



**Good Day to You.** The Gold Coast is a long narrow strip of flat coastal land bound on the west by lovely hills and valleys. When it rains a lot, we have predictable local flooding and we know where the floods will occur. So given that, wouldn't you think we would learn from the past and resist building on flood plains. When a flood occurs the inundation and flow velocity bring heart-ache and loss and deprivation. In planning circles there is a somewhat misleading phrase and it's called "*flood resilience*" which denotes how quickly an area and people can recover from flooding. However like so many euphemistic phrases it lacks practical authenticity and application as it relies on local interpretation when it comes to urban planning. Insurance companies may reject a claim in the event of flooding thus destroying the finances of an ordinary Australian. I would have thought it would be near impossible these days to obtain flood insurance if your home is on a flood plain. So this brings me to the point whether councils and government should allow development on flood prone land and in my view they shouldn't.

Now enter Clive Palmer and the Palmer Colonial Golf Course at Robina. Clive has applied to Council to allow him, at least in principle, to snuff out 9 of the 18 holes and build residential towers and concrete things on the flood plain. I know this area well and in fact the Robina Stadium and associated land are all on the flood plain and in the case of development now occurring there, it's right in the path of the inundation zone from Mudgeeraba creek. Nearby downstream the Colonial golf course lies directly in the path of the floods which regularly occur. Now a golf course is a good use of land prone to flooding notwithstanding the loss of natural wet-lands and habitat. If the golf course floods no real damage is done and this is precisely why their grand club house is near the road and high and dry. The nine holes to be sacrificed to Mammon are right out in the major flood plain and I have personally witnessed the flooding in this area and the Mudgeeraba creek becomes a broad unstoppable torrent. In my view to build there is sheer madness and if allowed it's an ethical and professional failure of the Council. I spoke with Philip Follent recently on this subject. Philip is the former Queensland Government Architect and is a peer reviewer and was the Gold Coast's inaugural City Architect. His view is relevant when he says.... "*the loss of significant parts of golf courses to bricks and mortar is poor decision making. When Council agrees to let a little go at a time it becomes unstoppable until the inhabitants of the city, human and animal, are robbed of the golf course, the habitat and the important relief of green space. Council appears more focussed nowadays on development at almost any cost and on shooting the messengers who call for restraint, than on addressing long term impacts and really serving its citizens*". I agree with him and many ratepayers don't have any faith in the machinery or public representation by the Council and this is partly why the Triple C are in town.

When it comes to flooding, look no further than the Council's own website where you can bring up an area or property and call up a flood overlay map and in the case of Palmer's Colonial *it clearly all floods*, so why on earth would Council even consider an application when the current zoning doesn't allow it and rightly so. Now the Councillor for division 11, Robina, is Herman Vorster a man not necessarily known for his ability to listen to rate payers, in my view. Some time ago when this matter first arose he told me personally that in principle he doesn't favour the loss of golf course land but even more so he said the additional population would cause significant problems for Robina and indeed it will. However it appears you don't normally get much detail from this bloke as most comments are couched in what appears to be political misdirection and generalisations. Herman Vorster's mantra claims he is preserving our life-style but some of the slums being built in Robina say otherwise as do the proposed rowing lanes he supports to the detriment of the disabled sailors' group at Lake Orr. However, all that aside, let's see if Herman is going to have this application from Clive Palmer knocked back for the good of all in Robina and the Gold Coast. Let's see if this Council can make at least one decision in favour of the people or is it completely flooded with stupidity.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**