |
| Jurisdiction and role of the CMC | 3 |
| The Investigation – an overview | 4 |
| Newspaper claims – Palmwoods | 4 |
| Witnesses | 5 |
| Mr Gary White | 5 |
| Mr Evan Jones | 5 |
| Mr Lindsay Enright | 5 |
| Mr Don Livingstone | 6 |
| Palmwoods urban footprint | 6 |
| The evidence in relation to Palmwoods | 6 |
| Conclusions and recommendations in respect of Palmwoods | 9 |
| Representations in respect of other land areas | 9 |
| Conclusions and recommendations | 12 |
| Chronology | 13 |

Background

On 10 May 2008, the Queensland Government announced that a review was to be undertaken of the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005–2026 (2005 SEQ plan).

As part of the review process, and to facilitate public comment, a draft regional plan (draft plan) was made public on 13 December 2008.

Upon completion of the review process, the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 (2009 SEQ plan) was published and became effective on 28 July 2009.

Following its publication, aspects of the 2009 SEQ plan became the subject of media focus. In particular, on 4 August 2009, the *Courier-Mail* newspaper published an article implying that the Honourable JP Elder, a professional lobbyist and former Deputy Premier of Queensland, had improperly influenced the review process. The article suggested the urban footprint, that is, the area earmarked for future urban development, had been extended in the 2009 SEQ plan so as to include certain parcels of land at Palmwoods, in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

On the same day, the Premier, the Honourable AM Bligh MP, wrote to the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) requesting that the organisation consider the circumstances of every instance in which an extension had been made to the urban footprint of the 2009 SEQ plan, to determine whether any individual had acted inappropriately.

Jurisdiction and role of the CMC

Pursuant to the *Crime and Misconduct Act 2001* (CM Act), the CMC has primary responsibility for continuously improving the integrity of the public sector and reducing the incidence of official misconduct.¹

The term ‘official misconduct’ is defined within the CM Act.² In essence, it involves conduct relating to the performance of a public servant’s duties:

- that is dishonest or lacks impartiality, or
- involves a breach of the trust placed in an officer by virtue of his/her position, or
- is a misuse of officially obtained information.

In the case of a public servant, the conduct in question must be a criminal offence, or constitute a disciplinary breach serious enough to justify the public servant’s dismissal.

The CMC’s jurisdiction is wide enough to apply to people such as Mr Elder, who is no longer a Member of Parliament. In this regard, for the purpose of defining ‘official misconduct’, section 14(a) of the CM Act extends the meaning of ‘conduct’ to a person ‘regardless of whether the person holds an appointment’ in a unit of public administration.

¹ Section 4(1)(b).

² Sections 14–15.

In the case of a person who does not ‘hold an appointment’, the term ‘conduct’ means:

‘... conduct, or a conspiracy or attempt to engage in conduct, of or by the person that adversely affects, or could adversely affect, directly or indirectly, the honest and impartial performance of functions or exercise of powers of –

- (i) a unit of public administration; or
- (ii) any (other) person holding an appointment ...’

The ‘conduct’ of that person is ‘official misconduct’ when it is also a criminal offence.

The CMC does not investigate every complaint that comes to its attention. However, if a complaint raises a suspicion of ‘official misconduct’, the CMC will undertake an investigation where the nature and seriousness of the alleged misconduct warrant one, and where it is in the public interest to do so.

The CMC considered that the public interest warranted an investigation into the role played by Mr Elder in respect of the land at Palmwoods and, as requested by the Premier, in relation to extensions recommended to the urban footprint more generally.

There were, and will continue to be, differing opinions among interested parties about extensions to the SEQ urban footprint. The CMC’s role did not include examining the technical merits of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning’s decision to include certain parcels of land in the urban footprint of the 2009 SEQ plan. The investigation solely focused on whether any individual’s conduct was capable of amounting to official misconduct.

