49 Pages in all

Public Submission; to the Queensland flood commission of inquiry tented and submit to the commission and the honorable justice Catherine Holmes, by the said:

Mr. Ronald. A. Backwell
[redacted] QLD
4670 30/2/11

Advised: [redacted]

There is no. river, creek, drain in Australia that will carry the one in 100 year flood year flood and in NO WAY likely to carry the 1 in 200 year flood.

In all concerned, admissions forthcoming merits suggestion framed a secured language oral or written it is very seriously stated and very true as the evidence of the resent floods tell us just that.
For the want if a better way of putting it I come to the cause of flooding and how to offer my education and noted findings on the matter over 65year out 70.
My findings tell me that, if you dig or dredge a river/creek/drain to adequacy to carry the flow of water, from seen heavy rains from what ever cause the, we see no flooding.
I intend to state my findings in all my findings the relative to flooding.

If all the rivers in Australia are dug or dredged to 10m this will lower the height of the flood, and allow all creeks and drains to work normally, if adequate flow and no back serge from the sea.
The rivers need to be dug or dredged in a straight line as one can , without curves or angles, or snaking, so the course of the water is be the shortest course to the sea. Keeping away from the recommend distances from the banks, walls and bridges for safety reasons.

In most cases, seen when we see dredging of a river or creek or drain it is noted the reason being for profit or gain in N.S.W, Queensland from the old days we seen the need for transport to go upstream to bring downstream logs to cut up timber or for the removal of sugar cane or other, at this time in the BURNETT RIVER for example:
This river has not been dredged for many years, as it use to before and as the HON cr MAYOR lorraine Pyefinch stated in her letter of the 3/2/11 to me. The only dredging that takes place is from the sea inlet to birth swing basin of the bulk sugar terminal wharf.

By the management by the Gladstone ports corporation for profits and have no interests in the city of Bundaberg or any safety factors of

shipping or boats or transport in the river or do they care? And it would be fair to say or do the governments or authority.

When money comes into it, the authority say no with no interests in saving life of things and as we find it was less costly to dig or dredge rivers, creeks or drains then the cost of the damage and loss of life by floods and if and when, we receive the 1 in 200 year flood,we find the authorities are not prepared for that flood seen,we will see it sooner than later I believe.

We know about the last 200 yrs but know not about the last 500 yrs not recorded that in councils and authorities.

As a person that has 8 university degree in perspective specifics that do not help me a lot in flooding authority I rely on my 60 yrs in small boats fishing at sea and rivers and creeks entering out and into the same at night and day times,in all sorts,many lives over a number of years fishing from the sea beaches rivers and creeks from the walls, banks, rocks over 65yr out of 70.

Noting the climate changes and photography same over the years and spending some years operating a dredge we found we did not have to move a lot because the local flooding from storms and heavy rains replaced the sand we took from the creek and rivers,as we took about 10 truck loads a day,and over the years dredging down to 10m one storm would replace what we took.

From the year 1966 my father and I built dwelling and we seen councils allow homes to be built in flood area in creeks, banks and low lying approved the subdivisions and home to be built. This went on in most places of Australia as we have witnessed by flooding well under the 1 in 100yr flood levels as we know it at this time.
My first time in a flood was in Coffs harbor 20k north I did purchase 3 acre lot down from a school and according to locals did not flood. But the back of the block was wet.
Sometime later in 1988 I applied for application to build some 100 imperial home,and the plan was to build it up 2m off the ground,but I found from the Coffs harbour council. That in 1988 they had completed a flood mapping surveyor and before I could build I had to have a surveyors report,to whom placed a peg in a tree,to show the in 100 yr flood level,and I had to build 750mm above that, so I built 1m above that,at the time of putting in the footings and just after 4hr I had poured the concrete.

We received 20" rain and 9" the next 3 days my vehicles was washed down to the large number of bricks and stopped, the water came up to above the caravan floor,so i got onto my back hoe and put all things onto the footpath til the next bloke small drain,carried the water way in 3 days time.
Sometime later the council put in a large road bridge and dug out the next lot of land 200 feet wide and down to 10m deep.

The locals that lived in this place had never seen this before and some have lived all there lives in this one place,so the next time we got 20" of rain in 2 days and flooded out Coffs harbour. We were found we were not effected by flooding,because of the new drainage but the hi-way behind found that the main roads engineers had not put adequate drainage under the high-way and it flooded even when it was above 3m above the swampy ground.

And we found that the Coffs harbour city council learnt something as well,as the city flooded 3to4 times in 12 yr the council had put roads into the hills and subdivisions and the drainage they put would not carry the flow of water,so the roads became the water cause and all ended up in town,and the creeks and drains also would carry the flow and we seen flooded again and again.

So as I say, built subdivisions and dwellings 1m above the 1 in 100 yr flood levels in Queensland. Dig or dredge all rivers 10m 30' down so the said will carry all flood waters.

Take away trees to did creeks to the needs on one side of the creek
STOP building homes on flood lands.
STOP building any buildings on likely flood lands.
STOP subdividing lands and building dwellings on the sea side of a road and the river side of a road to allow authorities and public access to same. This will safe lives and loss of increasing obvious financial destroying loss. From flooding and back surges from or bad planning by the authorities.

