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Dear Sir/Madam

**Regarding New Macksville Hospital, Old Coast Road, North Macksville (SSD 9103)** we wish to object.

As long-term residents of the Nambucca Valley and over 24 years at North Macksville we are not against the concept of building the new hospital however have serious concerns about the selected site and the fact that there is only one public access road to this proposed new hospital at North Macksville.

The site has a series of issues that will reduce the access and effectiveness to the local community of Macksville, Nambucca Valley residents and visitors. In particular:

1. The site selected is isolated from the town of Macksville and the whole Nambucca Valley community. There is little or no infrastructure to support a development of this type.

a) The road access needs significant upgrade.

The proposed Access Road development as it is currently planned greatly impacts on local residents. The residents of Letitia Close and the nearby section of Old Coast Road have already had their properties unfairly compromised by the Pacific Highway deviation (new dual carriageway). In this hospital/access road development there has been no consideration given to these local long-term residents.

The correct and far more economical access would be via the existing Old Coast Road that utilizes the existing Mattick Road bridge/overpass which is far closer to the proposed hospital site than Letitia Close thus minimizing impact on less local residents. This is not on a flood plain. The proposed 850metres Access Road is currently lowland swamp that floods after any amount of rain.

The current proposed road changes impacts local residents significantly and there has been no evidence at this stage of any attempt to reduce this impact. Some of the road reconstruction “removes” and “modifies” structure that was placed by the RMS to screen residents from the impact of the new Pacific Highway, off ramp and roundabout traffic. There is no clear evidence in the Access Road plans that the development is doing anything to “protect” the effected residents from this new roadway instead just degrading our amenity.

b) The proposed hospital site currently has no access to water and no sewerage access in the area. The residents in the area have rainwater tanks and various septic tank arrangements. The cost of providing this infrastructure to this new site is significant and there appears to be no provision for this in the development. The Nambucca Shire Council, therefore the ratepayers, finances this part of the development and this is an unreasonable cost that will be imposed on ratepayers.

c) Electricity provisions for a development of this cost would need to be significantly upgraded at a significant cost. This cost is increased greatly by the remote location from each of the Nambucca Valley towns for the proposed hospital. It further illustrates poor planning as the electricity supply in the area has already been significantly modified to accommodate the new Pacific Highway. A lot of this recent work will need to be re-done to allow the construction of the new hospital – a significant waste of public money.

d) There is limited telecommunications in the area. NBN advised residents some time ago that they had no plans to run fibre in the area. Residents who wish to access the NBN do so by fixed wireless. This has proved to be problematic and the service has been identified by the NBN as being a substandard service. NBN have attempted to remediate it by replacing the aerials, but this has not delivered any improvement. This substandard service would be a significant issue for a hospital that would require fast reliable telecommunications – something that does not exist at the proposed location. In addition, we have no reliable phone landline service. We are forced to use VOIP phones that are also unreliable at times.

Page 3 of *Appendix M\_ Electrical and Comms Site Infrastructure Management Plan* states “2.2 Communications  
*The proposed site is well serviced by both inground copper and optical fibre communications cabling as well as celestial mobile communications coverage.”*

This statement is in part incorrect. The only optic fibre “near” this area is on the southern side of the old Pacific Highway now called Giinagay Way. This is at least 2 km south of the site and on the wrong side of the road. There is no optic fibre near the proposed site.

e) Transport will be limited to private vehicles because it is an isolated rural location. The majority of Nambucca Shire residents are over the age of 50 with many people no longer holding a drivers licence. There is no provision for people walking the 4kms along the busy roads from Macksville to the proposed hospital. There are no other transport services present and it would not be viable for local buses or taxis to run these services to/from the site.

2. The proposed new greenfield site for the new hospital has a variety of environmental issues that make it unsuitable:

a) Prior to the realignment of the Pacific Highway by RMS/Pacifico the area that the hospital is to be built was subject to serious localised flooding. Whilst it is true the proposed hospital site will not be affected by flooding, the one and only Access Road to the hospital will be highly impacted meaning that during future flooding the hospital will be isolated. The development, as it is proposed at this moment, has only one access to and from the new hospital that is through flood ground.

Apparently there will be a dirt access to the north that could be used in emergencies only. We were told that the gate across the dirt access will be locked at all times. Any local flooding will also impact the “dirt road”, with very restricted access to the proposed hospital.