The Investigation — an overview

The CMC examined and took into account the Premier’s letter of 4 August 2009, which included the assertion that the Queensland Government had approved the extension to the urban footprint on the basis of the recommendation of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning (the Department). The Department’s recommendation was itself reportedly based upon legitimate planning principles.

Further, the CMC called for, and examined, all relevant records held by the Department.

Interviews were conducted with key witnesses, namely: Mr Gary White, Mr Evan Jones, Mr Lindsay Enright – each of whom was an officer of the Department at the time of the review process that culminated in the 2009 SEQ plan, and Mr Don Livingstone – a former Member of Parliament who had made some relevant representations to the Department.

Mr Elder was spoken to by telephone, and declined the opportunity to formally respond to the inference raised by the *Courier-Mail* newspaper article.

Newspaper claims — Palmwoods

The *Courier-Mail* article of 4 August 2009 focused upon certain land at Palmwoods. The article contended:

- The relevant parcel of land at Palmwoods was owned by Mr Terry Eil or MCH Corporation Pty Ltd (MCH), a company in which Mr Eil has an interest.
- Mr Eil has long-established links with some members of the Australian Labor Party.

- The possibility that the subject land might be included in the expanded urban footprint had not been referred to in the draft plan, or in any earlier planning instrument.
- Mr Ell ‘scored a major financial windfall’ by reason of the inclusion of the land in the urban footprint.
- Mr Ell was a client of ‘lobbying kingpin’ and ‘former deputy premier’, Mr Jim Elder.
- Mr Ell had acknowledged that Mr Elder had acted as a consultant for MCH, but ‘had no direct role’ in representing MCH over the subject land at Palmwoods.

Witnesses

Mr Gary White

Mr White is the Deputy Director-General of the Department, and is in charge of the planning division. He holds tertiary qualifications in town planning and business, and has worked as a planning professional in the public sector for over 30 years.

It is Mr White’s responsibility to overview all regional planning in Queensland – including South East Queensland. He has ultimate responsibility for making regional planning recommendations to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (the minister) and, through the minister, to the Queensland Government.

Mr White was appointed to his current role, from outside the state public service, in August 2008.³

Mr Evan Jones

Mr Jones is a town planner with tertiary qualifications in urban and regional studies, urban and regional planning, and urban design. He has been an Adjunct Professor of Sustainability at Murdoch University in Western Australia since 2007, and has some 30 years planning experience across four Australian states in both the public and private sectors.

Mr Jones was engaged by the Department as a planning consultant from July to December 2008, specifically to assist in preparing the draft plan.

The review process had commenced before Mr Jones began his consultancy with the Department. He was unfamiliar with relevant Queensland localities and identities.

Mr Lindsay Enright

Mr Enright is a consultant with tertiary qualifications in civil engineering. He has worked in the public and private sectors in New South Wales and Queensland for almost 30 years.

Mr Enright was employed by the Department for more than four years, until 30 November 2008. He was one of the authors of the 2005 SEQ plan and, in March 2008, he drafted the terms of reference for the review of that plan.

³ Mr White was formerly Director of Planning for Ipswich City Council, and was President of the Queensland Division of the Planning Institute of Australia.

Mr Don Livingstone

Mr Livingstone is a former Member of Parliament, having been the Member for Ipswich West from 1989–98, and 2001–06.

Palmwoods urban footprint

According to a departmental briefing note, five general areas (approximating 92 hectares) were added to the urban footprint around Palmwoods in the 2009 SEQ plan. All five areas were adjacent to the already existing urban footprint at Palmwoods and had previously been categorised as regional landscape and rural production areas in the 2005 SEQ plan.

There are very few physical features labelled on the relevant map (regulatory map 7) in the 2009 SEQ plan. The CMC is therefore unable to describe the boundaries of the expanded urban footprint at Palmwoods by reference to named roads or other physical features. However, the main North Coast Rail Line, Landsborough to Nambour section, bisects Palmwoods and would appear to affect existing and future land uses in the vicinity.

