

We The People
Program 311 September 17, 2018
We the People 311 Planning Arrogance and Poor Leadership



Good Day to you. I note that many folk don't like the trend of over development on the Gold Coast. The advancing concrete jungle is robbing the Gold Coast of the very things that make it desirable for so many. One casualty is the Surfers Paradise Surf Club which is valiantly attempting to reinvigorate Surfers Paradise despite the ugly tram bisecting what was once the glitter strip now more like the bitter strip. I say good for them in trying but the tram makes the place look and sound ugly and akin to Lakemba or Blacktown by the sea. In Surfers, local business hasn't recovered from the tram's construction phase and as Burleigh resident Ken Beech says **"the tram is a bus with no options"**. Now the Council wants the wretched tram to engulf the length of the beach side suburbs and provide an American type ghetto and modern graveyard to the once proud tourist capital. Meanwhile the Chinese are rolling out thousands of driverless electric busses able to go anywhere independent of each other while the Trojan Tram remains shackled to its rails. That shackling also applies to the Gold Coast Council and some Councillors who it appears have forgotten who they work for with their simplistic political myopia. They should work for the people not their own predilections. Cr Tate for example appears to predictably spew out his endless unsophisticated mantra of 'jobs, jobs, jobs' without any qualification or measurement of the human cost to the Gold Coast. There appears to be a culture of fear within Council and the bureaucracy where the planning department is expected to approve anything put to it. This period in time will drive a dreadful legacy for the Gold Coast as towering apartment blocks are built with tiny rooms deliberately catering to the Asian market which is well accustomed to tiny houses. They will in time be vacant as most Australians will reject them as they are primarily not designed for the Australian market.

Then we have the likes of Cr William Owen Jones who is reported to have said.... **"if anyone wants things to stay the same they should leave the Gold Coast"**. I see this as an arrogant proclamation and it appears to me he has no idea who he is working for. In this democracy if 'we the people' say we want certain things, then his job is to make it happen and he is in no position to lecture us. Cr Cameron Caldwell opines about a **'development balance'** but fails to tell us what his version of a balance is and when good folk try to guide their councillors it seems they are ignored and that's just more conceit. I don't like this Council or its general tone and culture, where recently the Federal member Steven Ciobo called Tate out for (quote) **"being at war with everyone"**. Tate's hollow response was to claim.... **"I will continue to put the city first, ahead of politics or politicians."** 'first' for whom Mr Tate and I say, don't listen to what he says, rather look at what he does and what he stands for as we wait for the CCC to deliver its findings.

Philip Follent was the City Architect for the Gold Coast and the Queensland Government Architect, so he knows a thing or two about good planning. He is aghast at what is happening now on the Gold Coast and a rudderless Council stumbling along apparently not following the City plan and approving densities up to 400% greater than allowed. Recently Phillip said and I quote..... **"The Council's targeting of a relatively small 12-unit development in Palm Beach to prove that Council is tough on developers is a cynical, muscle-flexing move, proving nothing other than Council's preparedness to treat smaller players as pawns in its attempted brinkmanship.... caring little for the applicant whilst feigning concern for Palm Beach residents. Earlier this year, it's rumoured, planning and legal experts chastised council over its cavalier approach on some development assessments. This was prompted by Council's approval of the Coolangatta Komune development, a 27 storey building in a 10 storey area"**...(end quote). Recently the Bulletin posted a worrying headline saying the Gold Coast must build up or families will be divided. The alarming article seems almost engineered to support Council's miserable agenda. More management by fear with no options. In my view this Council needs to go as they show scant consideration for we the people. The all pervading arrogance at play convinces me that many of these Councillors confuse arrogance with strength and knowledge with wisdom and take on simplistic mantras to justify their defective decision making, often at the hand of the Qld State Government.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley