What a great and interesting week

Editorial
JOHN HUGHES

CASSOWARIES AND RAINFORESTS

Anyone who drives through the greater Mission Beach area will have noticed all the signs pointing to future developments. There is also very clear evidence of developments that are already under way.

Monday’s decision by Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett to stop one such proposed development must now give pause to other developers.

The need to strike a balance between development and the environment is clear. But I would take it a step further and question whether there is any place for future large scale developments in the Mission Beach area.

Some developments are proposed for land previously used for agriculture. The land is largely already cleared and the more sensitive developers have made every effort to retain remnant native vegetation as part of their plans.

Done correctly and such developments could be an asset to the area. I have greater difficulty accepting the clearance of land in the Mission Beach area (rainforest, regrowth or otherwise) for residential or commercial developments, or otherwise)

REGIONAL PLAN

Apparantly some Mission Beach real estate agents have become the farmer’s fire safe and a lobbying hard to have the proposed 2025 Regional Plan allow the subdivision of even more rural land.

At a time when our water security and growing environment is the envy of most Australian farmers the subdivisions already happening at Mission Beach on red basalt soils (rated the world’s best soil type) is clearly a lasting monument to the stupidity and short-sightedness of previous planners and decision makers.

The disproportionately high percentage of prizes won by Mission Beach area banana farmers at the Tully Show is clear testament to the quality of the area for agriculture and its farmer’s skills.

Most people living in the Mission Beach area do so because of its quiet laid-back lifestyle and good fishing, as the Cassowary Coast is the southern-most point where the Great Barrier Reef comes close to the coast.

With a land bank in the Mission Beach area alone of around 1300 vacant blocks for sale and another 400 more applications on the table - we can expect to see another 3000 or 4000 cars on the road and another 500 to 600 boats on our waters with what’s already in the system.

Mission Beach Road is already hectic at peak times and those of us who use the Clump Point boat ramp know the parking facilities are already fully stretched on a decent day.

Unlike other “iconic” coastal settlements in Queensland (Noosa and Gold Coast) we have stingers and no surf, so fishing is a very important source of fun and food for locals of all ages and fitness levels.

Is there an example of anywhere in Australia (or the world for that matter) where increasing population density improved the lifestyle? Have you tried to catch a legal crab in the Hutt lately?

Increasing the rate base is a short term fix for councillors and there will always be ravenous “developers” keen to gobble up loose land and spit out urban sprawl.

make sure the current crop of politicians, planners and “quick quid merchants” don’t squander our environment, farm land and lifestyle for short term gain.

Page 38 of the plan clearly indicates the crazy population densities planned for us.

The State Government probably already has the plan set in concrete and the consultation process is the usual token offering to resemble democratic process.

However apathy will get us nowhere and we all have the opportunity to have our say by August 8 by filling out the forms from local council offices or phoning 1300 721 194 or going to www.dip.qld.gov.au.

There will always be people wanting to move into this brilliant part of the world. Ask people why they left where they were and they’ll more often than not describe what’s “in the pipeline” for here.

There aren’t many spots on the coast as good as we’ve got.

We all need to defend it.

Peter and Alison Sellaras
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