

SUBMISSSION
QUEENSLAND FLOODS COMMISION OF ENQUIRY

By

KEN ALDERTON



1. SUMMARY

This submission addresses the Commission's term of reference (g), namely:

'all aspects of land use planning through local and regional planning systems to minimise infrastructure and property impacts from floods'

It demonstrates that the pressures and cultures within Local Government Authorities, LGAs, produce faulty decisions for Development Applications on flood prone land. These faulty decisions have progressively increased the number of properties that have the potential to be inundated during periodic floods, increase the number of people adversely affected by flooding and increase the costs of restitution. There is some evidence that the effects are concentrated in more vulnerable groups like those who rent properties and elderly people in retirement centres who have no reason to be aware of the flooding history of the land. The evidence is drawn exclusively from the Ipswich City Council area but this submission has statewide relevance. Ipswich City Council is a good example to illustrate the more general position in the state since it:

1. Is one of the major LGAs in Queensland that have been sustained extensive flood damage in both the 1974 and 2011 flood events.
2. Has both urban and rural areas that are subject to periodic flooding.
3. Has an operational structure similar to most other Local Government Authorities.
4. Is subject to developmental pressures that are common to other Local Government Authorities.

Furthermore, effective solutions need to be implemented at the State rather than Local Government level.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the State Government establish by legislation mandatory criteria for flood prone land.
2. That LGAs be required by State legislation to identify flood prone land in their planning schemes.
3. That LGAs be prevented by State Legislation from approving any type of residential or business development, without exception, on land identified in the planning scheme as flood prone.
4. The changes in (iii) and (iv) above could be achieved by amendments to the Sustainable Planning Act. For example, Schedule 1 of the Act 'Prohibited Development' could be amended to include land described by (i) above.

3. THE PROBLEM

Whether flood prone land in any particular area in Queensland is developed or not is largely determined by LGAs and private developers. Some guidance is provided by the State Governments through legislation such as the Sustainable Planning Act and its predecessor the Integrated Planning Act. The word guidance is used advisedly. Although both the State Acts look prescriptive, in practice the provisions of these acts are broad enough to allow LGAs to have almost unfettered licence to do as they see fit. The exceptions are where State interests such as State owned infrastructure or environmental responsibilities are involved.

Although the rate income of LGAs is notionally based on the 'unimproved' value of the land alone, in practice the rateable value of land in an LGA area increases markedly if it is either developed or redeveloped to a land use of higher value. The growth in income of an LGA is dependent on the degree to which it can encourage the development or redevelopment of the land in its area. The development or redevelopment of flood prone land, traditionally of low relative value, is particularly attractive. It is also profitable to developers if they can get such low value land approved for higher value development. Fees and charges which are applied by LGAs to each development are also a significant source of its income. For example, 'Town planning and development charges' represented 11% of the total rates income for Ipswich City Council in the year 2009/2010.

However, when properties in flood prone areas are inevitably damaged, LGAs and developers bear little of the cost of restoration of either the private property or the considerable public property that is always associated with such development. The costs are almost all borne by the broader public through insurance premiums, by private interests totally dissociated from the original development or by State and Federal Governments. In other words when flood prone land is inappropriately developed, LGAs and developers get all the benefit and the public, State and Federal Governments bear all the costs.

The authorities that directly control the development of flood prone land, LGAs, have large financial incentives to allow development of such land. The parties that are largely responsible for paying the costs of restoration after the property on this land is damaged by flood; the general public, private property owners not associated with the initial developers, the State Government and the Federal Government have little or no influence on whether such land is developed.

4. THE SIZE OF THE PROBLEM

Authoritative, accurate information on the number and location of residential and business sites damaged by moderate or major flood events is notoriously difficult to obtain. LGAs that have access to such information are usually unwilling to make it publicly available. For example, in either 1999 or 2000 consultants Sinclair Knight Merz produced a report for Ipswich City Council entitled "Ipswich Rivers Flood Study" which examined the effects of the 1974 floods. A request on 22 January 2011 to the Ipswich City Council Library to view a copy of the report

produced the response that 'the Ipswich River Flood Study is not able to be released' (sic) (see email exchange Attachment 1). Most of the available information comes from local media or press releases by LGAs.