The new Pacific Highway construction has changed the area irrevocably and drainage from the area seems to be affected. Anecdotal information suggests that the area is no longer as free draining as it used to be prior to 2015 (highway reconstruction). It seems illogical to build a “flood free” hospital with only one access road through ground that is periodically affected by local flooding.

b) The area where the proposed hospital is to be built is under normal weather patterns subject to serious mosquito impact. Whilst this is mosquito infestation is not obvious at the moment because we have had three to four years of drier than normal rainfall. Any study done at this time would be a waste of time and money. During a normal rainfall pattern we find it very difficult to conduct simple tasks outside without being “eaten” by mosquitoes. We have spent considerable resources (time, money, etc) to remediate this problem without any real success. Both my wife and I have had Ross River Fever and Barmah Forest, contracted in Letitia Close. On the western side of the Old Coast Road, adjacent to the entire proposed hospital site and Access Road, natural wetlands are located that ‘encourage’ a mosquito friendly environment.

It would be foolish for a health facility responsible for the well being of the wider community to be constructed in such as an unhealthy environment.

3. When the site was first proposed nearly 4 years ago as the construction site for the production of the 165 bridge beams we objected as did many other residents. It contravened local town planning rules as the area was zoned rural residential. The NSW Government ignoring the rights and amenities of the local residents overrode this. We raised the concern that this was in fact development by stealth and the local residents agreed that the highway construction and other organisations would “see” the large area of land semi developed and they, local government and NSW government would be unable to resist the temptation to allow further development. We were told several times by the Nambucca Shire Council, RMS and Pacifico that this would NOT be allowed to happen, as RMS/Pacifico were required to restore the area to its pre dual carriageway construction condition. As we all know now that has turned out to be a lie.

4. We strongly object to the design of the Access Road and earthworks, as it is proposed in the DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 as it will be extremely unsafe for all road users and will significantly impact on our amenity and others in Letitia Close. In addition to this, we were promised by the RMS and Pacifico that on completion of the batch plant/beam construction the entire site would be returned to its original farming condition, “like for like”. We were told several times that there would be no development on that site.

**Amenity**

The Access Road construction will further erode our amenity. Prior to purchasing our property (at the beginning of 1994) we contacted the RTA (now RMS) to determine if they had any interest in this area. That conversation was in addition to the normal process that occurs during the conveyance of the title. The RMS at Grafton assured us they had no interest. Another fact we found to be untrue.





Photo #4 and #5 are essentially the same view shifted 12 years in time.  
 Photo #7 and #8 are essentially the same view shifted 12 years in time.

- We had a thriving, friendly community in Letitia Close/Old Coast Road that has now been all but destroyed with several families having to move and homes being demolished to make way for the dual carriageway and roundabout.
- The RMS and Pacifico ignored local landowners and simply bulldozed, both literally and metaphorically, all in its way in order to construct the new dual carriageway.
- Our views that led us to purchase this property in 1994 have now been eroded and permanently scarred.
- We are now subjected to highway noise almost continuously with no relief and the negative visual impact. The sound treatment provided by the RMS is not functional. If we were to “use” it our house would have no ventilation and become unlivable at various times throughout the year. The traffic noise is much worse during the late afternoon and at night when heavy vehicles increase their frequency of travel both along the dual carriageway and both the southbound off ramp and northbound on ramp that leads to the roundabout on Old Coast Rd. The vehicles travel into/out of Macksville.
- We now have headlights from all southbound vehicles streaming into our house in the living rooms, lounge room and bedrooms at all times of the night. The headlights start at Mattick Road (distance of 1.2 kms) for all traffic heading south as the earth banks are not high enough to screen us from the lights.

Also, every southbound vehicle leaving the highway and using the ramp at the Old Coast Road/Letitia Close roundabout at night streams its headlights into our living rooms, lounge room and bedrooms.

The new hospital access road design shown in DA 2018/76 / SSD 9103 will only increase the issues raised above.

The access road runs North – South across the flood plain and all vehicles using that new Access Road will add to our traffic noise and traffic lights. The road is perpendicular to the main axis of our house and all traffic leaving the hospital at night will stream their headlights into our bedrooms, lounge room and living rooms.

