

Council Debate on the adoption of the Nudgee Beach Neighbourhood Plan Tuesday 26th May 2009

* Waste of \$200,000 of ratepayer's funds.

* Amendment to fix Nudgee Rd opposed by the Lord Mayor and LNP Councillors.

Debate:-

Councillor FLESSER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I'm red with anger over item A, Madam Chair. This is the Nudgee Beach Neighbourhood Plan.

This has just been an embarrassing waste of ratepayers' money. It's been going on for the last five years, started by the LORD MAYOR and a waste of money by this administration, Madam Chair.

As a matter of fact, what I would do is I would challenge maybe Councillor COOPER and the LORD MAYOR to find one single resident at Nudgee Beach who thinks that the Nudgee Beach Neighbourhood Plan has been a good use of the \$200,000 allocated by the LORD MAYOR in 2004-2005 budget. \$200,000, Madam Chair.

There's about a hundred houses down there so that's \$2000 per house, Madam Chair. I'm sure that the residents there would much more appreciate a reduction in their rates of \$2000 than the complete waste of money by this administration.

Councillor SCHRINNER spoke before about how they're trying to save money, Madam Chair. Well, this is where a big saving could have been made. So let's talk a bit about the history.

It actually started five years ago. After the LORD MAYOR promised that every part of Brisbane—

Chairman: Councillor FLESSER, just a moment. There is too much noise in the Chamber. If you want to talk, please take it outside. Thank you, Councillor FLESSER.

Councillor FLESSER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Look, five years ago the LORD MAYOR said that neighbourhood plans are going to be right across Brisbane. They're going to be fantastic, they're going to make peoples' lives better and in his policy document, it said that the neighbourhood plans were going to deliver infrastructure needs, including transport, including technology, dealing with water issues, sewerage issues, playground areas, sports club facilities, parkland enhancements.

Madam Chair, that just hasn't happened. \$200,000 has been spent on glossy brochures and consultation with no result. What makes me really mad is that the Council in 2002 did a local plan in that area.

So Madam Chair, what happened in that local plan in 2002? What did the residents of Nudgee Beach want? They just wanted the area to stay a low density residential area. They wanted the adjoining Boondall Wetlands to be protected. They wanted to be left alone.

Madam Chair, after five years and \$200,000, the outcome of this neighbourhood plan is exactly the same as it was back in 2002 except that ratepayers are \$200,000 poorer. So Madam Chair, what's been going on? There's been a lot of talk about things down at Nudgee Beach but what they really – what the people down there really want is some local problems to be solved.

Some of the things that the LORD MAYOR used to talk about when he talked about what neighbourhood plans were going to do. The main thing that they're concerned about, Madam Chair, are traffic issues. Nudgee Road is becoming an absolute diaster, Madam Chair.

And when the LORD MAYOR went down there to talk to the Nudgee Beach residents about what they wanted out of the neighbourhood plan, what did they say? They wanted Nudgee Road fixed and they wanted some traffic management in the suburb. But Madam Chair, what's happened in the five years after \$200,000 of talk and brochures? Nothing, Madam Chair.

Even simple – even simple things like a little bit of traffic management in the suburb, probably less than \$10,000, there's been petitions, Madam Chair, I'm really disappointed that when those petitions come to the Chamber, the LORD MAYOR and the LNP Councillors rejected them.

And what about Nudgee Road itself, Madam Chair? We all know what the truck problems are there and I spoke not long ago about a cyclist who was killed on Nudgee Road. Nudgee Road needs to be widened. \$200,000 would've gone a long way towards widening Nudgee Road, Madam Chair.

That's the sort of thing that people in Nudgee Beach want. They don't want brochures and Councillors coming in talking to them. They want action and the Nudgee Beach Neighbourhood Plan does not deliver any action at all. Madam Chair, we've just seen some big flooding in Brisbane.

Nudgee Beach gets flooded occasionally when there's storm surges and big tides. So because this plan has taken so long to develop, five years, Madam Chair, what's one of the big issues that has arisen in the last five years, Madam Chair? It's global warming and rising sea levels.

So it's a pity we're not starting the Nudgee Beach Neighbourhood Plan today, because if we did, one of the things clearly we should be looking at is rising sea levels for the residents of Nudgee Beach. The whole suburb, every residential house there would probably be less than one metre above high tide level.

So Madam Chair, I'd hope that the next neighbourhood plan for Nudgee Beach will actually deliver those things that the LORD MAYOR promised and certainly should be starting to address the really big picture issue of global warming and rising sea levels at Nudgee Beach.

So Madam Chair, to sum up, it's been an absolute waste of \$200,000. Not a single person in Nudgee Beach thinks it's been a great idea. I hope that neighbourhood plans in the future end up with much better results than what has happened at Nudgee Beach.

Chairman: Any further debate? Councillor HINCHLIFFE.

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: Madam Chair, in relation to item A, the opposition would like to vote on that separately.

Chairman: Order!

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: Because we know this is a historic occasion. This is the first time that a neighbourhood plan has finally made its way through to completion, five years and two or three months after the LORD MAYOR was elected—

Chairman: Order!

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: —more than five years since the LORD MAYOR produced the Future Brisbane document wherein he said that all of Brisbane's problems, ills, would be automatically solved by the implementation of neighbourhood plans.

