

SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE NORTH BANK DEVELOPMENT

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- The one recurring problem I encountered during my years as a Practicing Professional Engineer, was associated with rainfall and runoff, trying to protect waterways from development and arranging for the safe routing of storm water. The State Government was usually an ally.
- Flooding problems do not originate from one major development but the accumulation of the effects of many smaller Developments.
- I decided a long time ago that “Waterways are for water and dry land is for buildings and they are not interchangeable”.
- From my experience, and the flood history of Brisbane, I find it difficult understand why “North Bank” as proposed was ever seriously considered.
- Because the “2007 Climate in Australia Report” suggests increasing flood frequency, and revised meteorological forecasts resulted in the spillway capacity of Wivenhoe being increased; the wisdom of North Bank as proposed must be in question.
- The Brisbane river drains an area of 10,000 Kilometers Sq with rainfall in 1974 over a 5 day period in part of the catchment exceed 1300mm. This not the highest that can be expected. Wivenhoe only controls half the catchment. Bigger floods are not out of the question.
- The fact that it is not costing the taxpayers a cent, is irrelevant. It is not going to make any difference to the final outcome; It will rain, there will be a flood and people will suffer damage.
- The Town Plan defines the waterway for the River as being 20 meters measured horizontally outwards from high water. What the code seems to say is that within the defined waterways, there is to be no unnecessary building, anything that is done must either maintain or enhance the waterway, it does not allow for downgrading.
- There is inconsistency in The Government’s approach, on the one hand, it is getting tough on shire councils accusing them of approving developments in odd places, and ignoring key elements of their plans while at the same time wanting to put buildings in the odd position of 70 meters into the River and ignoring the provisions of a key part of the Brisbane Plan.
- The Deputy Premier suggests that the area is underdeveloped and under-utilised. That may be so for that part out side the River Waterway, but for the rest if it is used for anything other than a flood way it is over developed and over utilised.
- Proceeding with North Bank as proposed will create a dangerous precedent.
- Governments and Developers can do what they like, but they can never change the primary function of the River as a “transporter” of flood water, that will always remain a constant.
- The argument based on flooding is one of the arguments against the proposal, but when combined with all the other important arguments, they together make a compelling case as to why the project should not proceed in its present form. However the area can be developed to make it more user friendly without offending against the Town Plan or adversely affecting the flood capacity of the River.

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