In reply quote:

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

7 April 2017

The Hon. Robert Brown, MLC
Parliament House
6 Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO THE HEARING ON WEDNESDAY 1 MARCH
2017 – INQUIRY INTO THE AUGMENTATION OF WATER SUPPLY FOR RURAL AND
REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES.

Please find attached Griffith City Council’s witness responses to ‘Questions on Notice’ taken
during the hearing:

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: You have been talking about the Clarence River diversion scheme. Is it
correct that that is essentially restricted to the Mann River subcatchment?

Mr ZAPPACOSTA: To the best of my knowledge, it covers most of the tributaries—for example, the
Boyd River, the Mann River, the Nymboida River and the Timbarra River. They are highlighted on map 2,
which was provided to the Committee.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: I am a little confused about the way the map reads. It appears as though
the water is coming out of the Mann River catchment, which is a subcatchment of the Clarence. The divisions
appear to be above the confluence of the Nymboida and the Mann. You recommend a 23 per cent Clarence
River diversion, but the question is: What percentage of is that of the Mann River flow and what environmental
impact will that have on the Mann River below where it is diverted? We should keep in mind the history of the
Snowy River and what has happened there over the past 50 years. Does anybody have any thoughts about that?

Mr ZAPPACOSTA: I will have to take on notice exactly how much comes from the Mann River
itself.

Response to The Hon. Rick Colless:

It is correct to say that the Clarence River diversion scheme is based on part of the sub
catchment of the Mann River, but is also based on the Boyd River, Nymboida River and a small
part of the Timbarra River as well which are all sub catchments of the Clarence River.

All these rivers are perennial rivers (a river that has continuous flow all year round) of the
Clarence River catchment. Therefore the total catchment area for the diversion scheme is 5,351
km² being only 23.6% of the total catchment for the Clarence River catchment.
Based on the August 1983 report by David Coffey, "A Scheme for Diversion of Clarence River Tributaries West to the Dumaresq River" (copy attached), the following calculations provide the best possible answer for the percentage of the Mann river flow used in this scheme:

Page 8 of the report shows the breakdown of the 1,220,000 Megalitres (ML) total average annual flow into the Clarence River from each perennial river capable of being diverted. A percentage of the total flow has been added to these values to assist in calculating the Mann River flow contribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>River</th>
<th>Flow (ML)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boyd River</td>
<td>430,000</td>
<td>35.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mann River</td>
<td>240,000</td>
<td>19.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nymboida River</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>40.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbarra River</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>4.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can therefore be calculated that the Mann River flow contribution is 9.67% of the 23.6% diverted from the total catchment of the Clarence River. Whilst this is a percentage of the total catchment, further detailed investigation and design will be required to determine the exact volumes and impacts the diversion scheme will have on the Mann River.

The reports to date on the Clarence River Diversion Scheme have made no attempt to seriously determine the effect of diverting and regulating large quantities of water annually. Obviously there will be great impact on all aspects of the natural and human environment. This will require separate detailed assessment and studies to progress this engineering solution to the water supply in NSW.

---

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE**: I wanted to raise a different issue, which is in your submission, and get your comment on the return flow policy, where you talk about the re-crediting of water that is returned after being extracted under licence. Your submission says that under section 75 of the Water Management Act there is a provision to do this but it has not been enacted to date. I am wondering if you could explain a bit more about that to me and provide information to the committee about why you think this has not occurred?

**Mr DAL BROI**: This was a submission that council commissioned and I must admit I am not fully up to speed.

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE**: You can take it on notice and if you have other information that will be fine.

**Mr DAL BROI**: I think I will. We will get back to you on that.

Response to The Hon. Penny Sharpe:

Council refers to the Water Management Act 2000 - Sect 75:

"**Water return flow rules**

75 Water return flow rules

(1) The regulations may establish water return flow rules for the purposes of this Division.

(2) Such a regulation may not be made except with the concurrence of the Minister for Climate Change and the Environment."