We've already heard from Councillor FLESSER in a very compelling speech about the important issues of this very significant community of Brisbane faces and were hoping to see reflected in the solutions outlined in

the neighbourhood plan. We've heard from Councillor FLESSER that he feels that this neighbourhood plan does not address that.

So accordingly I move an amendment to item A in the section under Recommendation point II, that is 2, add the following words: and that the Council requests the LORD MAYOR to allocate funds in the upcoming June 2009 budget towards the widening of Nudgee Road in accordance with the LORD MAYOR's election commitment in the Future Brisbane document that neighbourhood plans will address transport issues.

Councillor FLESSER: Seconded.

Chairman: The amendment has been moved by Councillor HINCHLIFFE, seconded by Councillor FLESSER, and it involves an addition to Recommendation 8.2 – yes, 8.2. I won't read it out again. If you wish – debate, Councillor HINCHLIFFE? Councillor FLESSER.

Councillor FLESSER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, as I said before, it's an outrageous waste of ratepayers' money, \$200,000 on this neighbourhood plan, allocated in the LORD MAYOR's first budget in 2004.

There's no way I can vote in favour of this item today, Madam Chair, without some meaningful benefit to the residents of Nudgee Beach. We know that the LORD MAYOR made some big promises about neighbourhood planning back in the lead up to the election.

His Future Brisbane document, Madam Chair, was very enlightening. It talked about residents taking ownership of plans. The Newman Liberal team will strongly encourage local residents to be involved to ensure ownership and acceptance of the completed plans.

Madam Chair, the residents of Nudgee Beach, they don't accept this plan. They think it's an absolute waste of money. It goes on. It says that the local plan – neighbourhood plans are going to address local needs such as footpaths, lighting streets, landscaping, design shopping, community centres, pedestrian links, enhance employment opportunities.

It goes on and on but I'll get down to the most important one, Madam Chair, and that's that neighbourhood plans are going to address infrastructure needs including transport. Madam Chair, there is only one method of transport to Nudgee Beach and that is along Nudgee Road.

Nudgee Road needs to be addressed. There are serious problems down there. Madam Chair, \$200,000 that was spent on this plan clearly should have been spent on widening Nudgee Road. If that happened the residents of Nudgee Beach, they would've thought well, that's great, we actually got something out of this.

So Madam Chair, there is no way, no way that I'm going to vote in favour of the Nudgee Beach Neighbourhood Plan unless my residents get something real, something on the ground that makes their lives better.

So Madam Chair, I totally endorse this motion. I hope that every Councillor here will also vote for it. After all, this is what the LORD MAYOR promised when he talked about neighbourhood planning back in 2004. So Madam Chair, I cannot understand how any Councillor here could vote against this amendment.

Chairman: Further debate? Further debate? No. Okay. I will – do you want to sum up, Councillor HINCHLIFFE?

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: Yes, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I am staggered that the Councillors on the other side would not take the opportunity of a historic debate about the first neighbourhood plan that has taken so long. I don't know what an elephant's gestation—

Chairman: Order!

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: —period is. I think it's about two years.

Chairman: Just a moment, Councillor HINCHLIFFE, just a moment. The administration hasn't got copies. Where are they?

Councillor SUTTON: Councillor QUIRK just put that in the bin.

Chairman: Order! Order!

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: Madam Chair, let the—

Chairman: Order! Just a moment, Councillor HINCHLIFFE. Order! Right, keep going, thank you.

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: Madam Chair, for the record, Madam Chair, for the record, because the record won't reveal the interjections and what just happened. But for the record, when the administration said they didn't have a copy of the amendment, we pointed out that in fact we had provided them with an amendment.

The DEPUTY MAYOR fished the amendment out of the rubbish bin in the Civic Council Chamber. Now, when the residents of Nudgee Beach get to read the transcript and record of this Council meeting—

Chairman: Order!

Councillor HINCHLIFFE: —and their local Councillor will ensure they will, they will see how vividly this administration disrespects their wishes. As Councillor FLESSER said, number one priority for those residents was an improvement in transport access to Nudgee Beach.

It is a tiny isthmus in Brisbane. It is one of the most precious pieces of land in the entire Brisbane community. It's connected by one road, Nudgee Beach, and not only do I expect that the administration will not support this but they show their distain for the proposal by putting it in the bin.

I hope after that revelation they have sufficient backbone and spine and yes, LORD MAYOR, guts to support this amendment to give the people of Nudgee Beach in the words of their Councillor: something real.

Chairman: I will put the amendment. All those in favour say aye.

Councillors say aye

Chairman: To the contrary no.

Councillors say no

Chairman: The noes have it.

A Division has been called by Councillor FLESSER and Councillor HINCHLIFFE

Clerk: Madam Chairman, the voting is as follows.

Chairman: Order!

Clerk: The ayes Leader of the Opposition Councillor SUTTON and Councillors ABRAHAMS, CAMPBELL, CUMMING, DICK, FLESSER, GRIFFITHS, HINCHLIFFE, MacPHERSON, NEWTON. The noes yourself as Chair, LORD MAYOR Campbell NEWMAN, DEPUTY MAYOR Graham QUIRK, Councillors ADAMS, BOURKE, COOPER, JOHNSTON, KING, KNAPP, MATIC, McKENZIE, McLACHLAN, OWEN-TAYLOR, PRENTICE, SCHRINNER, WINES, WYNDHAM. The noes have it, the voting being 10 to 17.