In the case of cities like Brisbane and Rockhampton or other towns or cities that have other rivers or dam waters that cause flooding on the basis that one river can not take the flow of waters.
Authorities and engineers look for a way to channel water by other causes go up stream to fresh water to a height so a new channel can be placed in.situ, that the outlet is higher then the high tide at the sea, in some cases this new channel may have gates to close off the flow of water in drought times.

This put in the mind, of the Murray river this river has the most recorded of all rivers . When it floods the use of wall build up to stop flooding and in the drought times you can walk across the river at low water. This I found in N.S.W and QLD all rivers sanded up and you can walk across them at low tide like the Elliott heads river and the Burnett in QLD and the Nambucca in N.S.W we find that most of all rivers the same and do have sand and gravel that could be sold to cover the costs of dredging.

When the rivers slow up, and become sanded up we find fish kills and if the river is deep no fish kills and that has been reported many times in all rivers and creeks.
So I think the government say no, We do not have the money we put sand bags on river banks to stop flooding. But if the Murray was dredged down to 10m the government would not need to buy back water rights because we would find enough water for all to use.

And for the government to say we will fix up the flooding back to the way it was before it flooded build back the way it was is just factitious feigning fixated nihilistic thinking behaviour when they do not try to improve things to include change to see it can not happen again improve the flow of water in the shortest way to lower the level of the height in the river creeks drains. As we have witnesses when we see the flooding waterways where 22m deep and 2 or 3 hundred wide and flowing at great speed to the sea, and when the drains in towns cities went down back to normal, we find the prepared drain was only 1m wide and 2m deep and the evidence was, not able to carry the flow of water that fell.

And we seen that in TV and in evidence so you do not have to take my word for it. I can not believe that engineers and authorities are so nihilistic in thinking it is bizarre and equally unfortunate for the person that lost life and belonging because of the said.

The rivers the bush are the same as it was before, just a lot more persons and building within and this thinking by authorities must change. Before it gets worst and repeats it self we see that in the world all over things do not stay the same and you must think down the road not what is in front of you. As presently seen, we just seen what took place in New Zealand, Christ Church. They did not expect that, and Brisbane and parts of that city did not expect the flood. But I did many yrs ago. But did not know when, and the same for the said 1 in 200 yr flood it is coming but when?

But we know this,no one in Australia is ready for it. Or do we have the appropriate mechanism in place, to carry the water or any consequences of that.

I imply the reasons for flooding that we have witnessed and say this: If you do not maintain, the flood carrying capacity of the rivers, creeks or drains YOU HAVE FLOODING!!

If you have no earthquake, cyclones or storm surge or others and the sea is normal, mild to calm the question may be asked will high tide. STOP the flow of flood waters going to the sea

ANSWER: It depends on the width, depth and the elevation of the river and the speed of the incoming tide. And the speed of the out going flood waters.
As in normal in coming tides the water is salt and water and not a lot of debris. And on the other hand the flood waters are salt with muddy and dirty water with debris and foreign bodies and very heavy. And if we say the incoming tide has the speed of five knots and the floods waters has the speed of 35 knots then the answer is NO.

The flood waters going out to sea will push its way out through the incoming tide and go out to two miles and as seen many times with all types of debris. When the river is deep the speed of the water is greater than if shallow . And coming into the river I find adjustment of speed needed than normal. But I would be found out to sea anyway I think I have lived this long because I believe in safety first.

I have pulled many bodies from the sea and rivers with my mates I have saved just as many lives also. And I would say it was the persons thinking and not understanding the waters, sea, and natural hazards within that area of associated risks in climate changes.

With no problems I could send a 100 pages but to keep it short I think is the best. I send of a copy of letters to you for your perusal one from the Bundaberg mayor 3/2/11, one from Stuart Fyfe advised but the honorable Stirling Hinchcliffe MP 14/2/11, one from the honorable Paul Neville MP and one from the honorable jack Dempsey MP and one from the office of the premier M. Weaver E.C

What I have noted is rivers like the Brisbane has not a lot of access to the river for dredge like the Brisbane ship to dredge. Because of all the buildings along the river I can not be widened. Because if so many bridges the big dredge can not go under the bridges. And this is one

reason building should not be built not the riverside of the road or on the riverside. As well as safety reason for flooding.

The Burnett river Bundaberg the dredging can be completed up to the Burnett river road bridge and the river can be widened from the needed spot from the ferry crossing. So more water can get to the sea sooner than later stopping the flooding lower the height of the flood so all town street waters can to the river as normal. Under that it is my submissions to say that the government and the councils and the authorities HAVE FAILED THEIR JUTY OF CARE.