For the Ipswich City Council local government area there seems to be general agreement that about 1000 homes were 'inundated' in the 1974 flood. Cr Nardi Chairman of the Works Committee, Cr Tully Chairman of the Planning and Development Committee and Mr Shane Neumann M.P. Federal Member for Blair have all used this figure (see Attachment 2). Mr Neumann produced the figure of 3,000 homes which were inundated in the 2011 flood and this is the only figure for this event that has been found (see Attachment 2). However the Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG), of which Cr Nardi is the Deputy Chairman, projected that 6,000 houses would be 'affected' if a flood of the 1974 size occurred now a figure that Cr Tully disputed without providing an alternate (see Attachment 2).

This means that between 2,000 and 5,000 dwellings have been constructed in flood prone areas in Ipswich in the 37 years since 1974. This is an average of between 54 and 135 dwellings for each year assuming that construction was evenly spread over the period. However what is more likely is that construction started at low levels in the years immediately following the 1974 flood event and accelerated as the memory of the event faded. Approval of developments on flood prone land was being given by Ipswich City Council almost up to the time of the latest major flood event in January 2011, apparently in direct contravention of the stated policy of the Council.

5. THE DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESS – IN PRACTICE

This section illustrates the **actual** process by which development on flood prone land has been approved in the Ipswich City Council LGA. The process is repeated, to a greater or lesser degree, in LGAs throughout Queensland.

There is a general public perception that elected Councillors either make the final decision on the approval of developments or at the very least have a large input into these decisions. This is simply not the case. Councillors review only a minute fraction of Development Applications. Ipswich City Council makes decisions on about 120 Development Applications per month. In the 12 month period from September 2009 to September 2010, Councillors in the Planning and Development Committee or in the full Council considered only 4 out of a probable total of 1,500 applications that were decided. The vast bulk of decisions are made within the Planning Department under powers delegated to them by the Council. Under the Ipswich City Council Resolution of 24 March 2009, the power to approve any development application irrespective of size is delegated to Team Coordinators, a second level position in the Planning Department.

It could be argued that Councillors do not need to review each Development Application because they set the policy for development either directly or by way of the planning scheme and this policy controls decisions by the Planning Department. Again this is not the case. Cr Paul Tully, Chairman of the Planning and Development Committee publically defined the policy of Ipswich City Council

on the development of flood prone land (see Attachment 2). The essential features of this policy are:

1. The standard for identifying flood prone land is the Q100 level.
2. Single dwellings are permitted on land that is below the Q100 level.
3. Land below the Q100 cannot be subdivided.
4. By inference, multiple dwellings are not permitted below the Q100 level.

The Ipswich City Council planning scheme supports Cr Tully's recital of the Council's policy but does not have the absolute prohibition on development below the Q100 zone contained in Cr Tully's statement.

There is no separate zone for flood prone land in the planning scheme. It is covered under the designation of the Limited Development (Constrained) Zone. Division 19 of the scheme covers this Zone and sets out the requirements for this Zone. Parts of this Division say that housing and reconfiguration of lots (subdivision) *'are generally not approved'* and that multiple residential uses *'constitute undesirable development which is unlikely to be approved'*. A separate part of the scheme, Part 11—Overlays, Div 4—Development Constraints Overlays pages 11-26 and 11-27, requires that *'Lot reconfigurations which create sites for additional dwellings are avoided in areas situated below the 1 in 100 flood line'*.

It should be noted that the scheme merely says that reconfiguration of lots and residential use of land below the Q100 line are 'to be avoided' or are 'generally not approved'. This gives the Planning Department considerable room to permit development below the Q100 line. This contrasts with Cr Tully's language of absolute prohibition in Attachment 2. It should be noted that the Sustainable Planning Act requires that the planning decisions be assessed against and comply with the requirements of the planning scheme not Council policy (see Section 313,314 and 326 of the Act).

When Cr Tully asserts that:

'the council had not permitted subdivision or development of the worst flooding areas since 2002.'

he is misinformed. This can be illustrated by the following three cases of Development Applications on flood prone land that were approved after 2002. These cases also illustrate that the Planning Department is not controlled by Council policy but by their interpretation of the more indefinite language of the planning scheme. Copies of all of the documents referenced in these cases can be accessed in the 'PD Online' database on Ipswich City Council's website. Each Development Application used in these cases is identified with a DA number and address, either of which can be used to access these documents.

Case 1 – Development Application No: 323/2010

Address : 84 Chubb Street, One Mile,

Decision Date : 13 September 2010

Decision Authority: Acting Team Coordinator – Central/West

This Application is for Reconfiguration of a Lot into 42 Lots in four stages and was approved under the provisions of the Sustainable Planning Act. This approval is not a standalone application. It is not valid unless taken up in conjunction with development application 437/2005, approved on 20 March 2006. This application was for reconfiguration of three lots into two lots and a material change of use to allow the construction of 118 'Aged Accommodation Units'.

