

## Nelson Bay Planning

### Some thoughts

1. Council and local community groups need to agree on a development plan for Nelson Bay which is compatible with the local geography and environment that is accessible and business orientated.
2. Unfortunately the existing buildings area a mish mash of buildings due to lack of proper council development approvals over many years.
3. The Nelson Bay CBD is divorced from the Marina Complex and any planning for the CBD should be undertaken to allow it to be a 'stand alone' location that will attract locals and tourists alike.
4. Whilst tourism is important it is far more important to build facilities that serve the local residents first. Businesses in Nelson Bay need to survive 52 weeks a year, not simply during peak tourism seasons.
5. Is high rise the answer? Certainly not within the central areas of the CBD. Even on the ridge locations surely there would be far better architecture of 'stepped down' developments rather than towers, and far more pleasing to the overall impact for sight lines and view corridors.
6. So, what should council do?
  - First they should dig out the many objections and reports completed by various community groups from the last attempt, which came up with very valid recommendations for the CBD.
  - Next, decide exactly what the Nelson Bay CBD is, or wants to be.
  - Develop a building plan that meets with that criteria.
  - Develop a traffic management plan that provides proper and adequate movement in, out and through Nelson Bay.
  - Develop a parking plan both within the boundaries of the CBD and also what would be the preferred requirements to be included in developments to accomodate residential, commercial and visitor uses.
  - Develop a streetscape plan for paving, road ways, lighting, seating, signage, bus stops, taxi ranks, plaza areas and landscaping that also meets the criteria of the building development plan.
  - Provide development guidelines for existing owners and new developers as to building street fronts, signage, lighting, facades, awning levels and design that also meets with the building development plan.
  - Develop a minimum 'public space' requirement for all new developments, or a contribution that would enable council to provide better public space in the CBD by, say, compulsory acquisition.
  - Consider if there are any buildings within the CBD that should/could be acquired by council for public space or plaza areas for cafes, bars, al fresco dining.
  - Work with existing property owners with respect to their input and contribution in meeting the future Building Development Plan.
  - Develop and appropriate contribution by developers in the Nelson Bay CBD that helps to provide some of the funding toward councils commitment to the streetscape plan.

- Put in place appropriate Bank Guarantees to be lodged by developers who do not complete a development, damage council infrastructure during the development process or do not meet fully the requirements of their Development Application/ Building Approval or bypass the requirements of the Nelson Bay Building Plan.
- **STICK TO AND DO NOT WAVER FROM THE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT PLAN RATHER THAN BE CAJOLED BY DEVELOPERS.** It is what council and the residents want Nelson Bay to be, NOT what a developer wants as the developer is there for the build, sell and profit and cares little as to the future outcomes.

By simple but proper steps, council and residents can achieve the best end result for the community, offer developers with appropriate building guidelines without interfering with their overall architectural design thus enabling all stakeholders to share the benefits of a well prepared, thought out, overall town and building development plan.

**REMEMBER, COUNCIL IS NOT A DEVELOPER BUT THEY CAN AND SHOULD DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN, WITH THE COMMUNITY, THAT PUTS AT THE FOREFRONT WHAT THE FUTURE EXPECTATIONS FOR NELSON BAY CBD REALLY ARE.**

To date that hasn't happened so we've ended up with ad hoc development, inconsistent building approvals, empty shops, poor quality development, lousy traffic management, poor road access and egress, and no forward thinking. It's too late to think it's part of the foreshore or the marina that went when some one in the past approved the Nelson Bay Towers on Victoria Parade

Regards  
Bob Young