

**Nathan Stringer - SUBMISSION: Woolgoolga to Ballina Project**

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**From:** Danielle Holland <cpdrive@hotmail.com>  
**To:** <plan\_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au>  
**Date:** 18/02/2013 5:38 PM  
**Subject:** SUBMISSION: Woolgoolga to Ballina Project  
**Attachments:** Email from Kylie Cochrane.xps; Unanswered Email from David Bell.xps

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18<sup>th</sup> February 2013

Major Projects Assessment  
Department of Planning and Infrastructure  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

To Whom It May Concern

**WOOLGOOLGA TO BALLINA PROJECT: Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing**

Please accept my submission as an anxious property owner in the Corindi Park Drive area. My submission is made due to concerns I have with the roadway to be built within 800 metres of the recently completed Blackadder Safety Works Project on the Pacific Highway at Corindi Beach and the increased possibility and likelihood of further accumulation and inundation of water which may occur adjacent to the highway and in Corindi Park Drive, Corindi Beach NSW 2456.

Before I list my concerns in relation to the Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing section, it is imperative that I provide you with background on the current issues experienced by residents on account of the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) Blackadder Creek Safety Works Project.

As per the RMS website, the Blackadder Safety Works Project on the Pacific Highway at Corindi Beach was completed in June 2012. On 26 January 2012, residents of Corindi Park Drive were inundated with an enormous amount of water which is believed to be linked to the unlawful redirection of water by the RMS. This water inundated previously flood-free homes and properties and prompted evacuations and road closures by emergency services.

To date, residents have been tirelessly liaising with the RMS but are still no closer to being provided an explanation as to why our previously flood-free neighbourhood was inundated with excess water (please see latest unanswered email from 7th December 2012). The RMS agreed to fund an unbiased report which was found by residents to be fraught with prejudice. Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC) was engaged, a company regularly used by the RMS, to undertake flood modeling with the use of RMS surveyors to advise of levels. It was not surprising that the modeling did not concur with the water levels experienced by residents on 26 January 2012 and showed water inundating properties in a manner which did not occur.

This is a very brief account of the event as I realise that this submission is in reference to the current Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing Project. I would be more than happy to provide you with additional information, photos and video regarding the Blackadder event if you feel this would be of assistance and I may be contacted on 0421 648 944.

The RMS refer to community and stakeholder engagement plan within the EIS which did not extend to my neighbourhood although we have previously been flood affected due to the Blackadder Project. I was left to organise meetings and discussions with Garry McPherson (RMS), Greg Roggenkamp (SKM) and Kylie Cochrane (SKM). These discussions have led me to hold serious concerns in reference to the current project and I outline them below:

- **NO CONSULTATION WITH RESIDENTS**

Consultation was lacking and residents of Corindi Park Drive accidentally stumbled upon the most recent meeting when a “directly affected” resident made a passing comment. I was contacted by Gary McPherson, Project Manager (RMS) at 19:50 on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> February who advised me that the meeting was to be held in two days time. This contact was made after I relayed my concerns to David Bell, Northern Regional Manager (RMS), that I had not been consulted. The RMS did not take into consideration the fact that Corindi Park Drive was so badly affected on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012, and it is my opinion that my street should have been formally invited to consult. We did not have sufficient time to review the EIS documentation and this has affected our ability to submit a complete view of our concerns.

In addition to this, at the meeting held on Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> February, Gary McPherson stated that he “regrets not having a flood focus group for Corindi”. There was no other explanation given as to his “oversight” but residents, including myself, were absolutely offended that there were two other flood focus groups setup in different areas affected by the project and only our area was omitted.

- **FLOOD MODELLING DID NOT INCLUDE CORINDI PARK DRIVE**

The flood modeling undertaken does not incorporate the potential effects on Corindi Park Drive. The flood management objectives referred to in the EIS for the Corindi River are frightening at the very least. After being directly affected by the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012 event, I hold grave concerns that the increases outlined in the report will adversely affect my property, and the properties within my neighbourhood, even further than what has been previously experienced. During the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012 event, my 33-acre property was completely underwater and has previously never been flooded. Prior to approval of this section of highway, the RMS should be fully investigated for the water inundation and further study undertaken to ensure that water levels are not further increased when the new road is built.

Gary McPherson stated at our meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February, that bridges in this location had been reduced in size since original consultation with affected residents. In particular, the largest bridge has been reduced from 400 metres to 300 metres (or 280m as identified in the EIS). With more road area being built up, more water will be allowed to accumulate and I have concerns that this water will be redirected to Corindi Creek / River and / or Cassons Creek. I do not agree with the statement in the EIS which states “downstream of the project, levels in the Corindi River would decrease in all assessed ARI flood events”. This too was stated in reference to the Blackadder Project and was found to be false and misleading. With the additional water being directed to these waterways instead of taking its natural course I hold serious concerns for the safety of local residents.

At our meeting with the RMS on Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2013 we requested the following to occur:

1. An extension to the EIS submission date;
2. A presentation prior to the closure of EIS submissions;

3. Development of a flood focus group for the Corindi area;
4. Development of a flood model that includes Corindi Park Drive;
5. Development of a flood model based on the actual water levels experienced during the inundation of water on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012;
6. Details of the Ombudsman and Roads Minister.

On Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> February an email was received from Kylie Cochrane (attached). Kylie apologised for being unable to get back to our group on Wednesday as previously agreed. Kylie provided details for Duncan Gay and the Roads Ombudsman and a copy of this letter will be forwarded to them and our local member Chris Gulaptis.

Due to time constraints, she was unable to provide us with a presentation before submissions closed. Nor could she provided us with an extension to the EIS submission date. She stated that “due to the recent weather events the Department of Planning and Infrastructure extended the submission closing date by two weeks. As such, the official date is unlikely to be extended again, however there may be flexibility with individual submissions”. I hope that this is the case and formally request that you grant flexibility to late submissions from my community due to lack of consultation by the RMS.

I believe the concerns I have outlined are valid and hold more water than what the RMS can send my way. Further investigation and planning is critical prior to this project being approved. I request, and plead, that consideration is given to my letter. After experiencing the water inundation on 26 January 2012, I hold concerns that this event will occur again, and may be increased due to the new structures being built as part of the Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing Project. It must be considered that residents will be at further serious risk of injury and / or fatality and in addition to this are already experiencing financial penalties such as increased insurance premiums, reduced property prices and the inability to sell in a previously highly desirable area.

Yours faithfully

Danielle Holland