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64 Little Place

Alstonville

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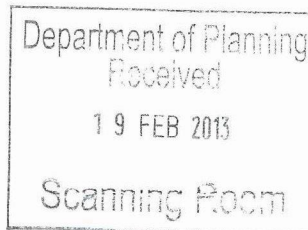
Department of Infrastructure and Planning,

Major Projects Assessment,

GPO Box39

SYDNEY, NSW 2001

Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade SSI-47963



Dear Sir/Madam,

In 2004 i nominated to be on the Community Liaison Group (C L G) in relation to the above Pacific Highway upgrade ,in particular Woodburn to Ballina section . I was accepted to the CLG Group. I attended all C L G meetings , all Flooding Focus Group and Ecology focus Group Meetings. I have continued to be involved whenever the opportunity arises.

The main area i am concerned about is the section of the highway on the flood plain from the South of Woodburn at Tuckombil Canal travelling North t o Langs Hill approximately 6 k's . Tuckombil Canal plays a major role in releasing flood water into the Evans River which flows into the Ocean. The proposed Highway upgrade built to a height of 3.9 metres across this area is like a hugh levy bank which will restrict water flow and cause higher flood peaks . Twenty three of the Twenty five community members of the CLG signed a submission to the RTA (as it was known at the time)recommending the FLOOD FREE ROUTE .This route is well above flood level . With the recent allocation of funds to continue the investigation of the highway upgrade why didn't RMS look at the original Flood Free Route as proposed by the C L G ?

If the highway is to continue on the present route between Tuckombil Canal and Langs Hill. The main issues I request you condition and require the Roads and Maritime Service to change and adequately address are :

- The use of the 1 in 100 year flood level (as recommended in Government Department reports) as the height to build the Highway , rather than the 1 in 20 year flood level the RMS has adopted for this section of the Highway.
- The use of adequate number and sized culverts and viaducts to allow floodwaters to escape as much of the highway will act as a barrier (a levee bank that keeps water in the towns rather than out) to floodwater getting away. To allow floodwater to effectively flow away from the towns there needs to be at least 880 m of viaduct plus the bridge across TUCKOMBIL Canal or alternatively the highway would need to move to the east to the flood free route .

If these issues are not addressed by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure and the RMS, it will mean:

- Any floods bigger than the 1 in 20 year flood level will still cut off the Highway and isolate towns;
- Areas inundated by floodwater will remain affected for a longer period and at a greater height, causing delays to floodwater retreating and ability to clean-up, also affecting agriculture;
- More properties will be affected will have floodwater entering them at the 1 in 20 year flood height that never had floodwater enter at that level;
- In major floods more properties and houses will have water entering them than ever before;
- Increased damage to homes and increased clean-up;
- There will be continued and increased infrastructure damage eg the Highway will still need to be fixed, which could be avoided by building it to a higher level; and
- Increased cost to local, State and Federal governments = cost to community at some point (property value decreases, cost to agriculture, increased rates, flood levy, increased insurance, less \$ for other projects).

All of this is at an increased cost to local, State and Federal governments, which at some point is an increased cost to the community eg property value decreases, increased rates, flood levy, increased insurance, and less money for other projects.

The Roads and Maritime Service apparently say these impacts are acceptable. I say they are not. All effort must be made at the planning stages to ensure the impacts of flooding are not worse in any way as a result of the Highway Upgrade. We do not want avoidable impacts, such as witnessed in Bundaberg recently, to be experienced here due to poor planning.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'B.M. Plenkovich', with a stylized flourish at the end.

B.M. PLENKOVICH