

Wooyung Development Fears

Wooyung Action Group

Clearly developer Cameron Davis of Samtay Group has taken a leaf out of Bush's book. Anyone who opposes him is labeled a 'terrorist'. A poor yet revealing choice of words from Davis, who is heading up a development that will prove massively environmentally devastating. Perhaps their terror springs from their lack of gullible investors.

Cameron Davis and the \$780 million Samtay Group are now facing off against the collective forces of the Wooyung Action Group, the Byron City Council, Republic Media in Melbourne, local farming representatives, three conservation groups (CONOS, BEACON and Caldera Environment Centre), representatives from South Golden Beach and North Ocean Shores, Greens MLC Silvia Hale, the Tweed Council, local botanist and former Tweed councillor, Henry James, greens candidate Tom Tabbart, local MP Neville Newell and many more. A list to strike terror into the wallet of any dodgy developer.

In the last month JMS/Samtay spent more than \$75,000 on local and national ads in an effort to cut ties with the development or find a joint-venture partner. Apparently 'We're looking for a fall-guy' was not the ad-line they went with in the end.

It's hardly surprising that the parties involved are looking to get out. The risk they took in reviving this development is not paying off. It is stained by its undeniably devastating environmental impact and by the corruption revealed in a 1990 ICAC report regarding its approval in the late 1980's.

The environmental statements conducted in the 1980's are laughable in their inadequacy, failing even to address the most basic of issues – the acid-sulphate soil in which the development would see a massive lake excavated. Davis is on record as stating that the studies done in the 1980's were so far ahead of their time that there is no need for one to be conducted now, almost twenty years on. Perhaps Cameron Davis needs to be told of the devastation which acid-sulphate released into the flood plain would see unleashed. Picture a barren

coastline where now the last remnants of littoral rainforest survive. But perhaps he already knows.

Certainly the 'embattled director' is no stranger to confusion regarding what is and isn't fact. His defence campaign states that only 14 percent of the site will be developed. This is at odds with section 5.22 of their Land-Use budget which states very clearly that almost 60 percent of the site will be developed. It will be one of the largest tourist developments in Australia and will dwarf Becton's Byron development.

Readers should have a look at www.wooyungdefenders.com site as this gives a map of the development site.

"We are committed to seeing the creation of a development that embraces the principles of sustainable development so that it is consistent with the existing amenity and the northern NSW lifestyle," said Mr Davis. 'Commitment' seems a bit of a stretch given that the man is looking for investors to take this burning-hot piece of North Coast real-estate *out* of his hot little hands.

And that 'existing amenity' consists of a fragile coastal stretch, 70 percent of which is protected under the Tweed Local Environment Plan 2000 Amendment 21. It is hard to see that the creation of the development would be anything other than a burden on local communities. Increased traffic with no corresponding updates to roads, as the developer promises investors that the condition imposed on the DA that roads be updated will probably be able to be avoided. No boom for existing businesses, since the development bills itself as a 'Total Destination Resort', including 1500 square metres of retail space. No relief for the surrounding communities who already experience dramatically increased flooding due to irresponsible development. And only ecological devastation from a resort which has begun to bill itself as an 'Eco resort' in a blatant attempt to sex-up its appeal to an environmentally conscious and frankly, disbelieving investor market.

"Lets get one thing straight. To call the "Wooyung Total Destination Tourist Resort" an Eco-Resort is a deliberate deception. To be an Eco-Resort it must be ecologically sustainable and it's not," said Paul

Hopkins of the Caldera Environment Centre.

The resort has come to known as the 'One Peg development', a name sprung from the recent Land and Environment Court ruling which hinged on an affidavit by a surveyor who alleged back in 1990 that he drove a survey peg in to the property. The judge ruled that this constituted 'practical development' of the land. One survey peg a substantial start to a \$240 million development.

The communities surrounding the development site are well informed and are outraged by the imposition of this development. A recent survey in the local communities including Pottsville, showed 93% of local residents opposed this development.

The Wooyung Action Group has attempted to meet publicly with Mr Davis on ABC radio and he declined. We have tried contacting through the internet and we have attempted contact through the Real Estate Agent selling their property and were refused the number.

"Mr Davis is very welcome to contact us through the contact details provided in many newspaper articles or visit our website. Hundreds of community residents have managed to contact us and register their support."

WAG is determined the children of the Tweed Coast communities should have a part of our coastline protected for them to enjoy and that this site should be developed in a sustainable and responsible way.