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Outrage over size of beach proposal

By **BILL HOFFMAN**

ANGER has been swift following the release of plans for a major development on Yaroomba beachfront land.

The key residents' association says the proposal by Sekisui House will become a serious community issue if it persists with plans to take building heights to a maximum of 12 storeys.

The huge Japanese home builder wants to put 2300 apartments, 300 stand-alone villas and a 450-room hotel on a 33.2ha land parcel opposite Palmer Coolum Resort.

Clive Palmer said the State Government's double standards were on display in its embrace of the proposal.

"If you don't have a lobbyist and you're not from an overseas country, the Queensland Government's not interested," he said.

Coolum Residents Association president Bob Walpole said the phones were running hot as residents received word of the plans.

"Coolum Residents Association has fought this battle once before in the Natoli era and got a partial compromise," Mr Walpole said.

The original proposal approved in 2007 by Maroochy Shire Council allowed 660 dwellings. It attracted 3657 objections.

Mr Walpole said the developer had failed to act on the major build allowed in the 2006 approval, but was now back for a bigger bite.

"Residents are deeply concerned about decisions that may or may not be made," he

said. "The residents association is by no means against some development. That's not the issue. We are not saying no to everything.

"We are not against development in that area. It is the extent of that development that concerns residents."

Sunshine Coast Destinations Ltd CEO Simon Ambrose said the Coast market would welcome and could definitely support a six-star resort.

"This would appeal to all international markets, in particular South-East Asia, but also UK, Europe, New Zealand and the US," he said.

Coolum Coastcare president Leigh Warneminde said there were immediate concerns about any development exceeding the four-storey height limit of the existing development approval on the land.

Ms Warneminde also expressed concern that the proposal had been discussed by the developer, council and the State Government yet the community was just now hearing about it.

"Yaroomba residents are horrified," she said. "This is a quiet suburban pocket where everyone knows each other."

Sunshine Coast Environment Council spokeswoman Narelle McCarthy said there should be serious concerns about the density, height and location of the proposal.

"This is a sensitive coastal environment," she said.

"Climate change is happening. It is beyond belief that they would propose a development of that scale."