

Att: belinda .scott@planning.nsw.gov.au

RE: PROPOSED MACQUARIE RIVER PIPELINE REF: 10 0235

Dear Sir/Madam,

OBJECTION TO THE ABOVE PLANNED PROJECT.

As a resident and retired health professional ratepayer on limited income ( but of, I believe, reasonable intelligence) living in Orange NSW, I wish to formally object to the proposed Macquarie River Pipeline.

Having been to a number of meetings, availed myself of written media articles as well as listening to Orange City Council Councillors and Staff, I believe that the above project has not been fully explored and that Orange City Council is forging ahead with the plan despite logical and well documented arguments by a number of specialists and concerned groups. These include neighbouring Councils, Bathurst and Cabonne, a Water Security Alliance amongst others who have publicly condemned Orange City Council for being short sighted and ignoring adequate water supplies for surrounding regions.

Although I do support a water security plan, I believe that Orange City Council has not adequately presented all the facts regarding alternatives nor has there really been appropriate community consultation as required in National Urban Water Management Principles 2008, in particular principle no.3.

There are a number of endangered fish species and my understanding is that at low flows the ability for fish to pass through the water will be seriously impeded. In fact I understand one senior Council staff person did tell a meeting that the River does not flow for 100 days of the year. If this is correct, how does this impact on the ability of pumps to inject water into a storage area?

Council has not adequately explained the route of the proposed pipeline but the area as I understand is sloping and unstable and at one meeting we were shown graphic pictures of landslides which have occurred in the past. How can funding be assured with these issues still to be fully and properly assessed? Surely these things would also impact on wildlife inhabiting the area.

We have a very innovative programme of storm water harvesting, this is not at a full capability due to restrictions on the amount of water that can be harvested. This and other viable alternatives such as re-using waste water for non potable appear to have been totally dismissed by the Council.

Council's website had stated that the local Suma Park Dam wall was to be increased in 2006 with completion due in 2008. This has not been done! And this is despite resident calls for urgent attention due to the weakness of the wall and potential for catastrophic flooding CWD 8/3/12 –front page) a claim dismissed by the Mayor John Davis as “absolute rubbish” yet on another ....2

page of the same newspaper a photo of Mr Davis and a Council technician with the caption "Flood alarms for homes close to Suma Park"!! Typical of the attitude towards Orange residents who question Council's reasoning.

We have very high rates, water rates have increased over 70% in recent years and Council has just raised them again - despite residents' on going co-operation to use less water - together with an \$80 charge for organic waste the collection of which does not start until mid 2013! These charges are a burden to households but there doesn't seem to be any analysis of the impact of increased water rates.

As a ratepayer, I object to the potential costs of a pipeline to a threatened River and eco-system and believe that any Government funding should be withheld until Orange City Council, fulfils its obligation to the City's residents and other neighbouring Councils. Council has a reputation for riding rough-shod over resident wishes and recent history shows it is totally inept in financial management e.g. Bypass roads which crumbled within days of completion and requiring ongoing repair, an Aquatic Centre, which the majority of residents did not want, and which went way over completion time and budget (residents are yet to be told of the final costs).

Finally, there does not appear to be anything in the Council's Environmental Assessment to address the Commonwealth's requirement of "description of long and short term economic and social consideration. Surely a full and indepth review by an independent body is urgently required and serious consideration given to the concerns raised by credible experts and those who will be affected if this pipeline is allowed to proceed.

Thank you for accepting this submission.

Bev Alexander-Fisher

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4/10/12