

We The People
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Good day to you. In my view there are three wonderful valley jewels in the crown of the southern hinterland being the Bonogin, Currumbin and Tallebudgera Valleys. Those who know Tallebudgera Valley will quickly relate to the *Man on the Bike* shopping corner as you enter Connection road on the flood plain. It's a pretty area and an important one for wild life and flora and of course historically. So into this peaceful setting arrives yet another Chinese developer **Ridong**, which wants to build an integrated resort on 47 hectares slap bang in the middle of the flood plain. Just like the Songcheng theme park at Carrara, Palmer's Robina golf course residential development, the Orient Central residential high rise they all want to interfere with a flood plain as though it has no value. There are others on their way as well as this Council expands their agenda to ruin the Gold Coast in the name of a greater population and some kind of perceived kudos associated with being a densely populated grid locked city. As with all these projects they are accompanied with glorious artists impressions of Shangri-la as this appears to appeal to the short term myopic aims of the Council and State Government . No amount of pictures and expensive reports makes up for the fact that the locals don't want it and isn't that what a democracy is about.

Apart from this there are compelling physical reasons why it appears this proposal is close to insanity. According to Jim Wilson of Save our Southern Valleys, the flood water at Tallebudgera runs at high speed and volume taking all in its path including live stock. Put simply its unstoppable. The proposed development looks straight into the teeth of the flood which can be three meters deep and they are planning to essentially block the flood way with what must be called a giant man made levy of buildings. This will no doubt cause back up flooding upstream and laterally which the locals assess as an unacceptable risk to life, property and the rural farm animals they husband. It's all pretty silly really but according to Council they can't stop a developer from applying for a change to land use from the currently zoned 'rural' and proposing a development. That in itself is wrong if the zoning doesn't suit and it doesn't. Now last week I attended a local public meeting of the Save our Southern Valleys group at Tallebudgera to discuss the matter in the public interest. It was very well attended and the distressed mood was palpable but surprisingly and good, included three Councillors and some town planners from Council. The later were youngish men who did not inspire practical confidence but appeared sincere if not inexperienced. The latter was revealed when one woman from the meeting quite forcefully asked them if they had ever seen this flood plain under water or were all their findings accomplished at a desk. Good question to which they gave no real answer. Other concerned people such as the notable architect Philip Follent and members from the ever watchful and very credible GECKO all looked most concerned and for good reason. There is in my view a wide spread belief this Council cannot be trusted and that they run hidden agendas which often defeat proper credible public consultation. They have built their own empire on code assessable approvals and we concerned residents are just an inconvenience.

It would be a disgrace if this proposal goes ahead but the developer has had a number of meetings direct with the State Government and not bothered with Council. The State can force this through and perhaps that's the aim of the Chinese. Either way if this project is approved, mark my words, there will be a peoples revolution unlike the Mayor or Premier have ever seen. We the people are fed up, we are over those Chinese developers who endeavour to bend the rules and well and truly over the double standards of this Council. In my view Ridong is ding dong to think 'we the people' don't care and flood waters can be held back.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley