

Belinda Scott

From: Rod Pitt-Owen <rodpittowen@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, 29 January 2015 8:46 PM
To: Belinda Scott
Cc: ElectorateOffice Wollondilly
Subject: Submission Picton Modification Enviromental Assessment

Department of Planning and Environment.
Attention Belinda Scott

Please find below my submission to the proposed modification of Picton Sewerage System

While I'm not opposed to the scheme as such I feel that some aspects of the system will be detrimental to mine and my families life as it is set out in the Environmental Assessment November 2014.

When the plant was first proposed we were assured that the plant would be only for residence of Picton, Tahmoor and Thirlmere and that Bargo and Buxton would have there own schemes. This has since changed which has lead to the expansion of the current site. It is now proposed also to allow both Ingham's and Picton Abattoir to connect to the scheme even though the scheme was meant to be for residential homes only.

If these changes can be made without consultation then this in its self is of concern.

My first concern is that of odour from the plant. It is stated that the plant will be constructed at 2OU standard due to its rural site. This is unacceptable as when the plant first came on line we were subjected to daily and nightly foul odours which made it impossible to have our eastern doors or windows open. The stench at times was intolerable. We were told that the modelling showed this would not happen. The modelling then, was done on data from Camden airport. Our complaints then fell on deaf ears for considerable time until EPA were contacted and after that up grades were made.

Once again the modelling is done on data from an offsite location that has little relevance to the work site and I do believe our residence will not be adversely affected with the current proposal.

Also in the original plans there was written condition that no residence would be less than 400m from the plant yet our residence it is stated we will be a mere 320m from the plant.

Also when plant first opened Department Land Valuation agreed that it would affect our land value and decreased the value of our land, bringing the plant closer may again affect the value of our assets.

I also have concerns with how the document has been developed. There was a complete section titled Stakeholder Consultation which covered Government bodies and Aboriginal groups but nowhere were neighbouring homes consulted, this to me shows how our concerns and thoughts are irrelevant to this whole project as when the initial plant was built. I would argue that we residents are possibly the most affected stakeholders but with no input.

To address these concerns I propose that the extensions be built on the Eastern side of existing plant or southern end. This would then mean that the plant would not be closer than existing works to residences. It would also allow for unlimited expansion possibilities in the future, which I have heard may well happen at sometime in the foreseeable future (ten years was predicted). I have been told to change the siting this would incur extra cost and extra construction effort and technical changes but it is possible. In the long run it may well be more economical and practical with future expansion. The ponds can be connected by piping or easements moved.

If the plant is built on the western side now that will mean future expansion will continue westward even closer to our homes. Surely now is the time to look further ahead than the now but into the future. If this had been done originally we wouldn't be in the current position.

If the plant cannot be built on the Eastern side for legitimate construction reasons, then all ponds should be fully covered along with any open water channels and any pumps or transfer junctions. The plans should be developed at the highest OU level so as to eliminate all odour. It is unacceptable that simply because we are few in number that we should be given a lower OU design. We have chosen to live here well before any sewer works were proposed and our lives and assets should not be adversely affected by any modification now or in the future.

I also asked when the plant first opened if signage could be changed to Water Treatment Plant instead of Sewerage Scheme, I was told this was not possible even though other plants were called this. I also note that the Environmental Assessment is titled 'Modification to the Picton Water Recycling Plant.

From our complaints when the plant first began which there should be a copy of with Sydney Water and the EPA, I think it is obvious that our living standards were severely affected by odour from the plant, thus a plant based on a 2OU is totally inadequate and should be raised to the highest level to ensure that no odour escapes from the plant, this could include total covering of sludge ponds and processes that eliminate odour dispersal.

I have been informed that odourless plants are possible and I think that we should be given written guarantees that if there are any odours detected by neighbouring residences that further upgrades will be implemented to eliminate odour.

Before recent works were carried out there were groups of trees planted to hide the plant from view. Many of these trees have recently been removed. I believe that the works should once again be screened from view by trees and that an equal number of trees be planted as were removed in recent works. Many of these trees were planted after consultation with local residents as part of an agreement to the construction of the original plant. Yet now they have been removed without any consultations. Surely any agreements should be binding until with consultation they are changed. If not what is the point of having agreements. As small land owners we cannot just make changes without following proper procedures and abiding by the rules.

I feel my options are quite reasonable and practical and hopefully will be considered and implemented in the final plan for the modification to the plant.

If you wish further clarification or information about my submission feel free to contact me using any of the below addresses or contact numbers.

Yours sincerely,

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