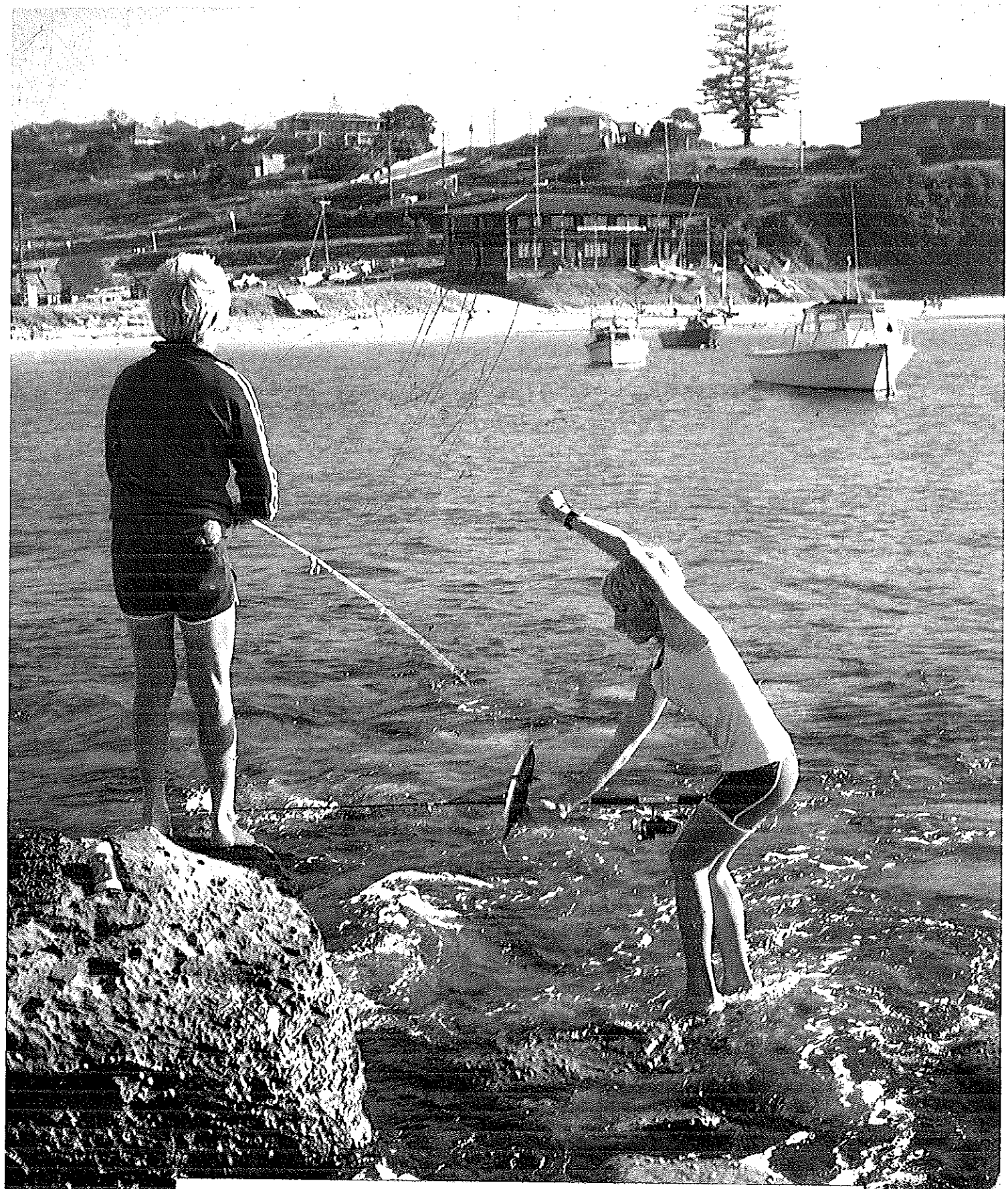
To all home and building owners. The living persons and workers in the place that was flooded or effected by flood because they the authorities did have knowledge that it has happened before and could happen again. They knew that the rail lines and the roads and some buildings can be effecting by flood and all authorities of the past knew of the said information for many years in some cases.

I hope that this may be some help to your inquires. Ron

Your sincerely,
R. A. Backwell

[redacted]

mott in Australia in APRIL if any meed to contact me; Ron



1990s

THIS IS A PHOTO OF THE BOAT RAMP AT TERRIGAL N.S.W the building and all the caravans at the back, and the fishing co, op was washed into the place of the boats .and where the boys are, the sea came across the football oval.behind the building and took the lot; never seem befor in 100 years befor;

all caused by a local bad s storm

just some of the places i use to take fish. the houses on the beach was taken by a very bad storm & Flood by the sea.

Pearl Beach with Lion Island near the mouth of the Hawkesbury River. Many big mulloway have been taken from this beach

Ron Backwell fishing with family members and friends

WAMBERAL TO FORRESTER'S BEACH

SMALL beaches alternating with rocky outcrops of a generally low nature make up this section of the coast.

In rough seas species such as snapper, bream and luderick can be caught from a variety of excellent sites.

To reach Forrester's Beach go down Crystal Street or Forrester's Beach Road, both of which branch off The Entrance Road. Although it's one of those beaches which are frequently overlooked in the search for fish, some good snapper are taken from Forrester's during and just after a big sea, particularly from the middle of the beach where a large bombora can be seen not far off-shore. The low rocks towards the north end of the beach are a worthwhile spot for groper and bream, and for bait there are plenty of red crabs to be found on them at low tide. Large mulloway are caught from the beach and it's not unusual to pick up a few good flathead.

