

WHO

Mr William Hu is the Director of Brisbane based SEQ Investment Group Pty Ltd, established in 2003. Management of property development is its major business. Mr Hu is also Director of SEQ Property Development Pty Ltd. The SEQ Property website seqproperty.com.au says: "With over 20 years' experience and many successful new property developments across Brisbane and greater South-East Queensland, SEQ Property Services is widely regarded as a significant player in the development of quality townhouses, house and land opportunities, apartments and subdivisions."

The applicant does not enjoy a reputation as a good corporate citizen. On 9 August 2019 ABC News reported that William Hu had commenced tree clearing a forested section of a caravan park near Iluka NSW that he had purchased earlier in the year. In response, Clarence Valley Council issued a temporary stop-work order over the site because of fears that an important wildlife habitat was being destroyed as Mr Hu tried to reactivate a 1984 development approval. He said he planned to remove every tree on the site to make way for more than 60 new cabins. "It is my legal right to clear all the trees within the approved footprint," Mr Hu said. "I'm a businessman. I want to make money."

WHAT

In December 2017 SEQ Investment Group submitted a Development Application to the Sunshine Coast Council to establish a tourist park on farmland at Bridges.

Council planning staff have granted multiple extensions of time as the applicant repeatedly missed deadlines to satisfy a series of requests for further information.

Council planning staff have indulged the applicant by considering multiple alterations to the original application which began with a cooking school and an animal nursery. The next version of the site plan removed the cooking school; and the animal nursery was in the last stage of the development. In fact, the first stage of that development included only the powered sites fronting the main road, the manager's residence and some amenities.

WHERE

In December 2019, after two years of submissions and changes, YADCA understands that Council Planning Officers were about to recommend refusal of the application as the site is on Good Quality Agricultural Land (GQAL) in the Rural Zone. Cr Rogerson has been unable to demonstrate that the GQAL classification is invalid; and the Planning Scheme prohibits permanent residency caravan parks in the Rural Zone.

WHY

Cr Rogerson co-sponsored a Maroochy Shire Council resolution that caused several large adjoining blocks of former cane land at Bridges to be identified in the inaugural SEQ Regional Plan as an Investigation Area for assessment for future industrial use. Before news of this came into the public domain several of the blocks were sold, including the site in question which was acquired by SEQ Investments. The incoming Sunshine Coast Regional Council of 2008 – to which Cr Rogerson was not elected – withdrew its support for the proposal and the State Government abandoned it also.

YADCA asserts that the Bridges tourist park idea has arisen, not by any consideration of function or amenity, but simply because a person who bought land for an industrial development which did not eventuate, is now looking for something else to do with it.