

Blueprint enters elections

It is satisfying to notice the attention Blueprint is attracting, especially with the upcoming local elections. I'm not going to respond on any remark made about the Blueprint process or content, because the project tells its own story and.... sitting on the fence and making non-substantiated negative remarks online or in letters to the editor is not constructive. Blueprint does not have any secret agenda, or hidden goals or objectives. It is nothing more – and nothing less – than a sincere, honest effort to reflect the opinions of the residents of Tamborine Mountain, created by those residents themselves. After a well attended meeting in October 2018 the community sent over 400 submissions with suggestions, ideas and proposals for maintaining our unique community and which actions are needed to further improve it, focusing on the next decade. All submissions were published and are still accessible via the website. In addition over 250 locals filled out questionnaires. Despite working with a budget of zero, the total response is percentage wise comparable with very well funded similar projects in big Councils like Brisbane and Gold Coast. Neither in our Blueprint, nor in similar projects elsewhere, the claim is made that the outcomes reflect 100% the opinion of all residents. That is by definition impossible. But, given the high response – and intuition - the outcomes seem to match remarks made by fellow residents at formal and informal discussions in the past years. Blueprint will NOT turn into an action group. The organisers have links to a wide variety of community groups, varying from the Progress Association to the Chamber of Commerce. That variety reflects perfectly well the fabric of our diverse – but mainly united – community, but anyone can use the results for their own purposes (e.g. in the context of the upcoming local elections). For this purpose a “Blueprint in ten points” summary is made available on www.visitamborinemountain.com.au/blueprint. That Summary has in between been presented in direct meetings with our State MP, Jon Krause, and two Mayoral candidates, Tom Share and John Brent. All three were impressed by the effort and outcomes, and will use relevant outcomes for policy choices. The outcomes of a similar meeting with the current Mayor and Councillors was less constructive, and is available online after publication in local newspapers.

In summary the main ten issues (longer and more attractive version of this summary:

NATURE

1. The main reason for locals to live here are the pristine environment and quaint, rural lifestyle. If well managed, sharing those qualities with tourists is okay, also because it brings jobs to our town.
2. Guaranteeing local drinking water supply from the aquifers and rain is also a big issue, because of lack of sufficient regulation of extraction, storage and distribution, and because of the risks of sewage leaking into the aquifer. This issue deserves much more action from government, and well structured, facts based input from our community.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

3. Lack of public transport to the Gold Coast, and locally is a major issue. A sub ctee of the TMPA is working on this and will provide feedback to MP Jon Krause, to find solutions at State level.

COMMUNITY

4. The issue of MMM zoning has major consequences for the functioning of the medical service, arts and possible the entire economy. Discussions with Federal MP Scott Buchholz are ongoing.

5. An art/environmental centre, better swimming pool, further improvements of the library and better recycling facilities are considered high as priorities. The proposed Observatory is widely supported.

TOURISM

6. Existing plans to improve/overhaul Gallery Walk should be implemented.
7. The Green Behind the Gold' is a theme that is widely supported widely, not only for marketing and profiling, but also as guideline to make the mountain greener, sustainable and plastic free.

ECONOMY/INFRASTRUCTURE

8. Without improvements in tourism management the impact of tourism will be unsustainable (better roads, Gallery Walk, Extended Long Road, parking facilities, traffic management at market days).
9. The proposed 'circular cycling/footpath' for school kids, locals and tourists is widely supported

GOVERNMENT

10. Our rates are twice as high as in the Gold Coast – they don't deliver value for money. 52% of respondents support the idea to move to a cheaper and economically stronger Council, while 18 per cent disagrees and 30 per cent are neutral. 70 % don't care under which Council the Mountain resides, as long as our environment is protected, development is limited, and rates are cheaper.

Blueprint will live on by itself. But we do encourage everyone involved in any action, or in political activities to use the document to demand from potential future politicians to take our wishes serious. It is also important never to forget that, even if you disagree with one or two points, that the strength of both Blueprint and our great Community is unity: we might have differences in opinions and have our own interests, but in the big picture we all agree.

That unity is our strength. On behalf of all volunteers who put a lot of effort into Blueprint I like to say thank you for – above all – that attitude of finding common grounds.

"Blueprint in ten points": www.visitaborinemountain.com.au/blueprint

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