A lagoon or pool in the southern corner of the beach is a wonerful luderick spot in a rough sea and fish can be taken there at various stages of the tide provided plenty of water is flowing over the low rocks and into the lagoon. The usual practice is to fish it from the beach, although sometimes it can be necessary to wade out to some boulders at the head of the pool towards low tide to reach the fish. Luderick are caught at times further along the beach close to some submerged rocks.

To the south of the lagoon, beyond an area of low rock is a point characterised by high boulders and a gutter on its southern side. This is Campbell's, a noted snapper venue where anglers cast well out to reach a clear bottom. The point and the surrounding rocks form a really good groper fishing location also and in a calm sea plenty of red crabs are found for bait on the low weed-covered areas.

Not much fishing goes on in the section beyond Campbell's where the rocks are pretty high, but the odd angler fishes for snapper or groper there — take a mate with you and a gaff, both are necessities.

Tailor fishermen up to their knees in water on Wamberal Beach

From this high ledge the rocks drop down to a gutter which is at the start of Spoon Bay. The gutter fishes well for luderick in the autumn and winter. Adjacent to the gutter is Spoon Bay, really more of a lagoon or pool behind the rocks where the water enters from a gap in front and as the tide advances, from over the rocks. Fished from the beach it can be a marvellous luderick spot in a big sea. However to fish there successfully under such a condition it's necessary to use a sidecast or threadline reel to cast the float the required distance.

Luderick are caught in this lagoon in rough seas by fishing the bottom and using a long trace.

Between Spoon Bay and Jewie Bay, the next one along, water pours over the rocks in a big sea and forms pools between the rocks and beach. Many good luderick are caught from the pools as the sea is moving towards high tide. Fished from the beach, the corner of Jewie Bay is another good luderick spot. It might seem an unusual way of fishing for this species but luderick are caught from the beaches in several areas on the Central Coast, usually close to rocks.

Bream, rock blackfish and trevally are amongst other fish caught at Spoon Bay. The rocks are one of the best places on the coast to collect cunjevoi. Vast expanses of it are exposed at low tide.

Jewie Bay is known as a mulloway, bream and tailor beach. Big mulloway are hooked there but very few are landed because of the rugged nature of the bottom. Heavy tackle is essential. It is sometimes a good beach for tailor, but like other venues it is often overlooked for this species.

The beach ends at the Wamberal rocks which are rather low and easily wiped out for fishing by any sort of a sea. Some reasonable fishing can be had from these rocks for species such as tailor, groper, rock blackfish, bream and luderick (which are best in the Jewie Bay corner).

Spoon Bay is reached via Crystal Street, Noorong Avenue and Spoon Bay Road.

ALL THE HOMES BUILT ON THE SAND HILL BEHIND WAS WASHED INTO THE SEA;
ALL the home where old, and built on the sea side of the road;

fish or mulies or by bobby corking. The rock is noted for mulloway but many of these are lost and heavy gear is needed there for jewfish. Most of the usual species are prevalent at this rock including rock blackfish, luderick, groper and bream. Abundant cabbage and greenweed grows on the rocks in the area.

The Skillion marks the end of the distance you can walk in that direction so if you plan to fish the south side of Terrigal you will have to retrace your steps to the parking area.

The rocks on the south side are all very low to the water and a bit of a lively sea makes them hard to fish. However they provide some good fishing and groper can be caught right along these rocks to North Avoca. The area is as good a place as any to catch red and green crabs, there's almost unlimited red weed and crevices for them.

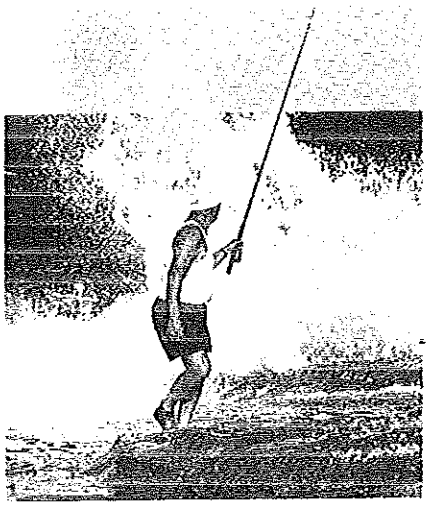
The Square Hole, recognisable by the large square rock protruding from its northern side, is one of the premier venues. It is sheltered in a strong nor-easter by the mass of The Skillion. Luderick is the predominant fish at the hole and the best months are from November to March. Cabbage leaf grows thickly in the vicinity and usually there's plenty of good quality stuff amongst it.

A little south of Square Hole a group of large rocks with a fishing hole in front of them are known as The Boulders, a fine place for bream both day and night, either fishing the bottom or using a small cork. A top place also for tailor in the morning or evening. The occasional snapper is taken when anglers are fishing there with a pilchard or garfish bait. Watch your step at these boulders if there is a swell running as many anglers have been knocked right off them by copping a wave in the chest.

