

INQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES

Organisation:

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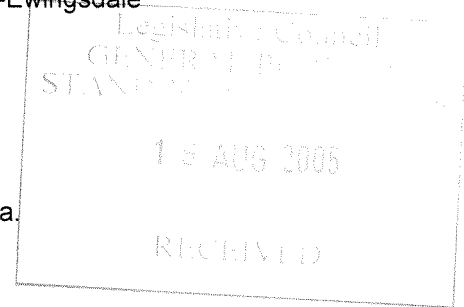
Subject:

Summary

From:
To: <gpscno4@parliament.nsw.gov.au>
Date: Fri, Aug 19, 2005 12:46 pm
Subject: submission : Upgrad of the Pacific Hwy Tintenbar -Ewingsdale

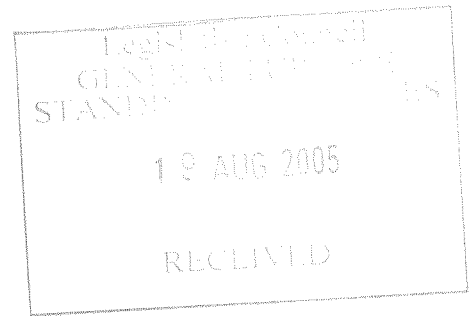
Please find attached my submission to the inquiry of the proposed upgrade of the Pacific Highway : Tintenbar - Ewingsdale

Faithfully,
Rebecca Zentveld
Resident and business owner in the T2E highway upgrade study area.



ENQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES

The Hon. Jenny Gardiner,
The General Purpose Standing Committee No 4,
Parliament House,
Sydney. NSW 2000



Dear Madam,

We wish to address the terms of reference:

1b/ The level of upgrade proposed for this section and the remainder of the Pacific Highway.

That the Pacific Highway needs upgrading for safety reasons is without doubt. Because of current use and the projected increase in traffic it would seem that a divided, dual carriageway is called for. HOWEVER, what the RTA proposes is that a whole new four lane highway be constructed with a potential to cater for a 6 lane motorway with a road corridor of up to 250 metres, a gradient of less than 6% and a 110 km per hr speed limit. In other words the road is being designed to cater for the trucking industry at the expense of local land owners!

The Pacific Highway has always been designated as a 'regional highway' and as such should not be the main thoroughfare for freight. The National Highway, passing as it does mainly through open fields and away from main tourist routes, should be the preferred option for large freight carriers. The toxic substances often carried should also be considered, these could have a much greater impact on heavily populated areas should a spillage or accident occur.

1c) The impact of the highway upgrade on prime agricultural land.

The area for the proposed new highway is through some of the best agricultural land in

Australia. Drought free, deep, rich red soil which produces world class horticultural products, such as macadamias and coffee, as well as stone fruit, passion fruit, bananas, sugar cane and vegetables. The lands in the study area are designated either State Significant or Regional Significant land. Also under the Farmland Protection zoning the land is classified as being 'too good for houses' but not, apparently too good for a six lane highway!!

The present Pacific Highway is a little under 2km. from Zentvelds Plantation. The following is a summary of our position as producers of coffee:

- Northern Rivers area recognized as capable of producing world class gourmet coffee
- Australia is free from coffee diseases, consequently no need to spray pesticides, giving a great marketing advantage.
- Increasing interest overseas in Australian coffee and great potential for tourism.
- Zentvelds produces multi award winning gourmet coffee which is marketed throughout Australia.
- Zentvelds coffee recently was used by the World Barista Champion at competitions in Norway.
- Due to overseas enquiries Zentvelds wish to expand to overseas markets.
- Zentvelds serves as an education facility with overseas and Australian visitors attracted to the property to learn about coffee growing.
- Zentvelds operates the largest coffee nursery in Australia
- Zentvelds also showcase coffee processing equipment which is sold overseas and throughout Australia.

The potential impact of the highway being close to us:

- Could no longer claim to be 'clean green'.
- Beauty of the area spoiled both visually and through noise pollution
- Because our coffee is tied to the beauty of the land, and 'clean green' aspect, we would no longer attract visitors or interest in our plantation.
- Our plans to expand have been shelved until decision is made by RTA as to route of highway.
- The 0.5 million expansion costs would be lost to the area if Highway nearby, plus potential employment opportunities and export dollars, all lost
- Zentvelds would close down if the highway comes nearby thus putting 10 people presently employed out of work.

1e) The impacts of B-doubles on the Pacific Highway

Unless you were a local resident, or off-time user of the Pacific Highway between Grafton and Ocean Shores you would have no idea of the impact caused in 2002 by allowing B-doubles onto the highway. Trucks now rule the road and people who previously were not aware of highway noises now suffer sleep disturbance. We consider this unacceptable. The best solution for all would be that the 'through' trucks (that is the interstate ones) should be sent back to the National Highway (The New England). And The Pacific Highway

could get the long awaited upgrade to a four lane divided highway on the present footprint.

1f) The impacts of interstate heavy transport on the Pacific Highway and the mixing of interstate and local transport.

There is evidence that trucks and cars do not mix. There is evidence of intimidating and bullying behaviour by some truck drivers, especially to slower vehicles. (See 'Truck Stories Booklet, Newrybar Landcare Group) There has to be serious concerns also regarding the traffic noise levels and the effect on communities. The original RTA 'study area ' includes a very high population density with a large number of homes within the area potentially affected by noise pollution. Evidence is also clear (American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, 1995, et al) regarding the health issues relating to diesel emissions. Obviously a highway is best placed away from communities, or at least limit the number of heavy trucks to minimize diesel emissions.

3) Any other related matters.

The RTA study area encompasses some of the most beautiful scenery in Australia.

It is predominately highly productive land, a true 'foodbowl' which increasingly attracts sustainable tourism and related businesses as well as evidently adding to our balance of payments with the import replacing and export growth of the productive agri-businesses.

Many properties have spring fed water and creeks... absolutely drought-free.

A number of properties are classified under the 'Land for Wildlife' scheme with much attention by property owners given to preserving local flora and encouraging wildlife.

All of the above would be negated should the highway take some of the best, productive land in Australia, our sustainable agri-based businesses and destroy real communities.

We urge the committee to look to the future and save our heritage by recommending that

1. all interstate transport return to the National Highway (the New England)

immediately

2. invest NOW in an appropriate sized upgrade of the Pacific Highway to Dual Carriageway along the existing highway 'footprint' wherever possible, fixing the 'black hole' accident prone areas as a priority

3. develop a long term freight plan for the movement of interstate freight, considering the population trends, economic and sustainability issues and alternatives such as road- rail and/ or developing an inland route away from population growth areas.