

We The People

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We the People 222 **The Destruction of History and the Depletion of Society**



Good day to you. There are affluent suburbs in most cities and these have risen from people who have been successful and built beautiful homes. I think it's a good thing as it rewards effort and gives all of us something to aspire to. Recently I was dismayed to watch a grand Melbourne home built around 1900 levelled with a value of \$16 million. A stately home and it represented the history of early Melbourne. The home was located in Toorak an area equivalent to St Ives or Wahroonga in Sydney or Teneriffe and New Farm in Brisbane. In a way it's the equivalent of knocking down the Southport School to make way for more chicken coop living. Locally, just imagine destroying the home of Sir Bruce Small and all its history and its central location on an acre of land. Let's hope the new owner doesn't want to level it and make room for more concrete units and destroy part of the history of the Gold Coast. This idle destruction is falsely known as urban renewal but is just another word for greed at the significant expense of the community and our culture at large. It's happening everywhere and it's a regressive act.

These ruinous social changes are from poorly regulated town planning to the advantage of the developer, based on the false concept that bigger is better. As the melancholy spreads the next generations are going to ask why, as they struggle to find a home with a back yard where their children can play. The rampant building on the Gold Coast is sheer madness and does not create long term employment. Land everywhere is being redeveloped and swallowed up thanks to a local Council which it appears has lost its way and a State Government desperate for taxes to meet debt. This unchecked development will never produce real wealth for the community as history and the suburban identity is lost and as the cost of infrastructure vastly outweighs any short term gain. It is social engineering at its worst and I reflect on George Orwell's book '1984' which predicted everything would be State controlled, even our thoughts. Overlay the destruction of so many things we hold precious including marriage and the arrant nonsense of the safe schools program and much is lost in Australian society. Next we will have the Thought Police out in force.

So to add salt to the wound the Gold Coast Council have been advised by the State that all suburban residential blocks of 800 sq meters must be able to be cut in half to 400 sq meter blocks. Councillor Peter Young anticipates up to 22,000 blocks may be redeveloped. Add to this the green field sites in train and it's a lot of match box homes not suitable for families or peaceful living. The current crop of super small uninspiring dwellings near Robina Town Center are testimony to this planning folly. Of course they claim its for good reason but they don't ask us and in this the Council and the Palaszczuk government are culpable when it comes to a decent city plan for the people.

So let's take a look at what a 400 sq meter block means. Firstly little or no back yard and probably one garage. No drive way, with the home virtually on the street and no room between neighbours and the social cost of that aspect alone is enormous. Everyone hears everything and guests have nowhere to park. Smaller backyards reduce the amenity of the property, both by reducing the outlook from the dwelling and cutting back facilities for outdoor recreation around the home, especially for young children. However the disadvantages go way beyond the lifestyles of the occupants. The reduction in vegetation, especially tree cover, around the home leads to a loss of biodiversity and an increase in storm water runoff. The microclimate becomes hotter and this requires more air-conditioning and increased energy use. Generally people problems and social trauma rise significantly. The price of real estate will not fall while huge costs will be incurred in providing sewerage, water, electricity and the like. We will need more garbage tips and garbage collection, more police and more of everything at a monumental cost and for what. Let's not forget the extra cars on the road too. All this as our life style declines and the Council and State government know it. In my view this Council and the State are failing us badly and I propose that Gold Coast Councillors act courageously and refuse to approve the reduced block size and leave it at 600 sq meters minimum. We the people matter, not the indolent compromised plans of politics and bureaucracy.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**