The effect of these two approvals is that only the 118 Aged Accommodation Units can be built on the site. The pre-existing zoning was a combination of Large Lot Residential and Recreational. There are no approvals earlier than 20 March 2006 that would make it qualify 'under the earlier regime' test that which Cr Tully says would have permitted the developer 'to exercise their existing development rights' see Attachment 2.

The land is below the Q 100 level. In fact the Decision Notice for Application 323/2010 approved on 13 September 2010, four months prior to the 2011 flood event says:

"4. Flooding

The subject site was fully inundated in the 1974 flood. Council, and its servants and agents, accept no liability or responsibility for any loss or damage to person or property of whatever nature or however caused as the direct or indirect consequence of the granting of the approval herein contained. Such approval has been granted at the request of the developer and in reliance of information submitted by the developer in support thereof."

This exact clause was also contained in the Decision Notice for Application 437/2005, approved on 20 March 2006. This indicates that Council was aware that the land was flood prone and indicates that the developer was similarly aware that the land was flood prone. Yet the Council approved the building of accommodation for aged people in direct opposition to Cr Tully's public statement of policy but simultaneously absolved itself of legal responsibility for any damage.

The author personally observed that the area proposed for construction of the units was covered by about 1 metre of flood water on 12 January 2011.

Case 2 – Development Application No: 6749/2007

Address : 70A Chubb Street, One Mile

Decision Date: 17 September 2008

Decision Authority: Team Co-ordinator - Central West

This approval was for Reconfiguring one lot into eleven lots.

In a document accompanying the Application, Planning Report Ref 06-010, dated 17 August 2007, which was prepared by Daniel Willis Town and Environment Planning, the developer acknowledges that the land is below the Q100 line but contends that:

1. The extent of floodwaters shown on Council's overlay map OV5 may not be accurate at a property by property basis.
2. That the extent of flood waters in this area has been modified due to the extent of development within the area, including earthworks.
3. That the site can be adequately developed to mitigate the risk of flooding associated with a Q100 event by increasing the size of the culverts used to convey stormwater to the drainage easement and by ensuring the differentiation between the road height and the level of the new allotments is sufficient to allow flows associated with a Q100 event to be contained within the road reserve.
4. The site is surrounded by existing residential development that is below the Q100 line therefore residential development should be allowed

Despite these contentions a month after receiving the above reports, Brett Davey, Acting Development Team Coordinator – Central West wrote on page 2 of an Information Request letter dated 20 September 2007:

'Flooding

The applicant is requested to submit a plan of the proposal development, which has been prepared by a RPEQ, superimposed with the inundation line of the 1 in 100 ARI Flood event. Council has information which suggests that this property is affected by this Flood line. The applicant is therefore requested to demonstrate that the requirements of Ipswich Planning Scheme Part 11, Division 4, Section 7 – Flooding and Urban Storm Flow Path Areas have been addressed.'

This suggests that the Planning Department was not convinced by arguments in the above report.

There is no indication in the documents available on PD Online on the Ipswich City Council website that this information was provided by the developer. There are no conditions in the Decision Notice that require the implementation of the flood mitigation measures proposed by the developer. As at 29 March 2011, more than 2 years after this Application was approved, the Q100 line on Council's overlay remains unchanged and still covers 70A Chubb Street. (see Attachment 3, Figure 1).

This indicates that the Planning Department was aware that the land was flood prone and below the Q100 line but still approved the reconfiguration with no conditions for flood mitigation measures. Neither Cr Tully's public statement of policy nor the planning scheme suggest that flood mitigation measures are an acceptable reason for development below the Q100 line.

Case 3 – Development Application No: 195/2006
Address : 2 Haig Street, Brassall
Decision Date : 23 December 2009
Decision Authority: Team Co-ordinator - Central West

This is an Application for a Material Change of Use of Premises that would allow the construction of Multiple Residential Units (48 Dwelling Units). The site was previously zoned Recreation and apparently contained a disused tennis court and clubs. The Bremer River is located on the eastern boundary of the site.

