

## **Summary of Cr Abrahams speech the Council Chamber on 1st March 2011, objecting to the approval of the two tower development at 324 Vulture Street, Kangaroo Point**

First of all I noted that Cr Simmonds, (Walter Taylor Ward) when speaking to this motion did not refer to the development until his final sentence. The rest of his speech was about my actions. He did not discuss the merits of the development.

The development is for two towers, being 20 storeys and 10 storeys, for 206 residential units ranging from one to three bedrooms, a shop, a restaurant, an office and 281 car parking spaces adjacent to St Nicholas Russian Cathedral.

Currently the site is a vacant site and it is surrounded by one storey buildings with an approximate eight storey building on one side. The rest is one or two storey buildings, apart from the Cathedral. It is the earliest Russian Cathedral in Australia, and it has a significant two storey tower.

I wish to discuss the submissions on this development proposal. The submitters are concerned about the **height; the 20 storeys, the scale, the bulk of the building, the overshadowing of the building onto the Russian Orthodox Church** which is acknowledged in Council's response to the petitioners. There were concerns about the **impact on St Joseph's school**, which is immediately behind, and **transport issues and access to the site** as this an extremely congested area. I do not believe the traffic issues have been fully addressed.

The development takes a 2.5 metre road contribution from Lahey Lane and a 3.9 metre road contribution from Mark Lane. That is the only acknowledgement of the traffic issues that were raised by the objectors

Traffic generally in this section of Vulture Street is very congested, Mark Lane is only wide enough for one car, and even in Committee we were told that drivers lose their side mirrors because the street is so narrow, and yet this Lane is one of the access routes to this site.

The most important and significant objection relates to the heritage building next door – St Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral. Council has, in the report before us, summarised the submissions as and I quote “The Environmental Protection Agency, the State Government agency administering the heritage legislation under which St Nicholas precinct falls, appears to have been bypassed”

I will say that again. The submitters were concerned that **the EPA appears to have been bypassed in the heritage assessment of this application.**

The response from Council to the submitters states “The Department of Main Roads and Transport was the only concurrent agency for the application. As a narrow lot adjacent to the site to the east is not within the heritage classification no referral to the EPA - or the Department of Environment Resource Management, as it now is - was required.”

That narrow parcel of lane is a vacant laneway that is owned by the Church. The development site abuts land owned by the church and when on site everyone perceives this development as immediately adjacent the Russian Cathedral.

I believe for this application not to be referred to the State Heritage Unit for comment as the Cathedral is a State listed heritage building is sufficient grounds for Council to reject this application at this time.

When Cr Cooper, Chairperson of Neighbourhood Planning and Development Assessment, spoke of the merits of this application; not that there were many; she alluded very quickly to the fact that she had been approached by the Russian community to consider the Cultural Heritage Trial. She dismissed that representation but stating she thought the Premier had also been consulted. That fact does not remove her responsibility to consider it as part of this application.

It is not good enough. **The proponents of the Heritage Trail are the members of the St Nicholas Russian Orthodox parish, the Sisters of Josephite Order, the Lutheran Church at Woolloongabba and the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane.**

I shall repeat, there are four major church organisations and all are opposing this proposal on heritage grounds. And Council, in its wisdom, didn't even refer it to the State Government's Heritage Unit for their comment..

**The grounds for objection by the four religious organisations was that it foreclosed their visionary plan for the heritage of our inner city suburbs of Woolloongabba and Kangaroo Point.**

The vision was for a walking trail from the Nazareth Lutheran Church in Woolloongabba through the central walkway of the proposed UDA site and across Vulture Street into an inviting pathway adjacent to the St Nicholas Cathedral, through St Josephs Church and up to Kangaroo Cliffs and up to St Mary's Anglican Church where we have another heritage church with a "to die for view". The pathway adjacent the Cathedral would highlight the heritage value and be a central feature of the Cultural Heritage

Now this innovative proposal has been presented to the Kangaroo Point South Neighbourhood Planning team. I supported it in my response to that Neighbourhood Plan. It has been presented to Cr Cooper who has ignored it when approving this application. It certainly has been presented to the Premier who has acknowledged its merit.

I oppose this application.

