

Note

This statement has been redacted to remove certain personal information and information that is not relevant to the land planning terms of reference.

<i>Name of Witness</i>	Paul REES
<i>Date of Birth</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Address and contact details</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Occupation</i>	Community Relations Manager
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Det Insp Mark Ainsworth
<i>Date taken</i>	24/8/11

Paul REES states,;

1. I am a married man, [REDACTED] years of age and I reside with my wife at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] West End. My wife and I purchased this unit in March, 2005. The unit block I reside in is known as the 'Regatta Apartments' and consists of 59 units made up of 5 two story townhouses and 54 units in a six story tower block. The complex is home to about 120 people ranging in ages from one to eighty. The residents consist of professionals, tradespeople and retired people and also a mixture of students and children. I would say that our unit occupiers have a strong sense of community ethic, an active body corporate and conduct regular social events to strengthen our sense of community. This sense of community was vital during the recent flood events and certainly enhanced our preparation, recovery and coping with the inconvenience of the floods. Currently I am the Chair of the Body Corporate of the Regatta Apartments.
2. The 'Regatta Apartments' are situated on the corner of Duncan and Kurilpa Streets, West End and were constructed about 8 years ago. It was the first of new apartment buildings in the old industrial area in the Riverside precinct and falls within the Brisbane City Council jurisdiction.

Witness Signature [REDACTED]
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Signature of officer

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3. The complex is bounded by Riverside to the west and is located a very short distance from the Brisbane River. The area consists of other residential blocks, industry of varying sorts, park lands and of course the Brisbane River. The area around 'Regatta Apartments' is zoned as Industry going to mixed use medium density residential. Maximum construction height in the area is supposed to be 7 storeys however Council has recently approved buildings up to 12 storeys. The Brisbane City Council is planning on an extra 25 000 residents moving into the area.

4. On purchasing our unit, my wife and I used Paul Bone Solicitors based in Cooroy to do our conveyancing. I have no recollection of what advice was provided in relation to flood issues for the property. At the time of the 1974 floods, my wife resided on Coronation Drive and she was well aware of the potential of flooding in our area. In saying that, we were also unsure about the level of protection the Wivenhoe Dam would provide for us, but we always recognised the possibility of flooding to our area.

5. On the morning of 12 January, 2011, the basement carpark of the 'Regatta Apartments' flooded. On 13 January, 2011 small parts of the courtyard and ground floor balconies flooded, this occurred at flood peak on Wednesday evening and went to a height of less than one inch below the ground floor apartment level. The ground floor apartments are raised approximately one-and-a-half metres off the ground towards the river end and under one metre off ground level on the opposite side of the complex.

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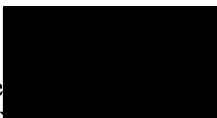
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As a result of the flooding the cost to repair damage to the common property (not including personal air-conditioners) was approximately \$120 000.

6. Flooding to the 'Regatta Apartments' occurred as the river level rose. The water from the river came up along our street then commenced entering the basement car park. Continuing rising of the river caused the flood water to totally submerge the basement car park then rose until it reached the balconies on the ground floor apartments and the courtyard at the rear of the building.

7. As previously mentioned the sense of community we have built at the 'Regatta Apartments' played a significant role in the preparation, clean up and coping with the flood. In the lead up to the flood we were able to remove all but two cars from the basement car parks and most belongings from basement lock-ups. Most ground floor furniture and possessions were removed either off site or to the upper floors of the complex. As early predictions put the possible flood peak at 2 metres above the 1974 flood level, some high value items were also moved from the first floor units. This massive task was completed by the affected unit owners and volunteers from elsewhere within the complex. Several residents relocated voluntarily to friends and family while others remained.

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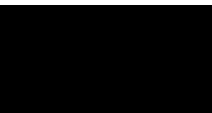
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8. As a result of the flood significant damage was caused including damage to the electrics located in the basement (lights, exhaust fans, security system, gate motors), the air-conditioning units servicing the bottom three floors of the complex and the town houses, the two cars that were submerged, the complex's two lifts, destruction of the security system. We were without power from Wednesday 13 January, 2011 to Saturday 16 January, 2011.

9. In considering the damage the 'Regatta Apartments' have suffered, I would say that we have come out of the floods in much better shape than a lot of other apartments in the area. I consider that the following points have significantly contributed to this;

- Power boards for the complex are located on the ground floor rather than in the basement.
- A single storey basement car park rather than a multi-storey car park as in some other complexes (these proved both difficult and dangerous to pump out and clean).
- Cohesive community spirit among the resident population. Most residents chipped into help clean up and assist fellow residents.
- Presence of trades people in the residential community which meant access to equipment to pump out the basement and to do the initial clean of the car park, and the skills to organise work crews to work safely.
- Our diversity among the complex's residents was a big advantage as well as the dedicated, committed and capable resident managers.

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10. Under the Brisbane City Council's South Brisbane-West End Neighbourhood plan, an extra 25000 residents and 55000 workers are to be accommodated in this area. This would cause utter chaos when considering the attempts to evacuate and resettle people during the flood and immediately after until it was safe to return. With the current population in this area, both residential and workers, it was chaotic when all were trying to get out of the area on the Tuesday morning as the river rose. The area should be redeveloped, but this redevelopment done at much lower densities than are currently planned.

I believe that the worst flooding was not on the riverfront (apart from the river homes at Flow and Leftbank apartments) but in the area half way back to Montague Road. I believe that these low-lying areas are not suitable for redevelopment and should be left as open space. There is already a lack of open space areas in the vicinity.

11. The main recreational space in the region is Riverside Parkland which during the flood suffered severe damage or destruction to recreational infrastructure. The concrete walkway on the river edge has been damaged in several places.

Recommendations:

12. I have a number of recommendations that I believe would be worthwhile considering, these being;

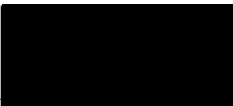
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- A freeze on development in the area until a new planning scheme and building guidelines that reflect the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry findings and recommendations are in place.
- Walls or levees at individual complexes to be built to allow rapid sandbagging/infill of basement entrances to prevent flooding.
- Power boards on new and existing developments to be on the ground floor and above, not in basements.
- No air-conditioner units in the basements of new developments.
- Single storey basements.
- New river homes and units to be built at a level higher than that of the Regatta Apartments ground floor.
- Smaller complexes – maximum of 6 storeys and 60 units.
- Riverside Drive to be closed and Riverside Park redeveloped in line with Councils pre-existing commitments. Riverside Drive is not a gazetted road and is overdue to be closed. The road surface was damaged during the floods and the bollards along the road and surrounding car parks have been either removed or damaged. I believe Council should close Riverside Drive permanently and this would also remove a significant safety hazard, being the risk of collision between cars swinging onto Riverside Drive from Kurilpa Street and bike riders using the bikeway in front of the regatta Apartments.
- Reduction in the planned population for the area as previously discussed.

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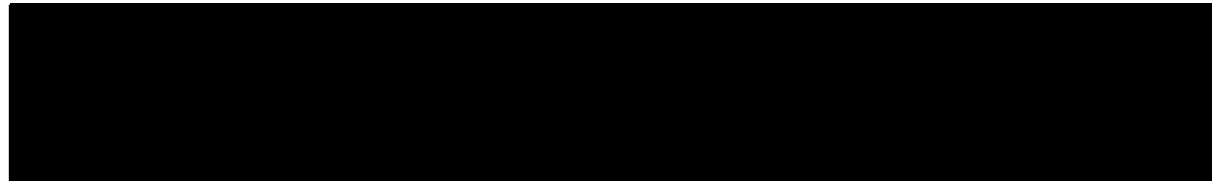


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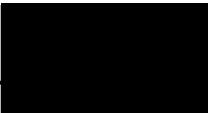
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- Parkland to be developed in the low-lying areas between Montague road and Riverside Drive.
- Encouragement of mixed ages and socio-economic backgrounds within individual complexes. This could be achieved by unit design and pricing.
- Our complex's resilience was due to design of the building, the size of the complex and the mix of residents. I believe lessons could be learnt from what the Regatta Apartments have achieved.

13.As a result of the 2011 floods the body corporate of the 'Regatta Apartments' is considering preparation of a flood plan and checklist. We are also looking into having waterproof doors on our electrical room and putting in a block wall on one side of our basement so we can dump sand to form a levee bank to stop water flooding in.



I now produce a copy of that submission.

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16. I have also taken a series of photographs of the floods that impacted the 'Regatta Apartments'.

I now produce a series of photographs depicting the flood events at the Regatta Apartments.

P.REES

Justices Act 1886

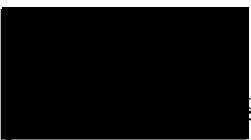
I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 26-08-11 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 8 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false.

..........Signature

Signed at BRISBANE this 26 day of August 2011

Witness Signature.
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