A flood report, prepared by Cardno (Qld) Pty Ltd, Job No. 7396/11 dated 7 October 2009, shows that some sections of the site are more than 3 metres below the Q100 flood levels and right at the Q20 flood level. It also suggests that the site will be filled to bring it above the Q100 level. But a map of the site after development seems to suggest that a number of the dwellings would still be inundated (see Attachment 2, Figure 2). Clearly the Planning Department was aware that the land was flood prone and below the Q100 line but still approved the reconfiguration with no conditions for filling except to insist that:

'There must be no filling or removal of material in the flood area below the flood level associated with an 100 ARI of years with the exception of what has been specified in Flood Study Version 4 for 2 Haig Street Brassall prepared by Cardno dated 7 October 2009'.

(see page 29 of the Decision Notice)

This would seem to restrict the developer to the situation depicted in the map in Attachment 2 Figure 2. In any case, neither Cr Tully's public statement of policy or the planning scheme suggest that artificially raising the land level above the Q100 line is an acceptable reason for allowing development below the natural Q100 line.

These three cases illustrate that:

1. Since 2002, the Planning Department of Ipswich City Council has permitted development below the Q100 flood line even though these developments consisted of a considerable number of dwellings.
2. The Planning Department was clearly aware that the lot reconfigurations and multiple dwelling developments that were approved were on land below the Q100 level.
3. The Planning Department took advantage of the indefinite language of the planning scheme to approve these development.

One feature of these cases that was particularly disturbing is the one of the approvals was for 118 accommodation units that would be utilised exclusively by elderly people, a group who are particularly vulnerable during major flood events.

There is no convenient means of determining how many cases similar to those detailed above have occurred in Ipswich City Council since 2002. The Council database PD Online presumably contains all the necessary details but is not searchable by flood prone land criteria. Therefore the only means of extracting the information is to look separately at each of the 1,500 applications per year.

It is also argued that the public has an avenue for review of Development Application approvals by appeal to the Land and Environment Court and this has the effect of controlling decisions of Planning Departments. In fact, suggestions of appeals to the Court are a favourite response of planners when questions are raised about decisions. There are some difficulties with this approach:

1. Appeals can only be mounted by people or organisations that have made a submission during the public Notification Period.
2. Only applications that are 'impact assessable' are required to have a Notification Period.
3. The cost of an appeal to the Queensland Planning and Environment Court has been estimated to be in excess of \$80,000. This is well beyond the resources most individuals and small interest groups.
4. These appeals are inevitably defended by both the Council and developer. The combined resources of these two groups usually make the cost of success much higher.

A thorough search of the database of Queensland Planning and Environment Court Decisions at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/qld/QPEC/> shows that in the 11 years between 1999 and 2010 only 22 of the cases brought to the Court involved individual submitters. Two of these of these involved Ipswich City Council. This demonstrates the power of these disincentives.

Planning Departments are well aware that decisions approving Applications are extremely unlikely to be subject to the review of Planning and Environment Court. They are equally aware that decisions refusing Applications or imposing unwelcome conditions would certainly be appealed by the developer. A cost of \$80,000 to \$100,000 is a small price to pay to secure a multimillion dollar development.

6. WHY ARE DEVELOPMENTS ON FLOOD PRONE LAND APPROVED?

The assignment of reasons for the apparent ease with which residential developments are approved on flood prone land are bound to be somewhat speculative but some reasons seem to arise from the above description of the approval process namely

1. There is a strong financial incentive for Councils to allow and even encourage development on of low value land such as flood prone land.
2. Planning Departments are aware that decisions unfavourable to the developer are likely to be appealed, particularly in the case of large scale developments,
3. Planning Departments are aware that decisions favourable to the developer are not likely to be challenged.

But there also is the more subtle pro-development culture that develops in Councils and is reflected in Planning Department assessments. This can be clearly seen in the Ipswich City Council. The public statements of the elected members of the Council make it clear that development of all types is expedited. Item 1 in Attachment 4 reflects the general tenor of statements by senior Councillors about planning and development while Item 2 in Attachment 4 reflects a general view about Ipswich City Council among people in the development industry.

The impact of this pro-development view of the elected Councillors can be readily seen in the regular Newsletters published by Planning Department at the website

http://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/business/planning/planning_news/.

Ipswich City Council is not unique in having this type of strong pro- development culture it can be seen in many LGAs, particularly those outside the Metropolitan Area.

Subject: Ipswich Rivers Flood Study

From: "Reference Infoserv" [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 9 Feb 2011 10:01:54 +1000

To: [REDACTED]

Hi Ken

I have contacted the relevant department in council which has been very busy since the flood and have just been informed that the Ipswich River Flood Study is not able to be released.