We have heard several rumours that there may be an additional north-facing ramp on the western side of the dual carriageway at the northern end of The Phillip Hughes Bridge. This will only exacerbate the issues outlined in our submission. This would represent a major revision of the Macksville Bypass and present another severe impact to nearby residents.

The developments of the Old Coast Road/Letitia Close roundabout, southbound off-ramp, northbound on-ramp, subsequent hospital construction and Access Road and now possibly a north facing off ramp only shows the ad hoc nature of the whole process.

What was the point of the Bald Hill interchange? It is a pity that different arms of government can't communicate with each other so that infrastructure is done properly the first time. A huge amount of taxpayer's money has been wasted on the roundabout, ramps and now new hospital site not to mention its one and only public Access Road across an almost 1km floodplain.

An interchange at Mattick Road, North Macksville would make much more sense to construct for the safety of all road users and patients at the new Macksville Hospital. This needs to be seriously considered and changes made accordingly before approval is finalised by the NSW Dept of Planning and Environment.

The Nambucca Sire Council DA 2018/76 Earthworks and Roads/(SSD 9103) does not show any attempts to remediate the issues raised. Access to the hospital will further destroy our amenity and trample our rights as long time ratepayers in the Nambucca Shire (and that of all Letitia Close and Old Coast Road residents).

### **Road Design**

The design of the new hospital Access Road appears to have many flaws as it has aspects that appear to be very unsafe for all road users.

- All traffic accessing the hospital from the Old Coast Road/Letitia Close roundabout has to negotiate a gradient up to the roundabout from the north or south with no line of sight to oncoming traffic from any direction ie the roundabout is a "cap" on a hill dropping away once you exit it.

In addition, safety barriers ie armco rails, signage, bridge rails/barriers and in the long term vegetation leading to and around the roundabout, block all line of sight making it extremely dangerous for all road users.

The distance between the roundabout and the eastern boundary of the Access Road is about 70m. This makes the turn radius very small. The proposed width of the road automatically imposes a low speed limit on the road.

Bicycle riders, horse riders and pedestrians often use Old Coast Road and Letitia Close. This also has implications for the hospital access road in that it will:

1. Create increased traffic in the area and therefore increased risk to all road users.
2. At various times, some or all of these users will use the hospital access road. The hospital access road will need to make provision for these "alternative" users. The DA 2018/76/(SSD 9103) needs to make provision for these alternative users if the planned road is built.

Currently, the Old Coast Road and Letitia Close is used twice daily on weekdays by a school bus. From the start of the dual carriageway construction Pacifico and the RMS completely bungled the handling of this situation often forcing the bus driver (by lack of any alternative) to "drop" school children off in the middle of the road in the construction zone, before the children walked through the construction zone to their homes in Letitia Close. This was despite the fact that Pacifico and the RMS knew clearly the detail of this school bus before a shovel full of dirt had been turned. They completely bungled the issue.

Hence, the school bus has implications for the construction phase (should it go ahead) and post construction phase (if it's built). The DA 2018/76/ SSD 9103 needs to account for this to guarantee the safety of the school students.

Also, the radius of the turn will be an issue for any long vehicle and/or heavy vehicle accessing this road.

Turning onto the proposed hospital access road from the roundabout is a very tight turn with an obscured vision to oncoming traffic from all directions according to the design plans. This very, tight turn maybe the cause of future accidents because vehicles, as you know, often exceed the speed limit. This happens regularly on that roundabout. The line of sight on this section of road will be inhibited creating a further danger to all users. Also, for long vehicles negotiating this intersection will need to travel onto the incorrect side of the road.

During the construction of the dual carriageway Pacifico used a version of this road to access the batch plant/beam construction site. Most of the time, Pacifico had traffic control personnel stationed adjacent to the intersection "permanently to control traffic".

During the last several weeks they have used this road to remove rock and earth prior to the commencement of the new hospital road construction. They have had a traffic control personnel stationed most of the time to monitor and control the construction traffic entering and exiting their access road. Obviously, they deem the intersection unsafe to leave it unsupervised.

We, as residents, treat the intersection like a stop or give way sign and are always cautious when approaching this intersection as it is deemed dangerous.