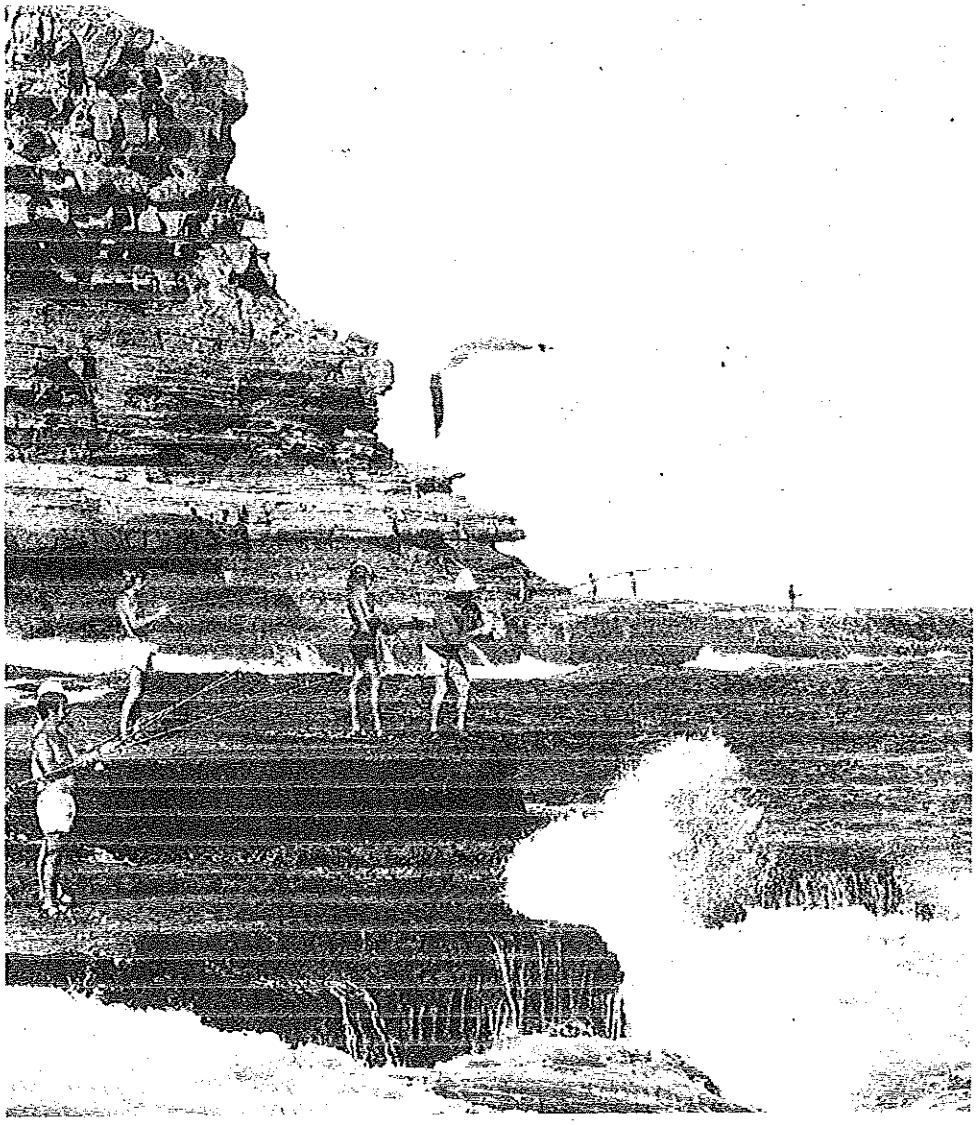
From the boulders on past a gulf there is little variety in the fishing apart from groper and rock blackfish until you arrive at Howard's. Usually someone will be fishing this flat area of rock for drummer. Some good catches of snapper are taken here each year as well as a few mulloway.

Beyond Howard's the rocks are accessible but not easy to fish from, so anyone wishing to progress will find it necessary to drive to North Avoca along Tramway Road.

Alf Aston with a bonito at the Skillion, Terrigal



Dennis Hawkins keeps a wary eye on the water at the Low Ledge at Terrigal



Bob Donkin is about to wash out a luderick at the south end of Terrigal, the Skillion forming a backdrop to the action

There are times when the fish can be felt following up the lure before grabbing it but frequently there are no preliminaries, just a whack and it's away.

Locations where I have taken mulloway on lures are Box Head, the rocks at both ends of Killcare or Putty Beach and Gerrin Point right on the boundary of Bouddi Marine Sanctuary.

