

Date:

To: Toowoomba Regional Council

RE: Submission Objecting to Development Application RAL/2025/5992; Property Address: Lot 1 and Lot 3 Meringandan Road, Meringandan, QLD, 4352, on Lot 1 on RP27298 and Lot 3 on AG4138

Dear Assessment Manager:

I lodge this properly made submission objecting to Development Application RAL/2025/5992. The proposal is inconsistent with the Highfields, Meringandan and Meringandan West Local Plan Code under the Toowoomba Regional Planning Scheme and conflicts with its purpose, outcomes and intent.

1. Conflict with the Local Plan Code

1.1 Local Plan Intent

Section 7.2.1.2 states that the Local Plan:

- encourages *minor expansion and consolidation* of the Meringandan township
- prevails over zone codes where inconsistent

Comment

The proposed 199-lot subdivision—79.4% between 300–500 m²—is not “minor expansion” and is not consistent with the township character. These lot sizes are typical of medium-density urban environments, not a rural township.

This is especially relevant given that KDL, the developer, states on their own website that they *specialise in medium-density development*. Their business model is incompatible with the Local Plan’s intent for Meringandan.

The Local Plan Code—not the SEQ Regional Plan—sets the appropriate scale and density for this locality. The proposal is inconsistent with those provisions, which prevail.

1.2 Context and Setting

The Local Plan requires that development in the Township Expansion Area:

- be consistent with the existing Meringandan community character
- strengthen and consolidate the existing community

Comment

Meringandan’s character is defined by:

- 2,000–4,000 m² lots
- wide spacing between dwellings
- a semi-rural, landscape-dominated environment
- low noise, low traffic, and rural amenity

The proposed development is wholly inconsistent with this character. Only 2% of lots exceed 600 m². This represents a dramatic and incompatible intensification of built form.

KDL’s own website describes Meringandan as a “*growth corridor*”, treating the township as a blank slate for urban expansion. Meringandan is not a growth corridor. It is a small rural township with a clearly defined planning identity.

Local real estate originally advertised this land using Council-supplied drawings showing lot sizes starting at 680 m². Residents relied on these representations. The current proposal bears no resemblance to what was promoted to the community.

Approval would set an undesirable precedent, effectively transforming Meringandan into a medium-density suburb—something the Local Plan explicitly seeks to avoid.

2. Mismatch with Community Expectations

Residents choose Meringandan for its semi-rural lifestyle, larger lots, and village-like character. I purchased my home in reliance on the Planning Scheme’s clear intent that this character would be protected.

The approval of RAL/2025/5992 would undermine:

- the established identity of Meringandan
- the reasonable expectations of residents
- the integrity of the Local Plan Code

Recent approvals already show a drift away from the planning framework. This proposal would accelerate that shift and permanently alter the township.

3. Absence of Strategic Justification

The Township Expansion Area is not intended to facilitate compact or medium-density lots. Nothing in the Local Plan Code supports this interpretation.

Approving this development would represent a material and unanticipated shift in planning direction. It would also signal that the Local Plan Code is not being meaningfully applied, eroding community trust in the planning framework.

A more appropriate outcome would involve:

- larger minimum lot sizes
- greater separation between dwellings
- a softer built form that transitions to the surrounding semi-rural environment

4. Minimum Lot Size Request

Given the scale of conflict with the Local Plan, I request that Council impose a minimum lot size of 667 m² for RAL/2025/5992. This aligns with the Emerging Community Zone density of 15 dwellings/ha and would:

- provide a more appropriate transition from rural residential areas
- retain elements of semi-rural character
- better reflect community expectations

This minimum lot size should also apply to all future development in Meringandan and Meringandan West.

5. Conclusion

The proposed development:

- conflicts with the Local Plan Code
- fails to reflect the established character of Meringandan
- undermines reasonable community expectations
- lacks strategic justification
- should be conditioned to a minimum lot size of 667 m²

Signature SHiggins
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