The evidence in relation to Palmwoods

So far as the subject land at Palmwoods was concerned, Mr Gary White told the CMC:

- The land (owned by MCH) was originally in the regional landscape and rural production area of the 2005 SEQ plan, but was situated immediately adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the urban footprint in that plan.
- The land, like other regional landscape and rural production sites adjacent to the existing urban footprint at Palmwoods, was added to the urban footprint in the 2009 SEQ plan in response to submissions made to the Department during the consultation stage⁴ of the review process.
- The reasoning behind the addition of the land (and other sites at Palmwoods) into the urban footprint was technically sound and consistent with planning principles.

The departmental records provided to the CMC included:

- A submission dated 12 February 2009 from Dennis and Joy Morris – in respect of property apparently owned by them.
- A submission dated 2 April 2009 from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council.
- A submission dated 30 April 2009 from Mr Terry Ell on behalf of MCH.
- Technical reports and other data attached to Mr Ell's submission, including a sketch plan number 6689-06 – apparently prepared for MCH on 2 April 2009 by Conics (Sunshine Coast) Pty Ltd⁵ – which closely reflects the changes the Department ultimately recommended by way of expansion to the urban footprint at Palmwoods.
- A submission dated 1 May 2009 from an organisation called Innovative Planning Solutions on behalf of James Brownsworth – in respect of an existing development interest he had in Palmwoods.

⁴ The consultation stage ran from 13 December 2008 – when the draft plan was released – until 1 May 2009.

⁵ Conics (Sunshine Coast) Pty Ltd is a recognised multidisciplinary consultancy group in the infrastructure and planning industry.

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council's submission was not supportive of any expansion to the urban footprint around Palmwoods. However, the other submissions all called for the respective properties to be included in an expanded urban footprint. These submissions raised various arguments in support of the expansion, including the impact of the proposed realignment of the rail corridor through the Palmwoods locale.

A report published by Queensland Transport in March 2008⁶ confirms a proposed realignment of the rail corridor between Landsborough and Nambour. The report foreshadows the realignment is likely to have a significant impact on land holdings in and around Palmwoods.

As indicated above, the sketch plan produced by Conics (Sunshine Coast) Pty Ltd, which accompanied Mr Ell's submission to the Department, closely reflects the ultimate expansion of the urban footprint around Palmwoods. When interviewed, Mr White acknowledged that this indicated that the Department appears to have accepted the arguments advanced in that regard by Mr Ells.

The CMC questioned Mr White about the nature, extent and effect of any representations Mr Elder might have made during the review process regarding the MCH land at Palmwoods.

Mr White explained that he had not only met with Mr Elder, but also with Mr Don Livingstone and Mr Terry Ell. (Mr Livingstone is a former state parliamentarian, having been the Member for Ipswich West.)

Mr White asserted:

- He had known Mr Elder, Mr Livingstone and Mr Ell separately over many years, from his time as a planner with the Redlands Shire and Ipswich City Councils. Mr Elder and Mr Livingstone had been, respectively, Members of Parliament for the Redlands and Ipswich localities. Mr Ell had development interests in the Redlands Shire.
- Mr Livingstone had called into Mr White's office on 23 February 2009 and 28 April 2009. On the occasion of the first visit, Mr Livingstone raised general issues concerning regional planning, and made incidental comment about the proposed rail realignment at Palmwoods. During the second visit, Mr Livingstone indicated that he acted for Mr Ell. According to Mr White, it was clear Mr Livingstone did not have a grasp of planning issues and the discussion did not descend into specific issues. Mr White suggested to Mr Livingstone that Mr Ell should make direct contact with the Department.
- Subsequent to Mr Livingstone's second visit, and towards the end of the consultation period, Mr Ell called upon Mr White, who advised that Mr Ell would be best served by making a written submission. Mr White's recollection is that Mr Ell responded by stating that a written submission had been prepared, or was being prepared.
- Mr Elder is regularly in contact with Mr White concerning planning issues – albeit issues pertaining to areas outside of the South East Queensland regional plan.

⁶ Landsborough to Nambour Rail Corridor Study: Route Identification Report, Queensland Transport, March 2008.

