

We The People  
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We the People 363 Spin Doctors



**Good Day to you.** No doubt you have heard the term 'Spin' in relation to changing the meaning of an event or act to selfishly suit the narrative. This happens regularly in politics and the media where stories are not necessarily favourable or conversely not negative enough to suit, so the media or politician **spins the story**. The entity which creates the manipulation is called the **'Spin Doctor'**. With submissions involving the Gold Coast City Plan having just closed it appears to me the home of the spin doctor lies within some of these duplicitous decisions of Council. One could be forgiven for believing that council regularly misrepresents the truth in this regard or spins the stories and events to suit their own agenda. Let's start with the City plan where Council says **"Our City Plan sets out a fresh and innovative approach to managing and supporting long term growth and is a crucial tool in shaping the Gold Coast into a mature, world-class city"**. So it sounds marvellous as a string of motherhood statements written by their PR department but it's them dictating their view on **'fresh and innovative'** but it's certainly not my view. Cr Caldwell is the chairman of the Economy Planning and Environment Committee. Recently he was quoted in the Bulletin regarding the changes to the city plan and public submissions as saying ..... **"Most of them are overwhelmingly positive, which has been great"**. On reading this I sent off an email asking him to underpin his claim with metrics and the silence was deafening. Others mused he arrived at this apparent inverted logic by assuming the relatively small amount of early submissions meant that everyone was happy with the changes to the plan. It appears he went further and implied the majority were comfortable with all the changes to the city plan. Well Cr Caldwell that's not true and its spin and nothing more because in my view rate payers are very worried about Council and its plans and unacceptable developer bias and **more spin than a washing machine**.

Now speaking of 'spin' consider Chevron Island, adjacent to Surfers Paradise on Main River. Chevron contains a unique village ambience and eclectic community with a diverse main street that showcases boutique shops, cafes and restaurants. Thomas Drive bisects the island and ultimately connects Surfers Paradise with Ferry Road at Bundall via an east and west bridge. The 2016 city plan illustrated a devious if not impossible transport overlay map with the wretched tram running along Thomas Drive. This triggered unrestricted building height for the island and this has led to completely unsuitable high-rise approvals including the forty-story tower 'Chevron One' on Stanhill Drive. The public were deeply concerned so the Council said, ok sorry we will change it and reduce the height. The trouble is the new height is typically 33 metres or 11-storeys with a 50% increase in height negotiable to 50 metres or 16 -storeys upon acceptable residential density. Notice the change from 'storeys' to 'metres' where the cynic might say it's just to confuse. Council have said they will remove the impossible tram route, which it could never deliver anyway. So Chevron island is destined to be massively overpopulated with the strip shops already bleeding because of insufficient parking. This is whilst the through traffic is dramatically congested and unsafe. For the record the eastern bridge cannot be widened beyond two lanes. So, bingo, another disaster in the making but the spin doctors are telling local residents it's visionary and their lifestyle is being protected, even improved. **No, it's not folks, no its not.**

Now finally to the spin at Jefferson Lane, Palm Beach. Jefferson Lane is an affluent top end one way lane without designated footpaths and runs parallel to the beach. There is currently high-rise development taking place where originally development sacrificed 1.5 metres of land for pedestrian traffic but not anymore. Similarly, there is no setback required from the street-front property alignment so get accustomed to an ugly wall of concrete and unsafe shared access for motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. Again the Council prevails, just don't tell the people there who have invested in lifestyle. Much of the Gold Coast remains unplanned meaning Mayor Tom Tate's dream of a Las Vegas by the sea seems inevitable and a long way from the environmental treasure most desire. The 'spin cycle' is rampant so do your homework and be very cautious about these tricky Council tactics **because our quality of life and happiness are on the line**.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**