

TELUS WILDERNESS POINT – CAWLEY POINT

In January of 2020 TELUS purchased a 124 acre property at Cawley Point with the stated purpose that it is a not-for-profit seasonal child/youth/family camp (summer season June-September) and off-season corporate leadership centre (off-season September-May) for community and corporate use.

The previous owners of The Wilderness Resort development operated a seasonal camping resort and had constructed a variety of structures on the site, including several elevated tent platforms, yurts, a caretaker's dwelling, a workshop a building with a washroom and a kitchen, and numerous accessory structures.

However, Telus has more extensive use plans for this property, so in September of 2020 Telus submitted an application to the Sunshine Coast Regional District to change the zoning from Rural 2 to a comprehensive development. Without checks and balances in place, there is a legitimate concern that TELUS, or a future owner of the site, might expand development significantly after rezoning approval. The list of Permitted Uses in the currently proposed CD Zone is quite extensive (see the list below). The Sunshine Coast Regional District is the local government authority for that property.

There has been one online public session in September 2020, where Telus' initial plans for the property were presented. At that time, the presenters stated that there would be changes to these plans, but they have not been provided to date.

In the meantime, Telus constructed along the water's edge eight timber cabins (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 14) and connecting boardwalks without building permits. The cabins range from 200-320 sq. feet in size. Several of the cabins were built on the existing elevated tent platforms, while others were built in new locations.

In July of 2023, the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) received a Development Variance Permit application requesting reduced setback from the natural boundary of the ocean for a number of existing structures located on the subject property near Cawley Point at Storm Bay.

Next steps:

- The request for comment on variance application has been sent to the Halfmoon Bay and Pender Harbour/Egmont Advisory Commissions, as well as the District of Sechelt. The meeting for Halfmoon Bay is scheduled September 26, Pender Harbour September 27
- Their consideration and comments will then go back to the **Sunshine Coast Regional District Board**.
- If residents of the Sunshine Coast wish to provide comment about the variance request, it is suggested that you use the following list of contacts to express your opinion. The local government with authority over this property is the Sunshine Coast Regional District. Contact information has been provided for the District of Sechelt Council members as two of them sit on the SCRD Board. As well, any development activity on Sechelt Inlet will also impact those residing in Sechelt.
- Some residents are taking the position that no variances or zoning approvals should be granted without Telus sharing the overall finalized plan for the property at Cawley Point.

Contact:

Sunshine Coast Regional District

Staff: Planning planning@scrd.ca

Yuli Siao, Senior Planner yuli.siao@scrd.ca

Directors: Area A – Egmont /Pender Harbour - Leonard Lee (Chair) leonard.lee@scrd.ca

Area B – Halfmoon Bay - Justine Gabias justine.gabias@scrd.ca

Area D – Roberts Creek – Kelly Backs kelly.backs@scrd.ca

Area E – Elphinstone – Donna McMahon donna.mcmahon@scrd.ca

Area F – West Howe Sound – Kate-Louise Stamford kate.stamford@scrd.ca

shíshálh Nation Government District – Philip Paul philip.paul@scrd.ca

District of Sechelt – Darren Inkster darren.inkster@scrd.ca Alton Toth alton.toth@scrd.ca

Town of Gibsons – Silas White silas.white@scrd.ca

District of Sechelt Council: John Henderson (Mayor) henderson@sechelt.ca

Donna Bell bell@sechelt.ca

Darren Inkster * inkster@sechelt.ca

Dianne McLauchlan mclauchlan@sechelt.ca

Brenda Rowe rowe@sechelt.ca

Adam Shepherd shepherd@sechelt.ca

Alton Toth * toth@sechelt.ca

Note: Darren Inkster and Alton Toth have two email addresses, one for Sechelt and one for SCRD

More Information Links and Details:

Website: <https://www.teluswildernesspoint.com/>

Rezoning Application:

https://adf179a0-88d5-48af-9f70-c994a252a7e1.usrfiles.com/ugd/adf179_85acd32d106f4bdaa47d09c901e194b2.pdf

Variance Application to SCRD and Documentation:

<https://www.scrd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023-JUL-20-EAS-Agenda-Package.pdf>

Coast Reporter:

<https://www.coastreporter.net/local-news/telus-cawley-point-cabins-variance-review-set-for-fall-7380445>

<https://www.coastreporter.net/local-news/more-review-on-telus-cawley-point-cabins-requested-scrd-board-7306102>

Halfmoon Bay Community Development Forum:

https://halfmoon-bay.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/CDF-Issue-Brief-DL4444-Cawley-Point-TELUS-Wilderness-Point_12Sept2023.pdf

Existing RU2 Zoning

- Residential – up to 3 main homes plus one guest cottage or secondary suite
- Agriculture, keeping of livestock, poultry and rabbits; horse riding, training and boarding
- Garden nursery
- Fish raising
- Animal shelters and Wildlife rehab
- Manufacturing, storage & vehicle repair
- RV and camping with up to 500 campsites
- Tourist Information Centre
- Forestry – logging, outdoor education, etc
- Construction Camp

Comprehensive Development (Tourist Commercial Zoning)

- Camp assembly
- Agriculture, research, education, garden nursery
- Arts and cultural or education facilities
- Cabins, portable cabins, lodge, health resort, resort hotel
- Dining facility
- Assembly
- Spa facilities
- Indoor and outdoor recreation and facilities
- Residential assembly
- Staff (residential) accommodation
- Boathouse and mooring facility
- Sewage disposal facilities
- heliport

- Under RU-2 zoning, sleeping cabins are not permitted as part of a campground use. In conformance with current zoning the existing cabins and yurts will only be used for non-residential or accessory uses such as storage, maintenance, artist studio, workshop, assembly, etc., and as such they contain no sleeping accommodations, or cooking or plumbing facilities.
- Environmental Report undertaken to identify environmental constraints and opportunities. The report states that “mature second growth forests remain along the marine foreshore. The marine shoreline includes steep and rocky areas along the southern shoreline and a mix of intertidal wetlands, mudflat and lagoons north of the dock. The greatest environmental values exist within the interface of mature forests and the marine foreshore”. (2020, November)
- Geotechnical Report undertaken with the purpose to identify potential geotechnical hazards for the development. The preliminary study recommended a 15-metre ocean setback and Flood Control Level (FCL) of 5.43 metres, 7.5 metre watercourse or pond setback with a FCL of 1.5 metres, and setbacks from any steep slopes. (2021, September)
- The applicant is seeking variance from the Bylaw setback requirement to permit retention of five cabins (1, 4, 5, 8, 14) as located within the 15 m setback, one yurt and the boardwalks and the removal of two cabins (6, 13) and three tents (3, 4, 5).



Building or structure	Setback sought by variance	Setback required by Bylaw 722
Cabin 1	2.7 m	15 m
Cabin 4	8 m	15 m
Cabin 5	2.5 m	15 m
Cabin 8	3.9 m	15 m
Cabin 14	4 m	15 m
Yurt 2	2.7 m	15 m
Boardwalks	Per Reference Plan	15 m

Diamond Head Consulting Letter dated November 23, 2022, updated February 15, 2023

- The Cawley Point Lands fall within the jurisdiction of the provincial Riparian Areas Protection Regulation which protects freshwater watercourse.
- The Fisheries Act includes protections for fish habitat within Canadian waters (Section 35). This act prohibits the harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish or fish habitat including marine foreshore and intertidal zones. Specific setback requirements are not defined by the DFO, however 30 m setbacks off the highest tide line were recommended to meet the DFOs expectations for new development. It was recommended that if development is planned within this setback, DFO should be consulted to mitigate risk associated with the development.
- Throughout the point, particularly adjacent to boardwalks and around the buildings, smaller understory trees, larger shrubs have been removed to improve views, and understory vegetation has been trampled and cleared from around cabin structures. Lower branches of mature trees have also been pruned in these areas.
- The estimate total disturbed area from the cabins and tent pads is 648 square metre for the areas within the 15 metre shoreline setback. Boardwalks, trails and roads account for an additional 508 square metres within the 15 metre shoreline setback.