

**Submission
No 132**

INQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES

Organisation:

Name: Ms Catherine Byrnes

Telephone:

Date Received: 23/08/2005

Subject:

Summary

19th August

Parliament House, Macquarie Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
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To the Hon Jennifer Ann GARDINER

Dear Madam,

I am writing to you in regard to the proposed highway upgrade for the Pacific Highway Upgrade Inquiry. I understand you will have a role to play in the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4.

I am a resident who is within the study area and I want to object to the idea of re routing the Highway from the proposed upgrade that was commissioned as long ago as 1990. Option B was then considered to be the preferred route and had already had the Bangalow bypass constructed to be in line with the future upgrades. This was the case until last November 2004 when we were told that new routes were to be considered. I have attended the public meetings that have been formed to canvass public opinion and to be truthful the consultative process has led to a moderately cohesive opinion that the Highway should stay on the existing route as closely as possible as this was what the community expected.

My farm is prime agricultural land gazetted by the Land and Environment Council as part of the NSW government bid to protect our scarce resources of arable land. We have three permanent creeks that allow for a wide range of agriculture. To consider carving through this rural landscape is environmental vandalism and future generations will require our land to provide food for Australians.

Furthermore there are many local action groups who are wanting influence the Inquiry into the Pacific Highway upgrades of the T2E and Ballina /Woodburn. Each group has a particular concern re the amenity or visual aspects of a highway cutting through tourist areas, sensitive wildlife corridors and coastal heathlands. All valid reasons for considering upgrading the national route No 1 via the New England rather than a highly populated tourist destination. I have written to the Ombudsman, the Minister for Transport Mr Joseph Tripodi. I am also concerned about the process of keeping the options within the Community Liaison Group rather than make them public. This is a very stressful time for residents and this secrecy is not in the best interest of the people concerned. I am not convinced that the RTA is being perfectly honest and question the processes being employed.

My request is to preserve our valuable rural resources, minimise loss of arable land and maintain viable farms. To consider putting a highway through our valley would mean cutting up viable farms and making them uneconomic.

Sincerely,

Catherine Bymes

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