

We The People
Program 277 November 27, 2017
We the People 277 Design Awards for Tomorrows Slums



Good Day to you. Every two years the Gold Coast recognises excellence in design in the built environment. Usually this is accompanied by descriptive phrases like excellence in urban design, liveability, efficiency and creativity, sustainability, innovation and an array of euphemistic descriptors. In fact the Council's web site goes on at length using expressions that the writers of Yes Minister or Utopia would be proud of. This is the sort of stuff that simply means more population living like sardines in a crowded inhospitable city with social and physical grid lock. Now do I sound cynical, well I suppose I do but the facts more than support my scepticism and bleak outlook. Firstly think about why you live on the Gold Coast and I will bet its lifestyle, open space, a stable safe family oriented society and the natural environment. If this is typical of your bench mark reasons then consider the State and the Gold Coast Council are deliberately destroying many of these qualities and all in the name of regress. Somewhere in the mix it's about money, power and mates rates and to hell with 'we the people' who are treated like mushrooms.....you know, kept in the dark and fed on dung and the waste products of politicians.

Let's take a look at a new development which has been awarded a commendation and located next to the railway line at Robina opposite the Town Centre. I encourage you to go and look at it for yourself because this is what the future of the Gold Coast looks like. Its called the City Village Terrace Homes designed by Robina Projects Australia and Andrew Halstead Architects who were probably just fulfilling a brief. Its constructed of cheek to jowl boxes with some colour and asymmetry to camouflage its dreadful morbid density. In fact in my view you could drop the lot into down-town Dhaka in Bangladesh and no one would notice. Let's put some facts up so you can appreciate what I'm saying and why Robin Loh the original visionary developer of Robina, would turn in his grave.

The narrow streets of the this terrace town are about 4.8 metres wide where you couldn't get an ambulance, fire engine or garbage truck along if cars are parked on opposite sides of the street. Of those homes that have a tiny garage none have a back yard. In some cases if you park a car nose to the garage door the back of the car sticks into the street and of course blocks the footpath. What children there are, play in the street because the place is almost devoid of grass and the natural environment. The relatively few street trees present include **botanically politically correct species** having no DNA for height or spreading branches and so will not provide shade or cover for birds, making it a sterile place. Now right in the centre of this crush is a concrete monolith of high rise apartments with little effort expended to break the monotony of this battery hen enclave. Let's not confuse this with affordable housing because the sale signs declared "**from \$500,000 dollars**". Somewhere in all this a developer and his friends turned a lot of money. The web site declares these "... **terrace homes are situated in a leafy enclave in central Robina, where residents can hide away while the surrounding city continues to buzz on their doorstep**". Now again I suggest you go there and see for yourself what it's really like and in my view this is the best it will look and all the clichés under the sun will not save it from social demise.

Now you would think the local division 11 councillor Herman Vorster would have something to say but his answer in general is that there is nothing he can do because the State government holds control. Herman mostly **never** answers my questions directly and it appears deals with minutia to pass the time away. **Why then do we have a local Councillor for Robina.** The final straw will be the possible arrival of the tram which will yield a 1.6 km wide high rise high density corridor and wipe the suburb out. There is a great deal of unfairness about planning and developer arrangements on the Gold Coast and indeed a complicit State government which sticks to a nasty plan apparently brought in originally by Minister Terry Mackenroth. It was back then the seeds of destruction were sewn and now we are reaping the insubordinate rewards. Mayor Tate and Premier Palaszczuk, it's your actions which are ruining Robina and the Gold Coast and in my view providing a dreadful legacy for our children and grand children.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley
Pictures follow

Pictures of Robina Terrace Development 201117



Scroll down



Scroll down



End