Regards

Margaret

Reference Librarian

Information Services Delivery Team

Ipswich Library and Information Service

IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Reference Infoserv **Sent:** Sun 23/01/2011 9:14 AM **To:** [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Ask a Librarian Request

Hi Ken

Thanks for your enquiry. I have checked the library catalogue and we don't have a copy of this report. I will contact another department in council tomorrow when they open to see if it is available there. I will let you know once I find out.

Regards

Margaret

Reference Librarian

Information Services Delivery Team

Ipswich Library and Information Service

IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat 22/01/2011 12:51 PM

To: Reference Infoserv

Subject: Ask a Librarian Request

Name: KEN ALDERTON

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Question: I am seeking a copy of a report produced for Ipswich City Council in either 1999 or 2000 by consultants Sinclair Knight Merz entitled "Ipswich Rivers Flood Study". Can you please advise me on where I might be able to see a copy. Thanks

Type of Enquiry: General

ATTACHMENT 2
ESTIMATES OF DAMAGE and Q100 LEVEL

EXTRACT FROM HANSARD

Tuesday, 8 February 2011

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

60

Date Tuesday, 8 February 2011

Page 60

Questioner

Source House

Proof No

Responder

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (6.28 pm)—On behalf of the people of Blair, I thank the Prime Minister for the condolence motion and extend my deepest sympathy and heartfelt sorrow to the people of Queensland and to people across the country for the loss they have sustained in lives, in property and in personal possessions, particularly the cherished mementos that they have lost. Our hearts go out to the people of the Lockyer Valley adjacent to the electorate of Blair and to the people of Toowoomba.

The measure of any community is found not in times of comfort and ease but in times of challenge and controversy. War and natural disasters bring out the best in humanity—and, regrettably, the worst. The virtues and the vices are very obvious, open and apparent at times of crises. The floods in South-East Queensland overwhelmed communities and councils. Lives were lost. People were injured. Families damaged psychologically and farms were destroyed. Schools were ruined. Clubs were obliterated. Roads and bridges were trashed. The damage to the lives of the people of Blair is as raw as the landscape around the Lockyer Creek, the Brisbane River and the Bremer River.

If you were to go to my electorate, you would think it was a war zone. There are people there who are living in caravans on river banks and creek banks, and they look like they are traumatised—because they are. They have not started the clean-up—you would think that the flood waters had receded 12 hours previously. It is the same for my friend the member for Oxley. The people of Goodna have sustained horrendous damage to their communities. Their CBD of Goodna in suburban Ipswich has been trashed, and the member for Oxley and his family have endured tremendous loss of possessions and of mementos and artefacts of many years of loyal service not just to his constituency but also to the party and to the people of Queensland. My heartfelt sorrow goes out to the member for Oxley, my good friend, and his wonderful wife, Margie, and their family.

I thank the ADF, particularly the RAAF base at Amberley, for the work they did during the flood. The RAAF base at Amberley is a cherished institution and icon for the people of Ipswich. I thank the Queensland

Police Service. I thank the City of Ipswich Council—the mayor, Paul Pisasale, and the councillors. I also thank the mayor of the Somerset region in Blair, Graeme Lehmann, and the councillors. I thank the Salvos, who are an ever-present lifeline. I thank the churches, the clubs and the trade unions, who showed just how important the trade union movement is to the people of South-East Queensland. I thank the businesses, the Ipswich Business Enterprise Centre, the chamber of commerce in Ipswich and the Somerset Region Business Alliance for their wonderful support, particularly to the people of Blair.

I represent most of the city of Ipswich and all of the Somerset region—the Brisbane Valley and old Kilcoy shire. I have the Somerset Dam and the Wivenhoe Dam in my electorate. The floods in South-East Queensland were worse for the people of the Brisbane Valley—far higher in terms of the levels of floods and the damage that was done—than was the 1974 flood. The people of Ipswich suffered far worse. In 1974, there were 74,000 people living in Ipswich, and 1,500 homes were inundated. In 2011, there are 170,000 people living in Ipswich, and 3,000 homes have been inundated and hundreds of businesses destroyed. In the Somerset region, 470 properties have been inundated. Over 700 streets in Ipswich were inundated with water. For the people of the upper Somerset the flood continues. Bridges are gone. Dozens and dozens of people are living in circumstances where they need choppers to bring in food and household possessions up at Mount Stanley and other places—there are dozens and dozens of people.