The proposed turn out/intersection of Letitia Close onto the Access Road as presented in DA 2018/76 /**(SSD 9103)** presents what seems to be a limited line of sight and will present a distinct danger to road users with an increased risk of accidents. The assumption that all users of this road will obey the traffic rules including speed limits is erroneous. **This makes the roundabout, Letitia Close intersection and Access Road highly unsafe and extremely dangerous.**

During the construction of the roundabout we had a number of discussions with RMS engineers regarding the safety of the intersection/roundabout. They advised us that it was "impossible/difficult" to access the intersection at more than 35 km/hr. The speed limit is 60km/hr. We have witnessed, heard and had experiences relayed to us, of instances where traffic users have ignored the existing road rules and appropriate road behaviour. We have anecdotal information of a numerous near misses, including emergency services vehicles almost colliding with other vehicles that were already on the roundabout. This also relates to the issue of poor lines of sight at the roundabout. **The hospital Access Road will only exacerbate this problem.**

The DA 2018/76 (SSD 9103) is forcing Letitia Close residents to turn onto the Access Road creating a variety of problems. There will be a greater potential for accidents involving Letitia Close residents/users especially turning into Letitia Close with the limited vision of oncoming traffic or vehicles rear-ending the car in front.

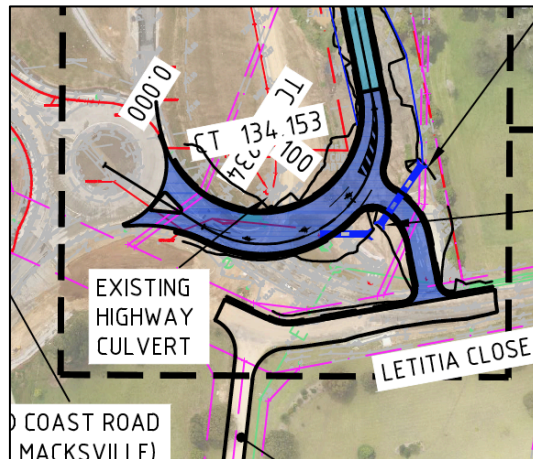
Waste Services vehicles, Roadside mail delivery, newspaper delivery, couriers, etc. can now access our (and neighbour's) mailboxes on a "drive through" basis. Under the DA 2018/76 plan /(SSD 9103) this will no longer be possible.

What accommodations will be made for these services?

We, and the services mentioned have already had considerable disruption during the 3 years of highway construction. We have been waiting for this to be "fixed" permanently but have been told Pacifico will not complete the work due to the uncertainty of the hospital Access Road. Incidentally, the work on our private shared drive started in October 2017 and is still not finished. It is about 25m of roadway. The new hospital Access Road design will entrench this uncertain and difficult situation even longer.

The DA 2018/76 /(SSD 9103) clearly shows an extension of Letitia Close exceeding passed our private access road (see plan below). It raises a number of issues:

- there is an electricity junction box, sometimes covered in water located here
- there currently is a very deep open drain where the DA 2018/76 /(SSD 9103) shows the extension.
- this mini “cul-de-sac” creates a “rest area” for traffic users. This is already a problem with people sleeping adjacent this area, picnicking, urinating and other toileting activities, littering, trespassing. We believe that this design will encourage road users to continue and possibly escalate these anti social behaviours. This undermines our personal safety and security.
- if this is to be the construction plan then there needs to be a provision for a turnaround bay or council will need to maintain our private access road which will be severely damaged overtime by vehicles turning in our private driveway.
- is this section to be maintained by the Nambucca Shire Council?



- The road design at the Letitia Close/Access Road intersection clearly shows a median strip, perhaps concrete, indicating a “no right turn” going to the hospital. Why is this the case?

Will there be merging lanes on the Access Road for traffic leaving/entering Letitia Close?

The current DA 2018/76 /(SSD 9103) road design will compromise aspects of the highway screening/earth mounds constructed by RMS / Pacifico.

Part of the Access Road plans at the roundabout call for the removal or at least partial removal of the northeastern earth bank. This earth bank serves as a screen to our house and other homes from the road noise and lights. We were told that this earth bank was to be planted with a variety of native species of plants (plan was even published) in February 2018. This has not occurred.

We assume that the hospital Access Road has created high levels of uncertainty and prevents the completion of construction by RMS/Pacifico and therefore the attempts at remediation to our amenity are only minimal at this stage.