- On one occasion, Mr Elder mentioned the proposed rail realignment in the Landsborough to Nambour corridor, and commented that the realignment would cause a diminution in available development land at Palmwoods. According to Mr White, this was the only time Mr Elder mentioned Palmwoods, and was the extent of Mr Elder's involvement in matters pertaining to Palmwoods.

Mr White did not minute or otherwise formally record his meetings with Mr Livingstone, Mr Elder or Mr Ell. According to Mr White, this was largely because he had simply listened, remained non-committal, and invariably advised parties to lodge written submissions. He said that all meetings with interested parties during the review process were on this basis.

Mr White acknowledged that the Sunshine Coast Regional Council had not supported an expansion of the urban footprint at Palmwoods. This was consistent with the council's submissions of 2 April 2009.

However, Mr White explained that the view had been taken that, acknowledging the inevitability of future urban growth demand, the council would be more likely to accept expansion to the urban footprint in areas adjacent to existing rail infrastructure, such as at Palmwoods, rather than other sites within the local government area.

According to Mr White, all recommendations made to the minister as a consequence of the review process were based on sound planning grounds and not as a result of any lobbyist's representations. Mr White was adamant:

Nothing that a lobbyist presented to me would have in any way changed my views on planning issues.

The information the CMC obtained through interviews and departmental documents did not raise any evidence that Mr Elder had acted improperly. On that basis, it was not necessary to formally interview Mr Elder or to compel him to respond to any allegation as there was no supporting evidence.

However, Mr Elder was offered the opportunity to provide a statement to the CMC, particularly with regard to the suggestion, as implied in the media, that he had improperly influenced the review process. He declined the invitation, but did comment on Mr White's account of the process.

Mr Elder claimed he had only ever spoken in passing about Palmwoods, and generally confirmed what Mr White had told the CMC. When asked whether he had spoken about the proposed rail realignment, Mr Elder explained that while Mr White may have inferred he (Mr Elder) was speaking about the rail corridor, he was in fact concerned about the impact of further public infrastructure demands generally. Mr Elder observed to the CMC that future public infrastructure potentially reduces the area of land that is otherwise available for private development.

Mr Elder also commented that he had no recollection of what response Mr White may have made, but he has no doubt it would have been non-committal – as that is Mr White's invariable practice.

Mr Livingstone is not a professional lobbyist and was not the subject of any suggestion of impropriety. Nonetheless, having been identified as having played a role in making representations in respect of the Palmwoods land, the CMC decided it was prudent to interview him.

Mr Livingstone told the CMC he had known Mr Ell for many years. They are friends.

Asked about his involvement in the matter, Mr Livingstone confirmed that he met twice with Mr White during the SEQ Urban Plan Review. He said he had done this as a favour, because Mr Ell was a friend.

Mr Livingstone acknowledged that he had spoken to Mr White about land use issues involving the possible rail realignment at Palmwoods. He had given Mr White a copy of a technical report Mr Ell had provided for that purpose. Mr Livingstone recalled that the technical report was not restricted to Mr Ell's property interests, but also addressed other land in the same vicinity.

Conclusions and recommendations in respect of Palmwoods

There is no evidence to challenge Mr White's assertions and no reason to suspect that any person committed an act of official misconduct.

The available evidence reveals that the Department, as represented by Mr White – an experienced planning professional – recommended the MCH property be included within the urban footprint at Palmwoods (together with other adjacent properties) on the basis of Mr Ell's written submission which was based upon the extensive technical data prepared by Conics (Sunshine Coast) Pty Ltd.

While there may be differing opinions among interested parties about the merits of the recommendation, there is no evidence that Mr White or any of his subordinates were influenced by any representation made by a professional lobbyist. Certainly, there is no reasonable basis to suspect there was any act of official misconduct on the part of any person. Any inference to the contrary is purely speculative.