I particularly thank David Greenwood and River 94.9, the local radio station that around the clock served the people of Ipswich, the Brisbane Valley, Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley. It is by far the most listened to radio station, where you have David, Moffy, Goldie, Dave and Tania—these are names that people across the South-East Queensland area know—and they did a fantastic job, sleeping at the radio station because they were cut off, as all the parts of my electorate were. Country towns and suburbs in Ipswich were cut off by water. There were 1,500 people staying in evacuation centres in Ipswich, and there were hundreds and hundreds in places like Lowood, Fernvale, Kilcoy and Toogoolawah.



6000 HOUSES IN FLOODZONE Residents urged to be ready for flood threat

557 words
27 October 2010
The Queensland Times
APNQUT
Main
1
English
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Prepare for the worst NOW, warns SES

NATURAL disaster experts say floods from a predicted cyclone in the upcoming storm season could affect 6000 homes in the Ipswich area.

That's six times more homes than were inundated during the notorious floods in January 1974.

With weather forecasters predicting a weather event similar to the 74 floods, authorities say now is the time for people to prepare. The State Emergency Service (SES) says residents have to take steps themselves rather than wait for rescue crews to help them.

The Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) met yesterday at SES headquarters to assess the city's flood readiness. The LDMG is made up of natural disaster experts from groups including the council, ambulance, police, fire service and the State Government.

LDMG deputy chairman Trevor Nardi said that in 1974 just over 1000 properties were affected. Now it could be 6000. Cr Nardi said flood monitors were being tested, alerts refined and Ipswich Showgrounds investigated as an emergency assembly point.

Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) regional director Eddie Bennet said there was "a big chance of the similar weather event to the 74 floods". "The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) is forecasting severe storms and tropical cyclones," Mr Bennet said. "Some of the weather websites are predicting seven or more cyclones but the bureau is saying six, with one crossing the coast in the south east. "So there's more storms, that means more rain and that means more flooding. There are a lot of parallels with the 74 floods."

SES Ipswich controller Are van den Ende said some people were already taking steps to get ready for flooding.

"We've had a large number of requests for sandbags," Mr van den Ende said. "We've been giving out 20 a day so the 800 stacked up the back is decreasing all the time." He was also looking at inflatable sandbags for elderly people.

He said people should realise the SES was there to rescue people, not perform tasks such as moving furniture out of flooded homes. "The SES will be busy taking care of people; they won't be able to do things like move furniture," he said.

"The focus is on lives not furniture."

He said people had to be prepared to move if need be and take into account items such as medication and pets and making sure cars were moved to higher ground. "People should have a plan of where they are going to move to if they are in inundated areas," he said. "We've got to get people to think about it. It's not the sort of thing people think about every day.

"They have to decide: do I stay, do I go, when I go, do I take my furniture?"

Meanwhile, the third trial of Queensland's new emergency alert system was conducted at Esk on Monday night.

The \$15 million telephone-based emergency system alerts all residents who have a billing address in an affected area.

BE PREPARED

Step 1: Prepare your household emergency plan

Step 2: Prepare an emergency kit and evacuation kit

Step 3: Prepare your home

Step 4: Tune into warnings on the radio



Cr Tully defends law

429 words

28 October 2010

The Queensland Times

APNQUT

Main

5

English

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Council refutes claims it allowed building on flood land

COUNCILLOR Paul Tully says it is a misconception that the council has allowed houses to be built in areas worst affected by the 1974 floods.

The council planning boss' defence came after fellow councillor Trevor Nardi said 6000 Ipswich homes would be affected by a repeat of the notorious '74 floods. That compared with 1000 homes inundated in 1974, leading to claims by QT website readers that meant council had allowed building on flood-prone land.

Cr Tully refuted those claims, saying the council had not permitted subdivision or development of the worst flooding areas since 2002. "Our standard is Q100, which is the state standard for development," Cr Tully said. "1974 was about a 1 in 100 flood, which means there is a one per cent chance of it happening in any given year. It could happen next month but it might not happen for another 200 years.

"If you have a block of land under Q100 you can't subdivide but you can build one house on the block. That's the same whether the block is 600sq m or 6000sq m. "We allow that because we want to protect people's interests; preserving people's ownership rights.

"A lot of people saw the '74 floods and said the council had let people build on land that was flooded but those places are above the Q100 level.

"I think we're the toughest and the most reasonable at the same time. You can build one house on Q100 land and if it burns down you can rebuild but you can't subdivide. "We have people coming in all the time wanting to develop or sub-divide on Q100 flood areas and they are told they can't.

