



Dear TWRA Members

One of the most important issues about Twin Waters West will be the Character of the development. Character is a very nebulous term. It will mean different things to different people. However, forming a view about the Character of the proposed development is important for us in deciding whether it is "equal to or better than Twin Waters", which has been our mantra from the outset. In this email we will attempt to set out our thoughts, which we acknowledge does require a larger element of judgement than some of the other issues we have identified. So, here goes!

Character is probably mostly about how the development would "look". Here in Twin Waters, we like the open planning, the parks, the trees in the streets, the quality of homes, the waterways, the walkways, the general "feel" that this is a wonderful place to live. There is no question that the advocacy by the TWRA, including the Conditions Precedent negotiated back in 2015 [click here to refresh your memory of the CPs](#), has already had a significant influence on the planning incorporated into Stockland's DA for TWW. That said, it is also important that we recognise that TWW will not look identical to Twin Waters. Twin Waters was substantially built between 1996 and 2005. Tastes have changed; building styles and materials have changed; lot sizes have generally changed. What we would want is a new Twin Waters West that incorporates modern designs but still has the feel of a great place to live.

The following are some points that we consider to be important in forming a view about the Character of the proposed TWW as set out in the DA:

- Overall layout and design - a mix of waterways, parks, tree-lined streets, walking tracks and, importantly the retention of the large tracts of native vegetation, especially at the centre of the development. We think the overall layout and design is quite good. There are differences to here, but the overall proposal is good, in our opinion.
- Waterways - we particularly like the inclusion of the large waterways and there are sections of waterfront walking tracks, much more so than in Twin Waters. The visual amenity will be excellent.
- Mix of housing – from the Master Plan there will be 584 low-density home sites and 197 medium density units. Partly as a result of our advocacy, Stockland has reduced the number of medium density precincts from the 5 originally proposed in their first DA last December to only 2 now. This is good. It will reduce the overall number of home units and this will flow through to traffic.
- Density - Stockland is proposing an overall density of 12.7 dwellings per hectare. Bearing in mind that Twin Waters includes some large lots on Karinya Island and Hetherington Drive overlooking the golf course, if these are excluded the comparison is with an average in the low-density areas of Twin Waters of 10.56 / ha. The other relevant comparison is with what is happening elsewhere on the Coast, which is generally in the range 15-25 dwellings per ha., with a median of 20 per ha. So, the proposed density is slightly higher but is probably imperceptible from a visual viewpoint when driving around.

- *Setbacks and plot ratios - this is an area where building development and designs have changed. Frontage setbacks (probably the most important visually) are proposed at 4.5 metres to ground floor building (6 metres to a garage) and 6 metres to the first floor. While there are some homes in Twin Waters with these front setbacks, most are setback 6 metres (and this is the Code requirement for new single homes in an already built environment). While we would have liked to see slightly larger front setbacks, this is one area where we have to face reality. The important thing is that the setback to the garage door is large enough to have an average vehicle parked fully within the home lot (unlike some other high-density housing developments like some lots in Sunshine Cove). The other setbacks and plot ratios proposed by Stockland are all consistent with the existing Code, which is different from what was allowed when Twin Waters was built. This cannot be challenged. One final point on front setbacks is that the overall street appearance will also be influenced by the covenants regarding front fences (Twin Waters originally did not allow front fences) and street landscaping. Stockland is open to discussions with us about the covenants (which was one of our Conditions Precedent).*
- *Landscaping - The DA proposes extensive landscaping of TWW and it can be concluded that this will be to a high standard, as it was in Twin Waters. We will be advocating that TWW also has a Landscape Maintenance Levy, similar to what we have here to allow for a higher standard of public landscape maintenance. We see no reason why Council would not agree to this.*

There are a couple of other points that can be made about the proposed TWW. Stockland, one of the largest housing developers in Australia, has three classes of residential development - first-homebuyer, lifestyle and premier. Their original proposal back in 2008 was "first home buyer". Now they are talking about a "Premier" class of development. While we have been very careful to maintain an arm's length relationship with them, we must say that in the discussions we have had since the process started, they have never wavered from expressing a firm commitment to building a premier development that is "equal to or better than Twin Waters". This has been reiterated on many occasions. They have been very willing to listen to our concerns and to consider them for their planning. We will show later how they have seriously tried to ensure that our Conditions Precedent are satisfied in their DA. We should acknowledge this.

Overall, therefore, while there is undoubtedly a large element of judgement required to form a view about the Character of the proposed development at TWW, our considered view is that we can give this point a "tick". We hope that our thoughts are helpful to our members as you also form your views about what is proposed in Stockland's DA.

Regards

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