We, and our neighbours, would be severely affected by the removal or partial removal of this earth bank. The earth bank is already not high enough and was supposed to be covered in vegetation. It provides some screening of vehicle lights and partial visual screening of the highway. For our neighbours and us it is an important barrier however the promised vegetative screening is yet to occur. Again, we assume this is a direct result of the uncertainty created by this DA 2018/76 /(SSD 9103). It is causing our neighbours and ourselves much grief and stress.

- This action of constructing the new hospital on this North Macksville site will have other consequences for local roads. The existing Old Coast Road has been seriously degraded by the dual carriageway construction work. Its condition prior to the start of construction was poor and often neglected but now is dreadful. In the past the Old Coast Road was often used as a “rat run” between

Nambucca and Macksville and Tewinga et al. There have been a number of serious car accidents on that road. The Nambucca Shire Council will have to re-form and seal the entire length of Old Coast Road in the near future. As a direct result of the hospital being constructed on this site traffic will definitely increase on the Old Coast Road.

The hospital being located on this site will also see an expansion of housing development along this corridor. There are a number of sites closeby that the council have already approved for residential development hopefully committing the council to rebuild this road. The Songbird estate and associated other development (residents, infrastructure, etc.) on the remaining eastern section of the Old Coast Road that connects Mattick Road with the back of Kingsworth Estate and Jacks Ridge Road (and mountain bike track) called Rosella Drive is already a serious bushfire risk with limited access.

- All of the above issues will have the risk profile increased considerably when heavy vehicles make use of the Access Road. This will be through the construction phase as well as constant future deliveries to the hospital.

The council has to accelerate the reconstruction of the entire length of the Old Coast Road as a direct result of the hospital being constructed on this site. This will make the more natural access to the hospital via Mattick Road. **The distance from Mattick Road to the new hospital site is about 270m. The distance from Letitia Close to the new hospital site is 890m.** It is obvious that the better access is via Mattick Road and not across a proven flood plain.

Therefore, it makes far better sense to have the Access Road coming from Mattick Road and not the one and only Access Road at Letitia Close. **Why can't there be two roads into and out of the hospital?** This would be at least 3 minutes quicker for a southbound ambulance in an emergency to use the Mattick Road exit instead of travelling a further 1 km, negotiating a busy roundabout before travelling another km north across the floodplain to arrive at the Emergency Dept. Pity the person if they are having a heart attack in the ambulance.

## Security

The proposed hospital Access Road via Letitia Close will further erode our personal and residential security. Prior to the highway construction, when we had a community before the many houses were bulldozed, traffic access was continuously "monitored" by the residents when necessary. Neighbours looked out for each other and any "strange" vehicle was noted. Letitia Close residents have never had any unlawful incidents in the 24 years we have been residents.

However, since the highway construction started we have had a parade of "strange" vehicles with a number of incidents that were disturbing. With the opening of the dual carriageway Letitia Close has had a parade of vehicles accessing it unnecessarily and often trespassing on private property. We have found at times groups of people using our private access lane as a "rest stop / picnic" area, littering, sleeping overnight, using any pull off areas as "rest areas" and even toileting. Incidentally, one of the stated aims of the Warrell Creek to Nambucca section of the highway was to provide more rest areas. We were not told that Letitia Close is a designated "rest area".

We believe that signage on the off ramp is misleading consequently misdirecting traffic into Letitia Close. We have raised this issue with Pacifico/RMS with little response and no outcomes.

**The hospital Access Road as in DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 will significantly increase traffic adjacent to homes threatening, as the highway already has, the security and safety of all residents in Letitia Close. We are already seriously concerned with the degradation of our security.**



## Lights & Noise

The hospital will result in a huge increase in traffic in our area at Letitia Close. This will bring into serious doubt the RMS Sound and Traffic modeling as the hospital was never part of the highway. If the batch plant was not constructed here, the hospital and the Access Road would not be an issue. It would never have happened. As was pointed out to the RMS, Pacifico and Nambucca Shire Council the batch plant was development by stealth. We have been shown to be right.

As a result of this hospital development we are facing the prospect of increased traffic and the associated noise, traffic lights, building and street lighting problems. This will result in the need for a complete review of the model the RMS used to construct the highway in this area.

