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ATTENTION DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Woolgoolga to Ballina Upgrade

I am writing to you to advise of my concerns regarding the above. Overall my issues are in relation to “FLOOD CONCERN”: “DUE PROCESS NOT FOLLOWED”

Referring to other sections of the highway, consultation process adhered, more and longer bridges and “better engineering”.

There was not any consultation between the residents at Corindi and the RMS. At our discussions with Gary McPherson on Saturday 9 February 2013, Gary stated that he did “regret not having a flood focus group for Corindi” and that it was “an oversight”. Due process has not been adhered to. Engineers/developers need the input of local knowledge, have time to fully investigate in order to “get it right” and not waste tax-payers money and resources. It is my opinion that the better the preparation work the more likelihood of ensuring the quality of engineering is undertaken.

The flood model did not encompass Corindi Park Drive. This is of great concern as the changes at Blackadder Creek (September 2011) have directly affected the homes on this street. We have been lobbying the RMS since we were flooded (by a wall of water) on 26 January, 2012, to no avail. Our concerns have been ignored and “swept under the carpet”. A flood model was prepared by an “independent company” SMEC. We have now recently discovered that this is not an independent company, RMS use them on many occasions. In this flood model, no measurements or surveys were taken from Corindi Park Drive. Photos and video footage provided from residents to the RMS have “disappeared”. We were told at our first meeting after this flood event (February 2012) that surveyors would take measurements from homes in Corindi Park Drive to ascertain the effects of the wall of water. This did not occur. The flood model provided is completely inaccurate, did not encompass Corindi Park Drive and did not simulate the event (26 January 2012). When this was brought to the attention of David Bell (Yarrawarra meeting December 2012), we were assured that our questions would be answered. As of February 2013, we still have not had a response.

There was another rain event this year 26 January 2013. Video footage has been taken indicating the changes to water flow at Blackadder and how this water is now being diverted.

Prior to the road works at Blackadder, residents told the RMS that the changes would have a negative impact, which happened 26 January 2012. My concern is that there has not been a thorough investigation to these road works. By Gary's own admission, by not having a flood focus group at Corindi for approaching road works the effects of a rain event at Corindi Park Drive has not been considered in the planning. This could result in severe flooding at Corindi Park Drive. It would be horrific if that during the next severe rain event, lives were lost.

There is also a concern that Corindi Park Drive is in close proximity to land that is part of Aboriginal significance. The 26 January 2012 floods have caused damage to our street and the surrounding lands. These consequences have not been thoroughly investigated.

The model that is proposed for the Pacific Highway will divert the natural course of the water. To my understanding, it is illegal to divert water which can cause flooding to residence. Please correct me if I have misunderstood the law.

Discussions on Saturday 9 February 2013, indicated that Corindi Park Drive is now part of a "flood plain". When these properties were originally sold, the land was not classed this way. Council have not indicated to any resident that Corindi Park Drive is now part of that flood plain, though the diagrams (Sat February 2013) indicate otherwise. In the course of our discussions with Gary McPherson the RMS have the legal right to increase water levels by 100 ml. The Blackadder Road changes have increased the level of water to be much higher, as our homes were flooded. The RMS have diverted the water more significantly than 100 ml. Now with more alterations and culverts being considered along the Pacific Highway rather than a 400m bridge, these levels will continue to rise and cause major flooding. Our premiums rise and our land values decrease without any compensation.

My concern is that the length of the bridge was changed from 400m to 300m. Instead more culverts and "land fill" will be created. This will divert the water, increasing our levels again. Therefore, these levels will rise way above the allowed 100ml.

As we indicated to Gary McPherson and Kylie on Saturday 9 February 2013, we would like the following to take place:

- a flood focus group
- a presentation prior to closure to EIS,
- a flood model extended to incorporate Corindi Park Drive,
- a flood model to demonstrate actual water levels from 26 Australia Day 2012,
- a flood focus group
- an investigation into the floods effect on the Aboriginal lands.

Should you have any further questions, please contact me on XXXX XXXX

Kind regards

Piret Braine