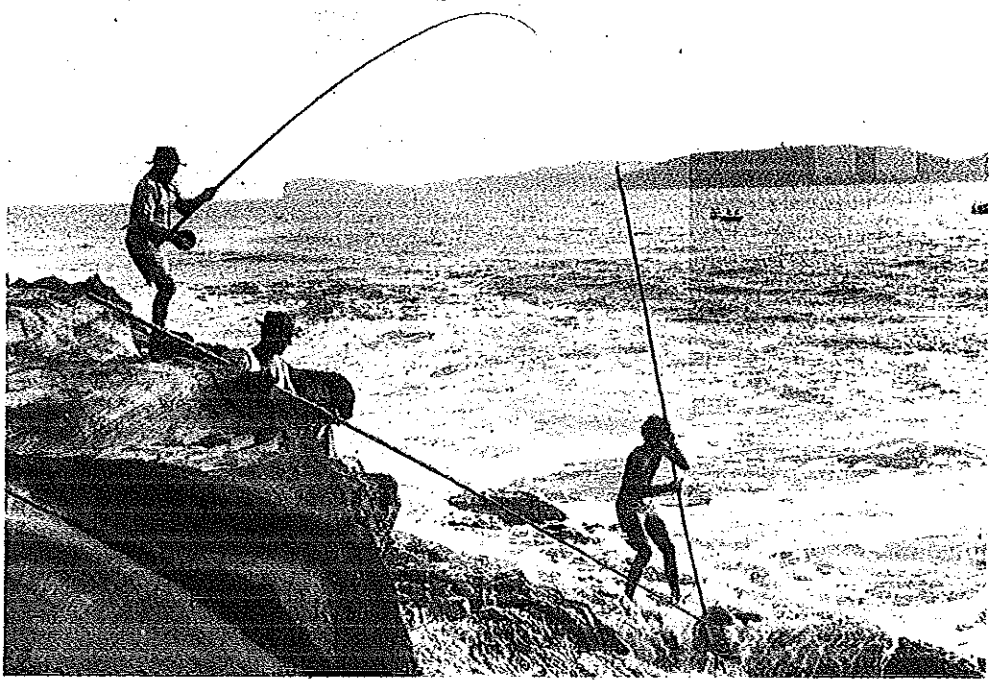
Box Head is the hottest mulloway spinning location and it has the distinction of being the most difficult to get to as it involves a long walk through sandstone country. Anglers shouldn't go there without a mate and a gaff and anyone who catches a mulloway in there needs to be in good physical shape to carry it out over the difficult terrain. For a start the fish will have to be carried up a steep cliff and then over at least 2 kilometres of undulating country.

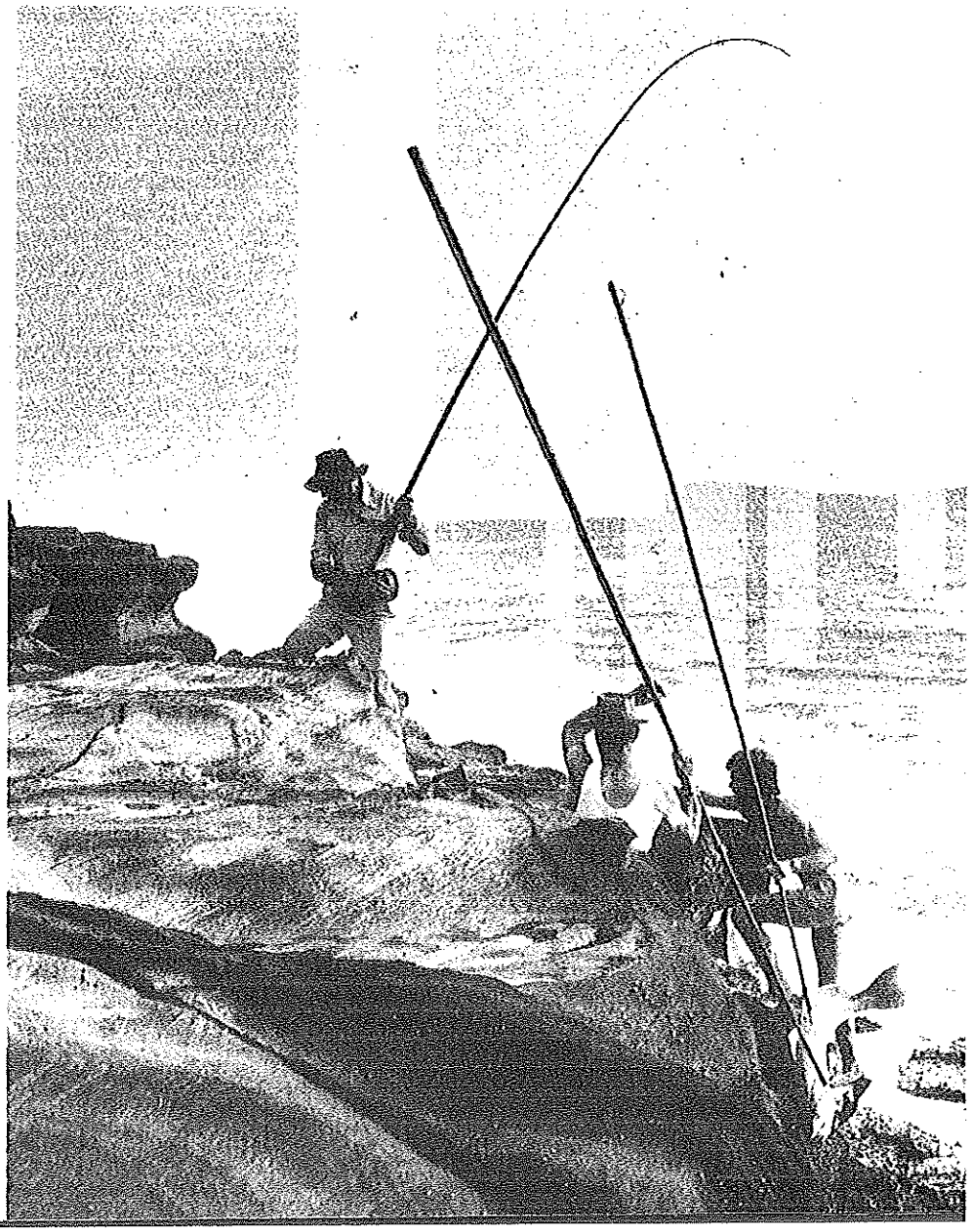
The rocks at either end of Killcare Beach are a much easier proposition. Vehicles can be driven relatively close to both spots and if a mulloway is hooked it's usually possible to work it along the rocks to the beach where it can be washed out without any of the risks associated with landing one on the rocks.

