

Resort proposal drags into new year

THIS year started in much the same way as 2006 ended for Save Our Fore-shore lobbyists this week, with the controversial Outrigger Resort development decision still up in the air.

Dressed in pink t-shirts and the odd pink croc shoe, the lobbyists marked the start of a new council year by once more demanding council quash FKP/Eumundi's (Carmist's) plans to build a four-storey resort complex on the Lagoon carpark.

During public question time SOF member Jan Clifford pointed out that the final extension granted to the development had lapsed on January 9, and asked whether this now meant the Carmist development application was legally void.

The question proved a little too complex to answer on the spot and was taken on notice, allowing development manager Manfred Boldy time to investigate the matter and provide a written response.

The Outrigger debate reared its head again a few minutes later, with the focus this time on the state government's eleventh hour election promise last September banning highrise on the fore-shore.

Airlie Beach resident Lester Riley

said the state's position, coming on the heels of an independent assessor's report suggesting the project be rejected, made it clear the development was not appropriate.

Shire CEO Tony Hayward said the council was still seeking clarification of the state government's pre-election statement, saying council was not prepared to reject a development approval using a media release promise as a safety net.

"In every election — local, state and federal — political candidates and political parties make statements saying they will do certain things once they are re-elected . . . if anybody in this room can (point to a party) which has delivered 100% of those promises then I'd be very interested," he said.

"It is not official until something is provided in writing to council."

He said council was also unsure whether the author of the promise — Natural Resources Minister Henry Palaszczuk even had authority to make such a promise given he was not contesting the elections and that the government was in caretaker mode at the time.