### **Will the DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 take this fact into account?**

The alignment of the Access Road running north south, perpendicular to the axis of our house means all traffic entering and exiting this road will spill headlights into our lounge room, living rooms and bedrooms of our home. The problem for us will be worse when vehicles are exiting the hospital especially late at night when the staff change shifts.

Any street lighting (none indicated on the DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 will also have a negative impact on our home and neighbours homes. The DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 gives no indication of the lighting issue.

## Traffic

The addition of the new roundabout at the intersection of Letitia Close and the Old Coast Road has increased traffic considerably. It is now one of the busiest intersections in the Nambucca Valley being used by all types of vehicles from pushbikes to B-doubles 24 hours a day. **The addition of the hospital Access Road to this roundabout will only serve to make this problem worse and extremely dangerous and unsafe for all road users.**

Traffic numbers have not been presented in DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 and one can only speculate on the actual numbers. One thing for certain, it will make the current situation far worse and will only increase the traffic numbers over time.

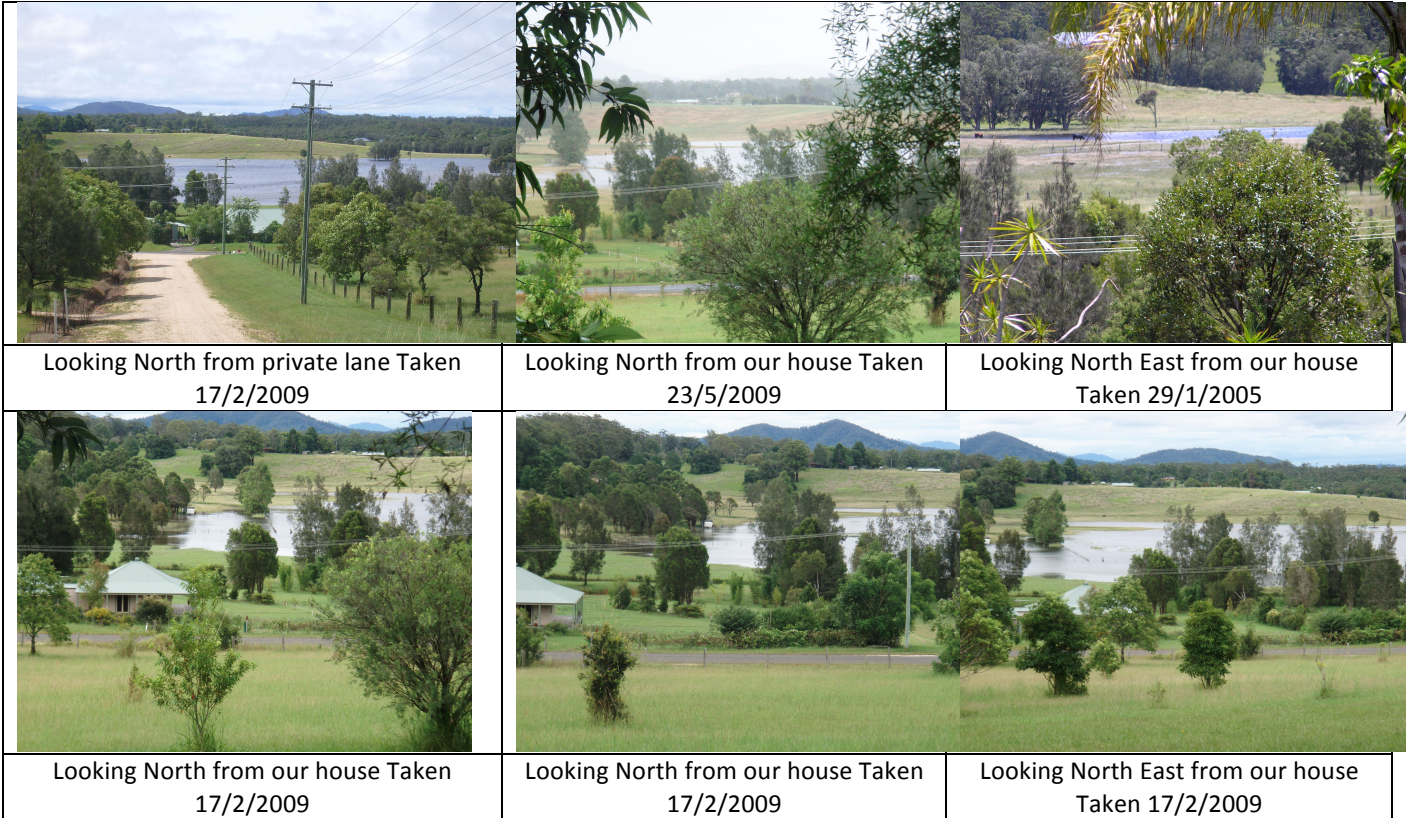
The existing Old Coast Road north of the Letitia Close roundabout will also experience a huge increase in traffic. The road surface is already seriously degraded, parts of the road are basically a clay base and very narrow. There are countless potholes, bitumen edges broken away and huge ruts have formed in the bitumen. Siding Road has a very narrow rail bridge (single lane with load limit) as well as being in a very poor condition. All of these roads will be subject to a huge increase in traffic as a result of the hospital. DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 makes no provision for this issue.