Given this requires concurrence from the Minister for Climate Change and the Environment under the Act, Griffith City Council would like a return flow policy developed to allow the re-crediting of water that is returned to a water source after being extracted under licence.
The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Mr Stonestreet, I was interested in your comments about population planning, and I have to say I think there is a real gap there. Those figures you quoted are absolutely right in terms of what New South Wales is trying to cope with and what that is generating, particularly in Sydney, but the impacts further afield. I am not sure it is clear in your submission, the population projections that you are preparing, whether you have been able to match the water requirements to meet those, if it was business as usual or if we did look at things like better recycling. I agree with you that the idea about new water needs to be explored. I am wondering if you have any extra modelling for that, that you can provide to the committee? I think some of it is covered in your submission, but I thought drawing attention to population and water beyond feeding people and managing that is something I am interested in hearing from you about.

Mr STONESTREET: I have not done any research into the future, I suppose timeline, for the likes of raising the height of the Warragamba Dam wall, for instance. I have heard of media commentary in the last probably twelve months that is likely to be a requirement in years to come but I have not done any research on that. I am more than happy to take that on notice and research what I can.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It is more I wondered whether that work had been done and you can provide it. If you are happy to give me it as well, that would be terrific.

Mr STONESTREET: We will research what we can.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Thank you very much.

Response to The Hon. Penny Sharpe:

The Snowy Mountains Scheme which was commissioned in 1972 and is a similar scheme to the Clarence River Diversion Scheme. Since the commissioning of the Snowy Mountains Scheme, viable farming country has been developed and generates $1.82 billion in agriculture. This sustains a surrounding population base (Riverina Cities) of approximately 285,000 and can be directly attributed to the guaranteed supply from the Snowy Mountains Scheme. A similar comparison can be drawn in relation to the development of the Clarence River Diversion Scheme, therefore a similar population and industry growth could be expected from this additional water supply.

Projects like the Clarence River Diversion Scheme could therefore provide decentralisation solutions to the growing population of Sydney and ease the pressure of the expected 85,000 projected growth population per annum in Sydney.

In the August 1983 report by David Coffey, “A Scheme for Diversion of Clarence River Tributaries West to the Dumaesq River” (copy attached), reference was to made to the Commonwealth Government’s National Water Projects study grant which was abandoned in 1983 by the new Federal Government elected in March 1983. If the study grant had proceeded it would have included all studies at the feasibility level for this project.

Griffith City Council has not come across any feasibility studies or research documentation that provides direct correlation to decentralisation from Sydney in relation to the Clarence River Diversion Scheme. Griffith City Council would fully encourage further investigation and studies into the benefits this would achieve for the state of NSW.

Mr SCOT MaDONALD: I return to page 21 of your submission and the rules-based environmental water of five per cent contributed by high security and 15 by general security. It sounds as if you have had similar frustrations to me in trying to get to the bottom of it, but at the end of the day we have to make recommendations. Perhaps you will consider coming back to us on this. I am concerned that when we review this environmental water it will be lost in the rough-and-tumble of the water sharing plan, so I wondered if you would support a separate recommendation or review of the rules-based environmental water.

The request for review would go towards the transparency, the efficacy, the equity and the environmental outcomes of it, because I cannot see any of that in the water that was taken away 10 years ago. There was a promised review, from what I can work out, as you have alluded to in your submission. There was no compensation; it was voluntary. I understand that the water access licence holders continue to pay fixed charges. At the end of the day, we have to make recommendations and this one is going to get pushed under the carpet if it is mixed up in the upcoming general review of the water resource plans which is now two years overdue.

Mr DAL BROI: We will do it. I think it may be longer than 10 years that we have been contributing. I am a high-security water holder, and at one stage I held up to 2,000 megs and was contributing five per cent of that each year to the environment.
Response to Mr Scot MacDonlad:

Griffith City Council supports a separate recommendation or review of the “rules-based environmental water” under the NSW Water Sharing Plans. Council would like the 5% of the high security and 15% of the general security contributions currently required, to be removed from the Water Sharing Plan.

If you require any further information please contact my office on

Yours sincerely,

CR JOHN DAL BROI
EMERITUS MAYOR