

Nathan Stringer

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Date: 24/02/2013 5:33 PM

Please find below submission from Barry and Jill Mitchell, Corindi Park Drive, Corindi Beach NSW 2456. It must be noted that we were again flooded last Friday and many people had to be evacuated by emergency services. The water flowed through Barry and Jill's garage and also caused damage to their yards / gardens.

To: Major Project Assessment
 Department of Planning & Infrastructure
 GPO Box 39
 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Date: 18 February 2013

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing section of the Woolgoolga to Ballina Project

We are elderly residents of Corindi Park Drive, Corindi Beach. We have all of our savings invested in our property with plans to later sell and fund our retirement. We cannot see that this will be achievable in the near future and are now forced to live our lives with the fear that we may be further impacted upon by the construction of this new road project. To date, our concerns in response to the Blackadder Project, and now this new Project, have not been taken into consideration by the RMS nor has appropriate consultation processes been followed. This is the reason I send this letter to object to any further construction of the new highway until further investigation and consultation is undertaken by the RMS.

Before purchasing our property approximately 14 years ago, we spoke with many long term residents. One resident at the time was 97 years old and his parents had resided in this area for most of their lives. We had been advised that the riverbanks had never been breached and the property we later purchased had never been inundated by water under any circumstance. Our property was a cattle refuge for the days when the bottom paddocks were boggy – they were boggy, but they never flooded. Both of us have lived in local flood country all our lives and had investigated properties in the area in the search of a flood free lifestyle. This area had been dairied for generations with no reports of flooding but this has now all changed since the RMS undertook the Blackadder Project. My concerns with the construction of the Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing section of the project leave me with the opinion that we may be further impacted by water due to incorrect information previously gathered by the RMS in response to the event we experienced on 26th January 2012.

The RMS has stated in the EIS that they will raise the level of water in the Corindi River area but have neglected to undertake flood modelling which takes Corindi Park Drive into consideration. They have made this decision even though they are fully aware of the impact the water inundation had in our area on 26th January 2012 after they changed the road as part of their Blackadder Safety Works initiative. We have attended many meetings with them, provided countless photos and eye witness accounts and although this is well documented, Gary McPherson (RMS Project Manager for the new highway) stated at our meeting on 9th February, that he did not know too much about this flooding event at all. This leads me to believe that due diligence has not been practiced. The increases listed in the EIS are disturbing and I request further investigation prior to the project being approved to determine how our properties will be further impacted.

During this same meeting, Gary also advised that the bridges had been reduced in size even after the RMS had consulted with affected landowners who advised them that their design would not work with the larger bridges originally planned. He noted that the road would be built up between the bridges and we now hold concerns that this will encourage the water to accumulate and spill into waterways that have previously not had to deal with such an amount or force of water. By not allowing the water to follow its natural course is almost certainly going to adversely impact our properties even further.

The meetings held by the RMS are not communicated with residents very well and our street was not

considered to be impacted although we already have been by the Blackadder Safety Works Initiative. This must also be addressed with the RMS as we feel as though they have not upheld their legal requirement.

The effects from the initial event have left me living with the psychological aftermath of almost losing my life due to being knocked over by the wall of water that inundated our property and I live with the fear of recurrence of this event. Jill has been hospitalised in the coronary care unit at Coffs Harbour Health Campus after collapsing at one of our meetings with the RMS regarding the Blackadder Project. She has now developed a condition known as takotsubo (stress) cardiomyopathy. Our health continues to decline and has been fully documented by our GP. We live in the hope that our objection to this project will be considered and it will stop us from being further adversely impacted by the lack of information the RMS provides during their supposed consultation processes and their lack of remorse for the water inundation we have already experienced.

We may be contacted for further information on [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

Barry & Jill Mitchell