Representations in respect of other land areas

As explained earlier, the Premier also requested the CMC examine the circumstances of every instance in which an extension had been made to the urban footprint of the 2009 SEQ plan, to determine whether any individual had acted inappropriately.

According to the Department's records, the review of the 2005 SEQ plan resulted in a total of 49 changes to the urban footprint. The changes were comprised of 34 additions and 15 deletions.

The additional sites are located at Bahrs Scrub, Beachmere, Bellbowrie, Bli Bli, Brighton, Cambooya, Cashmere, Charlton, Cooroy, Eagleby, Elimbah East, Finnie, Gatton, Gatton North, Greenbank, Helidon, Logan Village, Lowood, Jimboomba, Karawatha, Kilcoy, Mount Rascal, Narangba, Palmwoods, Park Ridge South, Plainland, Port of Brisbane, Purga, Redbank Plains, Steiglitz, Toowoomba, Upper Kedron and Walloon.

The deletions affect sites situated at Bracken Ridge, Chapel Hill, Helidon, Kuraby, Mount Gravatt, Nudgee, Parkinson, Purga, Rochedale, the Southern Moreton Bay Islands, Spring Bluff, Springfield and Thornlands.

Inquiries undertaken by the Department at the CMC's direction revealed various lobbyists had made representations during the review process. However, those representations were limited to sites at Caboolture West, Cedar Grove, Coomera, Elimbah East, Flagstone, Marcoola, Noosaville, Palmwoods, North Stradbroke Island, Wamuran and Warrill View.

In addition to the role played by the Honourable JP Elder in respect of the land at Palmwoods, the CMC has previously examined the involvement of the Honourable TM Mackenroth as a lobbyist in respect of land at Elimbah East.⁷

Apart from the matters involving Mr Elder and Mr Mackenroth which have already been addressed, records show the involvement of lobbyists (including Mr Mackenroth) in respect of sites at Caboolture West, Cedar Grove, Coomera, Flagstone, Marcoola, Noosaville, North Stradbroke Island, Wamuran and Warrill View. Those matters are reflected in the following table.

| Locality | Lobbyist | Client |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Caboolture West | Mr Shaun Drabsch (Rowland Pty Ltd) | Brookfield Multiplex, Heritage Pacific, Lenvest and Stockland |
| | Mr Terry Mackenroth | Heritage Pacific |
| Cedar Grove | Mr Noel Harvey (Three Plus) | Broomfield Grazing Company |
| Coomera | Mr Jim Soorley | Coomera Waters Village and Resort |
| Flagstone | Mr Terry Mackenroth | Heritage Pacific |
| Marcoola | Mr Andrew Soter (Open Door Consulting) | Messrs Ceccato, Cook, Mantyla, Myers and Savimaki |
| Noosaville | Mr Mark Nolan (Hawker Britton) | Mantle Group |
| North Stradbroke Island | Mr Shane Goodwin (Rowland Pty Ltd) | Consolidated Rutile Limited |
| Wamuran | Mr Cameron Milner (Milner Strategic Services) | Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd |
| | Mr Noel Harvey (Three Plus) | Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd |
| Warrill View | Mr Terry Mackenroth | Indigo Property Group |

⁷ *Allegation against the Honourable TM Mackenroth in respect of land at Elimbah East*, CMC, Brisbane, September 2009, <www.cmc.qld.gov.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=10743>.

Mr Gary White told the CMC:

- Mr Mackenroth met with him on 1 September 2008 concerning Heritage Pacific's interests at Caboolture West and Flagstone.
- The Department received letters from Mr Harvey on 9 and 17 September 2008, in respect of Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd's interests at Wamuran.
- Mr Nolan met with him on 11 September 2008 concerning the Mantle Group's interests at Noosaville.
- The Department received correspondence from Mr Harvey on 25 March 2009, 27 March 2009 and 16 April 2009, concerning Broomfield Grazing Company's interests at Cedar Grove.
- Mr Mackenroth met with him and Mr Colin Jensen (the Coordinator-General) on 8 April 2009 concerning Indigo Property Group's interests at Warrill View.
- The Department received an email from Mr Milner on 1 May 2009 concerning Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd's interests at Wamuran. Mr Milner also met with Mr Anthony Jensen (a departmental planner) on 27 May 2009 in respect of the same matter.
- The Department received an email from Mr Soter on 1 May 2009 concerning the interests of Messrs Ceccato, Cook, Mantyla, Myers and Savimaki at Marcoola.
- The Department received a letter from Mr Drabsch on 1 May 2009 concerning the interests of Brookfield Multiplex, Heritage Pacific, Lenvest and Stockland at Caboolture West.
- Mr Goodwin met with Mr Anthony Jensen on 10 July 2009 concerning Consolidated Rutile Limited's interests on North Stradbroke Island.
- Mr Soorley met with Mr Brendan Nelson (Executive Director of the Department's planning division) on 16 July 2009 concerning the interests of the Coomera Waters Village and Resort at Coomera.

According to Mr White, in almost every case, the particular lobbyist was promoting an expansion to the urban footprint. Despite the involvement of the lobbyists, no expansion was recommended in respect of any of the sites identified in the above table.

In other words, except for the areas situated at Palmwoods (which had been mentioned in general terms by Mr Elder and by Mr Livingstone – who was not a professional lobbyist) and at Elimbah East (the circumstances of which have been canvassed in a previous report), there was no other matter in which a lobbyist made representations that culminated in a recommendation for expansion of the urban footprint.

This is also consistent with Mr Jones's recollection. (Mr Jones is no longer employed by the Department, and has returned to Western Australia.) Other than meetings he had attended at which Mr Mackenroth spoke in support of the Elimbah East site⁸, Mr Jones is unable to recall being party to any meeting or communication from any lobbyist. Moreover, Mr Jones told the CMC he is satisfied he would have a recollection if such an incident had occurred.

⁸ The details of which are contained in the CMC's report in respect of that matter.

For his part, Mr Enright told the CMC that, from May to July 2008, he had attended meetings between the minister and mayors from the South East Queensland Region. Beyond those meetings, however, he was not otherwise involved in the review process.

Mr Enright knows Mr Elder and Mr Mackenroth. Indeed, both gentlemen had made representations to him about planning issues prior to the review process. However, Mr Enright is adamant that no lobbyist approached him during the review process.

The evidence shows that the representations made by lobbyists during the review process did not influence any departmental decisions. In the case of Palmwoods (and Elimbah East), there is compelling evidence that the Department's recommendations were based on planning merits.

Conclusions and recommendations

This investigation has focused upon the Department's recommendations in respect of the area of land at Palmwoods, as well as those other areas in which representations were made by a lobbyist.

Of those matters, there is no reasonable basis to suspect there has been any act of official misconduct committed by any person.

The CMC is concerned, however, at the Department's general lack of record-keeping, particularly as to representations involving lobbyists.

At an early stage of the investigation, the CMC requested access to all relevant departmental records detailing contact between departmental officers and lobbyists. Advice was received to the effect that, during the review process the Department had formally and systematically recorded the names and addresses of over 3500 individuals and organisations from whom formal written submissions were received. No such process existed with respect to oral representations.

Instead, all relevant files had to be physically checked for notations evidencing the possible involvement of lobbyists. Ultimately, the CMC has had to rely upon entries in personal diaries and the recall of individual departmental officers.

The absence of a process of formal and systemic recording of discussions with lobbyists and other interested parties at the very least exposes both the individual officers and the Department as a whole to damaging speculation. At the worst, the lack of process provides the opportunity for potential official misconduct to occur.

The CMC recommends that urgent consideration be given to implementing a procedure whereby some written record is made of all communications with registered lobbyists and other interested parties. The extent of the record necessary will no doubt vary according to the matter and type of representation. As a minimum, however, the record should confirm the fact of the communication, the issue to which the representation relates, and the Department's response, if any, to the communication.⁹

⁹ Mr White has acknowledged the desirability of a comprehensive written record of such communications, and has indicated that such options are already being explored.

