

## **Submission to RTA**

**Regarding the Woolgoolga to Ballina upgrade, specifically construction of the new highway in the location of Grafton Airport to Ulmurra.**

Recently I had the opportunity to spend some time with friends near Grafton. Their property includes several hectares of wetland, a stunningly beautiful area. To my great surprise and utter delight, I saw a couple of Brolgas wandering gracefully through those wetlands.

When I learned that the new dual carriageway would cut through this area, I became extremely concerned. Much of the flora and fauna now growing and living in this wetland would be disturbed to the point of extinction. Mitigation measures such as the proposal to maintain access to habitat for Coastal Emus can only have very limited benefits.

Please consider an option which would not impact as much on the natural environment as the route currently proposed.

I suggest that it is a much better option to widen the existing highway to four lanes and construct a new route only where it is absolutely unavoidable. Utilising the existing road corridor would not be as destructive as developing a new route. Along the floodprone sections on the Clarence River, a bridge, similar to the Kempsey Bypass could be constructed.

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