"There are a few places you could point to but they would have had pre-existing approvals."

Katie Peters said she and her husband Gavin bought their house in Sydney Street, Brassall knowing full- well it was in the Q100 zone. The house they bought five years ago backs on to the Bremer River but Ms Peters said she was willing to live with the flood risk. "When we bought it we were told the water came right over the road in 1974," she said.

"It worries me but if it happens, it happens. I wanted a place next to the river and I like the idea of having no neighbour at the back."

Document APNQUT0020101027e6as000rx



20 November 2010
The Queensland Times
APNQUT
Main
16
English
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Not quite right

PETER C of Bellbird Park is wrong in relation to his interpretation of Ipswich's development flood levels . After the 1974 flood, Ipswich City Council adopted a modest 1 in 20 flood level which was later increased to 1 in 100.

Land owners with approvals or planning development commitments under the earlier regime have been permitted to exercise their existing development rights.

The state-wide standard of 1 in 100 applies in Ipswich for residential developments subject to some very limited exceptions.

If Peter C would like to make an appointment at my office, I am more than happy to explain the rationale and detail of the city's flood regulation strategy.

CR PAUL TULLY Goodna

ATTACHMENT 3
MAPS

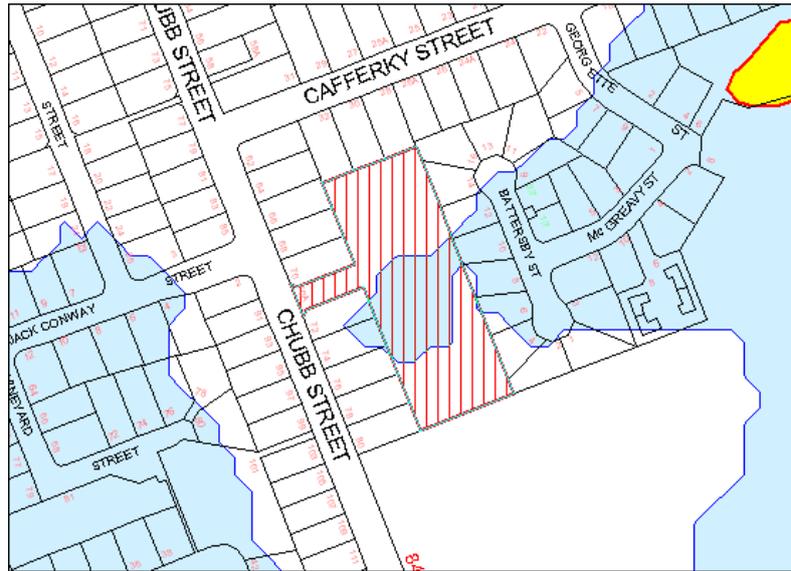


Figure 1

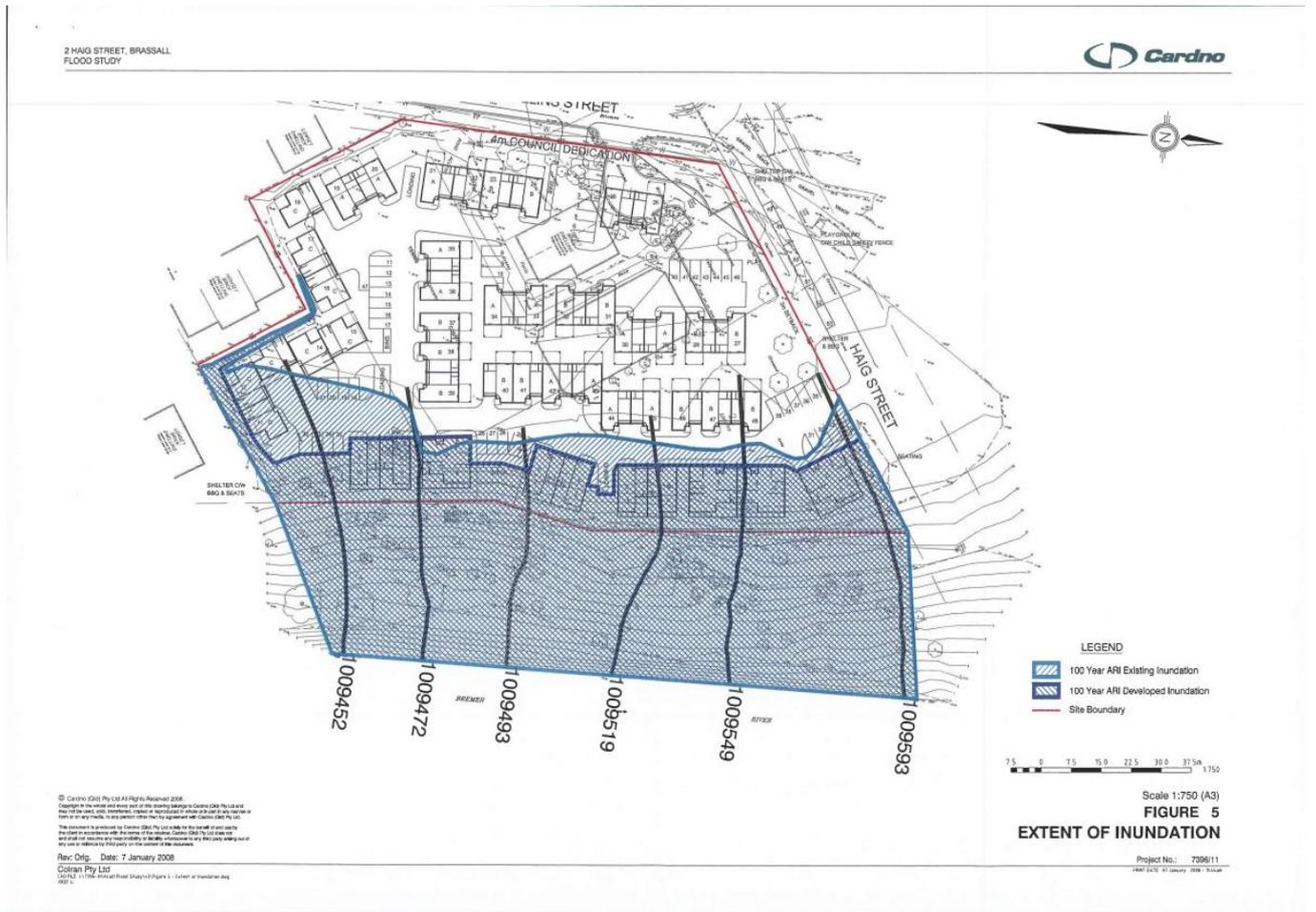


Figure 2

ATTACHMENT 4
PRESS STATEMENTS - DEVELOPMENT

ITEM 1

Some councils around Australia have built a reputation for fast-tracking good developments

31 July 2010

The Gold Coast Bulletin

GCBULL

B - Main

44

English

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(EXTRACT)

Ipswich City Council

A COUNCIL united in its pro-development stance is one of Ipswich City Council's secrets to success according to its decision-makers. Councillor Paul Tully said all the councillors were behind good development, which filtered down to the attitude of its planning staff.

