



Speech by

Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Hansard Thursday, 4 June 2009

HELENSVALE GOLF CLUB

Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (10.17 pm): Members will remember the torrential rainfall that was experienced by people in the South-East Queensland region during the last sittings of parliament. This period of rainfall was the last in a series of events that the region has been subjected to over the past 11 months. It needs to be said that this rainfall was, for the most part, welcome.

However, for the Helensvale Golf Club the rain came at a cost that on its own would have been manageable. At this point I would like to table a letter from John Wheatley, the president of the Helensvale Golf Club, which outlines the club's losses and concerns.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 21 May 2009, to Michael Crandon MP from John Wheatley, President, Helensvale Golf Club, in relation to the restriction of drainage during heavy rainfall [338].

Unfortunately, this last deluge added another 11 lost days to the already accumulated 114 lost days, referred to in the letter, for Helensvale Golf Club in the past 11 months. Those 11 lost days included four weekend days. Weekend days are when the greatest revenues are generated on a golf course. A total of 125 lost days in 11 months—125 days out of 330 days—is almost 40 per cent of the days during that period. The loss in revenue terms amounts to \$250,000—a quarter of a million dollars. That is before the last 11-day loss.

Using a formulae outlined in the letter I have tabled, this last 11-day period adds more than \$20,000 to that sum. That is \$270,000 that has been ripped out of the annual revenues of a not-for-profit public golf course that has some 600 local members, 80 per cent of whom are aged over 65 and, therefore, look forward to the amenity the course provides on a very regular basis. The course also supports a youth program for five- to 18-year-olds of around 40 members.

These members have been deprived of the use of their golf course for an extraordinary period of time. These members pay their annual dues in an expectation that they will have reasonable use of the golf course. How many organisations can sustain this level of loss of productive time? How long will the membership remain tolerant of this type of loss to their amenity, to the loss of their membership entitlements?

The losses described above are avoidable. The golf club acts as a drain for the Helensvale area, which is quite acceptable. However, the issue that causes the lost days is not the drainage into the golf course; it is the blockage beyond the golf course boundaries that has been neglected by the Gold Coast City Council over many years. The blockage slows the drainage into Coombabah Creek to a trickle. Unblocking the drainage system between the golf course and Coombabah Creek is not without some difficulties. For example, there is a bat colony in the area. But the issues can be managed. As John Wheatley states in his letter, 'The EPA agree that the offending area needs clearing and has offered to manage such a project'.

The Helensvale Golf Club is nearing a point financially where it is—
(Time expired)