**Cr Dick (Shadow Chair) continued to present Cr Abraham's arguments when her time expired.**

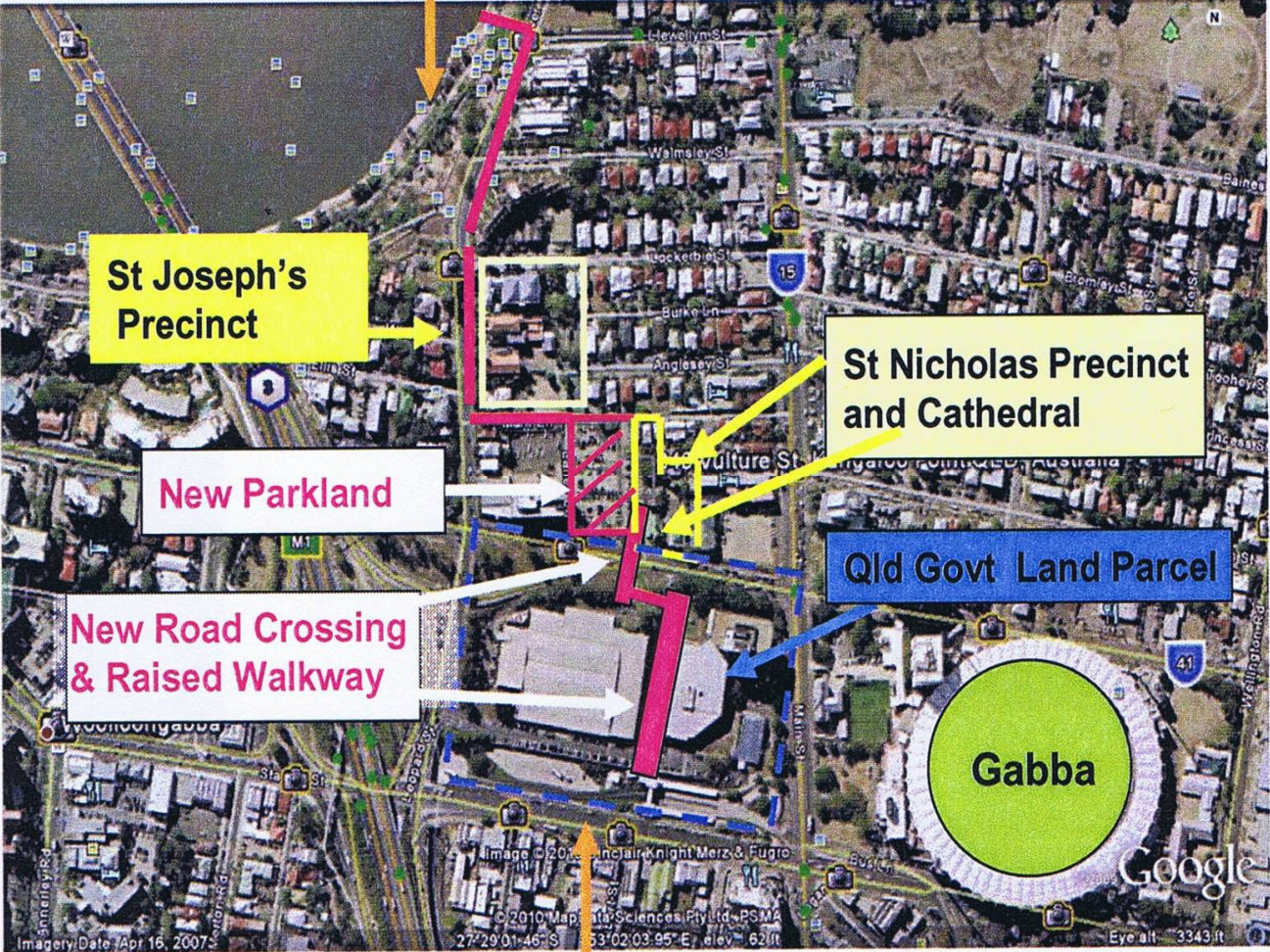
"let's be very clear on this development; when you have the Russian Orthodox Church, the Sisters of the Josephite Order, the Lutheran Church and the Catholic Archdiocese all united opposing a development you'd have to think that the Council, this Council, would take them into consideration.

I want to read into the record exactly what the Archdiocese said in their submission on this application " The development displays a lack of knowledge of existing local communities and the history and heritage of the locality. Historical heritage and community aspects of the locality have also been completely disregarded by planners."

It is fact that the local community groups are now being ignored with respect to this development is shameful. It is absolutely shameful. You only need to read what the headline in this week's *City South News* which said "**Heritage listed churches oppose towering development.**"

Madam Chair in the article written by Taryn Davis it says Father Deacon said the parish had opposed the development application along with the Sisters of the Josephite Order, the Lutheran Church at Woolloongabba and the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane. He said that they acknowledge the need for higher **density living, but argued that six to 10 storeys were ample.** He said it will be like a sore thumb sticking out in the middle of nowhere.

# Kangaroo Point cliffs and Riverside walk access



Woollongabba Transport Hub