"Properly prepared developments are processed fast," he said. "We encourage officers to deal with approvals quickly and councillors do too. "We work on the basis of how we can say yes to projects instead of how we can say no."

Cr Tully said large developments were usually approved within six months. He said Ipswich City Council had been on the front foot with planning infrastructure for future development. "Sometimes councils cannot approve development because the infrastructure is not in place to support it," he said. "But the infrastructure is already in place or planned here ready for things to move ahead."

Mayor Paul Pisasale said the planning and economic development staff had a reputation for telling developers what was needed up-front, instead of dragging out the process. Its staff even find land for developers.

ITEM 2

Noel gets PIP and off to Ipswich

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(EXTRACT)

Mr Grummitt, one of the city's longest-serving town planners, says high council charges are killing the Coast's economy and developers are now abandoning the city for Ipswich. He says that in Ipswich town planning reports need be only 30 pages long, while they need to run up to 140 pages on the Gold Coast.

He also says Ipswich council charges are a fraction of the cost of those on the Gold Coast.

He said the different charge regimes meant an industrial warehouse costing \$1.2 million to build on the Coast would cost only \$200,000 in Ipswich.

"My Gold Coast clients have been moving their projects to Ipswich for more than 12 months, so it made sense to follow the work," he said.

"I won't close my Southport office - but there is definitely more work in Ipswich.

The council processes there are much easier - it is cheaper and faster to develop."

Gold Coast Mayor Ron Clarke said it would only be a matter of time before Ipswich increased its charges.

"All councils have to introduce a PIP (Priority Infrastructure Plan) charge system which increases the fees," he said. "Ipswich will have to do it sooner or later."

Ipswich Mayor Paul Pisasale said he did not want to 'bag' the Gold Coast but said his council's charges were more realistic.