Chronology

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 2005 | 2005 SEQ plan was released. The subject land at Palmwoods was included in the regional landscape and rural production area of the South East Queensland region. |
| March 2008 | Queensland Transport published a report identifying the preferred route of a realignment of the rail corridor between Landsborough and Nambour. |
| 10 May 2008 | The Queensland Government announced the review of the 2005 SEQ plan. |
| August 2008 | Mr Gary White joined the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. He was appointed Deputy Director-General in charge of the planning division. In this role, Mr White is responsible for all regional planning in Queensland – including the review process undertaken in respect of the 2005 SEQ plan |
| 1 September 2008 | Mr Terry Mackenroth met with Mr White concerning Heritage Pacific's interests at Caboolture West and Flagstone. |
| 9 September 2008 | The Department received a letter from Mr Noel Harvey (Three Plus) over Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd's interests at Wamuran. |
| 11 September 2008 | Mr Mark Nolan (Hawker Britton) met with Mr White over the Mantle Group's interests at Noosaville. |
| 17 September 2008 | The Department received a letter from Mr Harvey over Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd's interests at Wamuran. |
| 13 December 2008 | The draft plan was released. |
| December 2008– May 2008 | Mr Livingstone and Mr Jim Elder (former state parliamentarians) and Mr Terry Ell (a property developer) met with Mr White – or in Mr Elder's case, telephoned Mr White – at various times. |
| 20 February 2009– 10 May 2009 | <p>The Department received written submissions from or on behalf of Mr Dennis and Ms Joy Morris, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Mr James Brownsworth, and MCH (in that order).</p> <p>The council submission does not appear to support the expansion of the urban footprint around Palmwoods. However, the Brownsworth, MCH and Morris submissions all called for their properties to be included in the urban footprint in the 2009 SEQ plan.</p> |
| 25 March 2009 | The Department received an email from Mr Harvey over the Broomfield Grazing Company's interests at Cedar Grove. |
| 27 March 2009 | The Department received a letter from Mr Harvey over the Broomfield Grazing Company's interests at Cedar Grove. |

- 8 April 2009 Mr Mackenroth met with Mr White and Mr Colin Jensen (the Department's director-general) over the Indigo Property Group's interests at Warrill View.
- 16 April 2009 The Department received a letter from Mr Harvey over the Broomfield Grazing Company's interests at Cedar Grove.
- 1 May 2009 The Department received an email from Mr Cameron Milner (Milner Strategic Services) over Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd's interests at Wamuran.
- The Department received an email from Mr Andrew Soter (Open Door Consulting) over the interests of Messrs Ceccato, Cook, Mantyla, Myers and Savimaki at Marcoola.
- The Department received a letter from Mr Shaun Drabsch (Rowland Pty Ltd) over the interests of Brookfield Multiplex, Heritage Pacific, Lenvest and Stockland at Caboolture West.
- 27 May 2009 Mr Milner met with Mr Anthony Jensen (a departmental planner) over Bentleigh Developments Pty Ltd's interests at Warrill View.
- 10 July 2009 Mr Shane Goodwin (Rowland Pty Ltd) met with Mr Anthony Jensen over Consolidated Rutile Limited's interests on North Stradbroke Island.
- 16 July 2009 Mr Jim Soorley met with Mr Brendan Nelson (the Executive Director of the Department's planning division) over the interests of the Coomera Waters Village and Resort at Coomera.
- 28 July 2009 The 2009 SEQ plan was released.
- 4 August 2009 An article in the *Courier-Mail* inferred that a retired former Deputy Premier (the Honourable JP Elder) had somehow improperly influenced a state decision to include farmland at Palmwoods in the urban footprint of the 2009 SEQ plan.
- The Premier (the Honourable AM Bligh MP) wrote to us. She advised the Palmwoods site was not the only addition to the urban footprint in the 2009 SEQ plan. The Premier asked us to investigate all additions to the urban footprint in the plan to determine whether any individual had behaved inappropriately.