The Letitia Close intersection off the roundabout at the moment is subject to traffic control because it is deemed unsafe because of very poor lines of sight. The hospital Access Road will duplicate this issue but there will be no 24/7 traffic controllers.

## Flood

At a recent meeting with the hospital construction group held at a private residence in Mattick Road we were informed that a hospital could not be built on flood ground. **Yet they can build the only access road through flood ground.** This would appear to be contradictory at least. The proposed access road as outlined in DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 is subject to flooding. Countless times over the last 24 years we have seen that area/floodplain completely inundated by water well above the fence posts in the paddocks.

These accompanying photographs were taken looking north from our property in the direction of the proposed hospital access road.



**If the access road goes ahead as planned in the current DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 it is very likely that there will be times that the hospital will be inaccessible because the one and only hospital access road will be flooded.**

Is the existing wide, open channel that Pacifico built in 2017 going to stay?  
 This channel carries the run off water from the ridge, Letitia Close and some water from the roundabout (see attached photo below) and this run off was after a storm that only gave us 92mm of rain.  
 Imagine the volume of water after more rain.





Looking North from our house taken 2/1/18



Looking North from our house taken 2/1/18

During the 3 years construction of the highway it has been relatively dry with only very minor flooding in this area. The small amount of rainfall we have had in recent months has left erosion problems around the Letitia Close/Old Coast Road intersection and roundabout that the RMS and Pacifico have been made aware of but failed to deal with yet. We believe they are expecting the hospital road to “fix” these issues.

We have had discussions with our neighbours regarding these flooding issues lately and although we have had no significant rain all the locals have observed that surface water in this area is not draining away like it used to prior to the highway construction. The reasons for this are not clear but maybe due to the “barrier” of highly compacted soil created by the highway. This probably has formed a type of dam that prevents subsoil drainage to the west and natural wetland area.

Hence, this has serious implications for mosquito management in our area including the hospital site. We have had problems with mosquitoes most of the time we have lived here. We have spent considerable time and effort attempting to deal with this problem. Both of us have had Ross River and Barmah Forest virus contracted on our property. To date we have had some success but following we weather the mosquitoes are uncontrollable. Recently there has been an increase in the incidence of the Buruli ulcer that is probably spread by mosquito according to scientists and the media. Whilst Nambucca is not at this time a hotspot the indications are that this disease is spreading and potentially may present a serious problem in the future for the hospital staff, patients and visitors if it is built in this proposed location. The RMS has established permanent settling ponds between the hospital site and Letitia Close. This is still water and a permanent perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes.

In conclusion, we strongly object to DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 as it is currently presented. We are not against the building of a new hospital. The planned road access is undesirable for a variety of reasons especially in the safety of all road users. The consequences of building the hospital in this location with the one and only Access Road through a flood plain have implications that are not considered in the DA 2018/76 SSD 9103. Also, the Letitia Close residents will suffer further significant degradation of their security and amenity. The submitted DA 2018/76 SSD 9103 seems to have tunnel vision focusing on only one thing and ignoring its impact on others. Letitia Close residents have already had a significant loss of their rights since 2003 with RMS. This new hospital and associated roadwork development appears to be just one more adversity and we believe it is grossly unfair to the affected local residents.

15<sup>th</sup> August, 2018.