To reach Gerrin Point there's a walk of at least a kilometre along a track which leads around the headland from the beach. Here too the fish can be brought to the beach to be landed. A walk out with a big mulloway from here is relatively easy when compared to the trek out of Box Head.

In flood conditions mulloway are caught at Little Box Head and it's possible to hook them at several other places but those mentioned are the most likely spots to tangle with one on a lure.

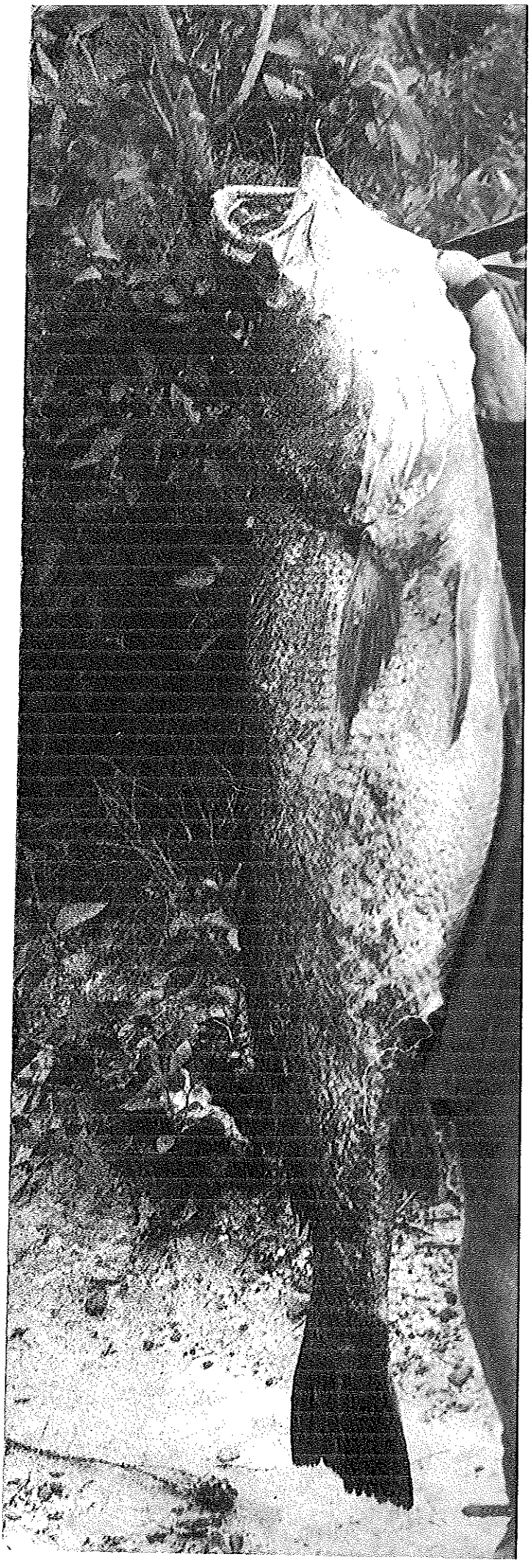
Many big mulloway hooked on lures are lost; lures pull out and some are cut off on rock and reef. I think that the mortality rate on fish hooked at the locations mentioned would be close to 50/50.





Mulloway action at Box Head. Gaffing the fish can be a tricky operation in a big sea. Bob Lund in the hat and Alan Whitehead combine to gaff this jewie for the author

just one of the fish taken by Ron Backwell ; in the 80s



1 of 5 fish taken that day;
Ron Backwells mate. helping to carry 2 miles up the hill to the car.

Queensland 500 A never seen a flood in 100 years this old house was damaged, and when we look for the cause of the flood ,we se the grass id higher than the road bridge, and when the flood went down; that was say 1200 mil in hight. we se that the creek is say 3 meters wide ,and 6" deep not able to carry the flow of water; again inadequacy planing by the Authority in this matter;

DAMAGE SEEN BY THE FLOOD TO THE OLD HOUSE:

