



Coffs Harbour Bicycle User Group (Affiliated with BNSW) P O Box 36 Red Rock 2456 Ph. 6649 1555

*The Committee Manager,
Standing Committee on Public Works.*

*Parliament House,
Macquarie Street,
Sydney N.S.W. 2000
20th April 2005*

I relocated to Coffs Harbour in 2000 from Sydney. I find one of the greatest disadvantages in living in this region is the lack of transport infrastructure and having to rely solely on the motor car to get around with reasonable efficiency and safety.

In Sydney I used to be able to utilise my bicycle far more often to commute, shop and travel to work, as I had the option to plan my journey via low stress routes, there were always many options to keep away from danger points.

Up here on the North Coast there is only one option, the Pacific Highway. I live 46km north of the main CBD in Coffs. To ride this route on a bicycle regularly into Coffs has become a game of roulette. One day the odds wont be in my favour, so I don't play the game any more.

School children who also live in this coastal ribbon are forced into the same option if their parents are unavailable, or if it is a weekend when the school buses remain in the shed.

I work hard with the Coffs Harbour Council and Road Safety trying to establish safer routes to take, but unfortunately budgets are minimal in NSW, and I am afraid more gets allocated to short term fixing of community problems rather than looking at the bigger picture, and implementing schemes such as Safe Routes to Schools, the Coastline Cycleway Project (DIPNA) and others, which will yield long term rewards to the community, through reduced obesity levels in our children and hence lesser impact on health budgets and the rewards which will also flow from tourism dollars, as can be seen in Victoria with the successful "Murray to the Mountains" Rail Trail which is attracting tourists in droves from Australia and overseas. We need to start allocating substantial budgets here now to develop these cycle networks for locals as well as tourists.

Too much emphasis and dollars are being "tunnelled" into the Sydney CBD as we speak, whereas if the bigger picture was evaluated, without satisfying the short term "fix-its" the dollars should be heading north, as I did 5 years ago. I'm sure there will be tens of thousands more in the very near future, unfortunately the planners didn't judge correctly 20 years ago, lets get it right this time.

yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Mockridge".

Rick Mockridge

Coffs Harbour Bicycle User Group (advocacy officer)