Queensland;
ELLIOTT HEADS RIVER
INLET. BLOCKED OFF
By SAND,

inlet
<---------------
sea

runup River -------->

sea

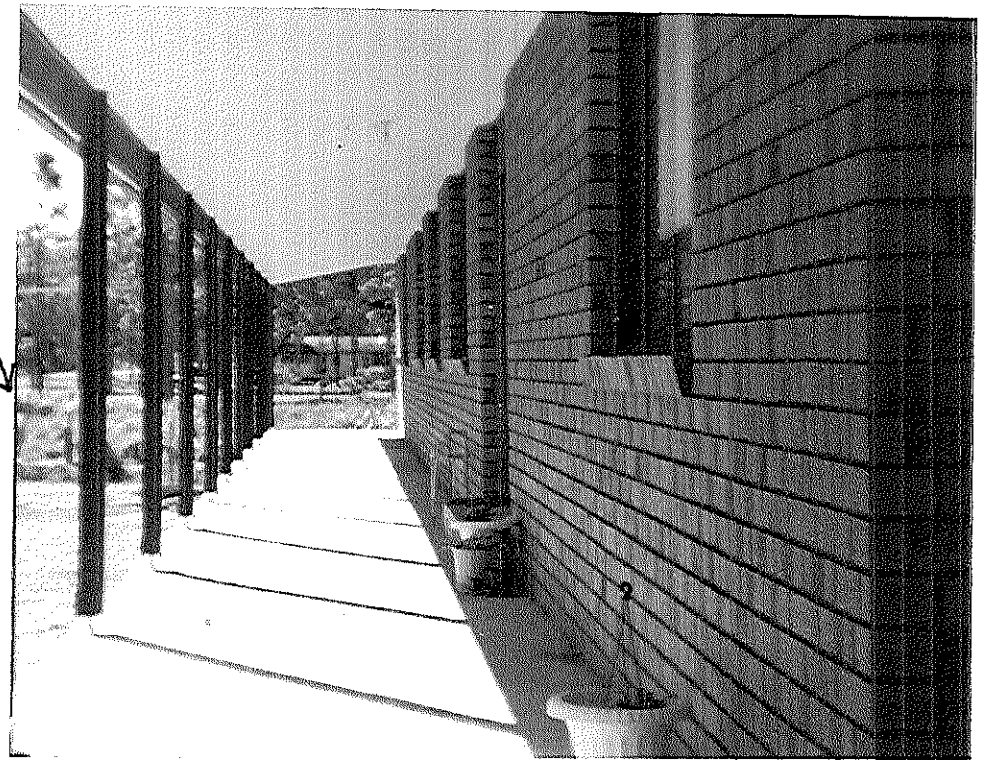
to go up river->

River ------>

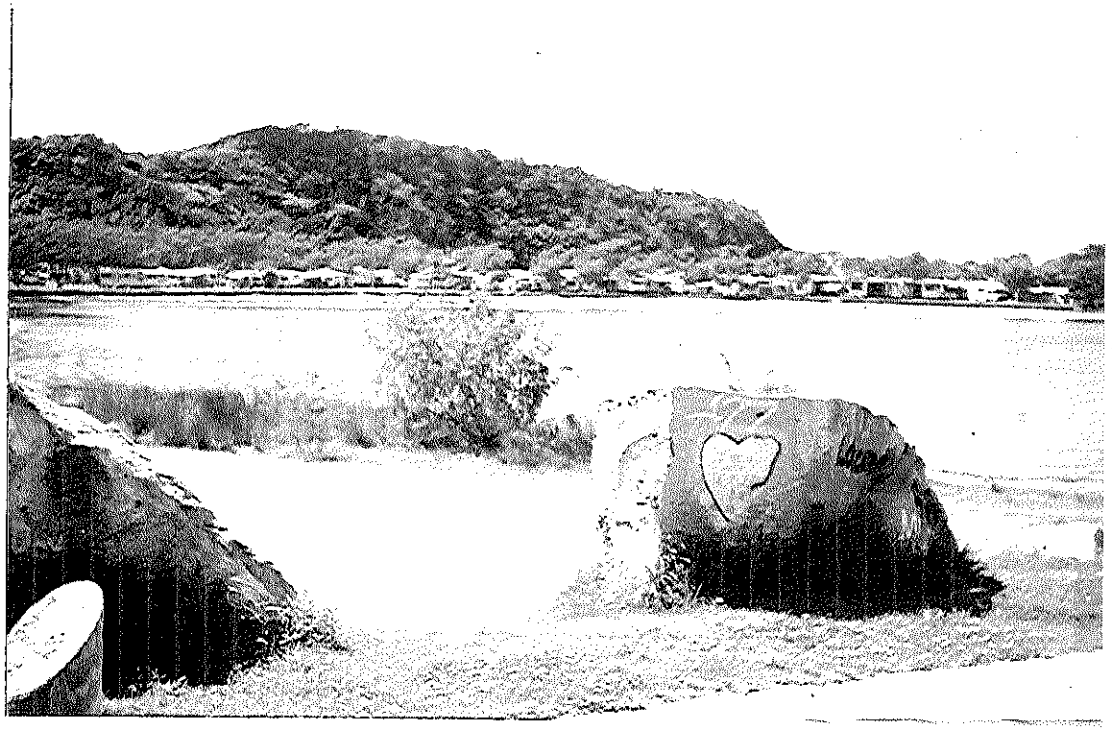
the sea at BARGARA QUEENSLAND FROM JUST A BAD STORM allmost took some dwellings on the sea side of a Road. the Photo was taken after the STORM. and the Tide was out;
NO TSUNAMI HEAR OR CYCLONE hear. just a storm;

where this photo was taken is the 200 wide drain
by 10 meters deep. and in say 22 years no more floods;

200FT Drain
10 meters Deep



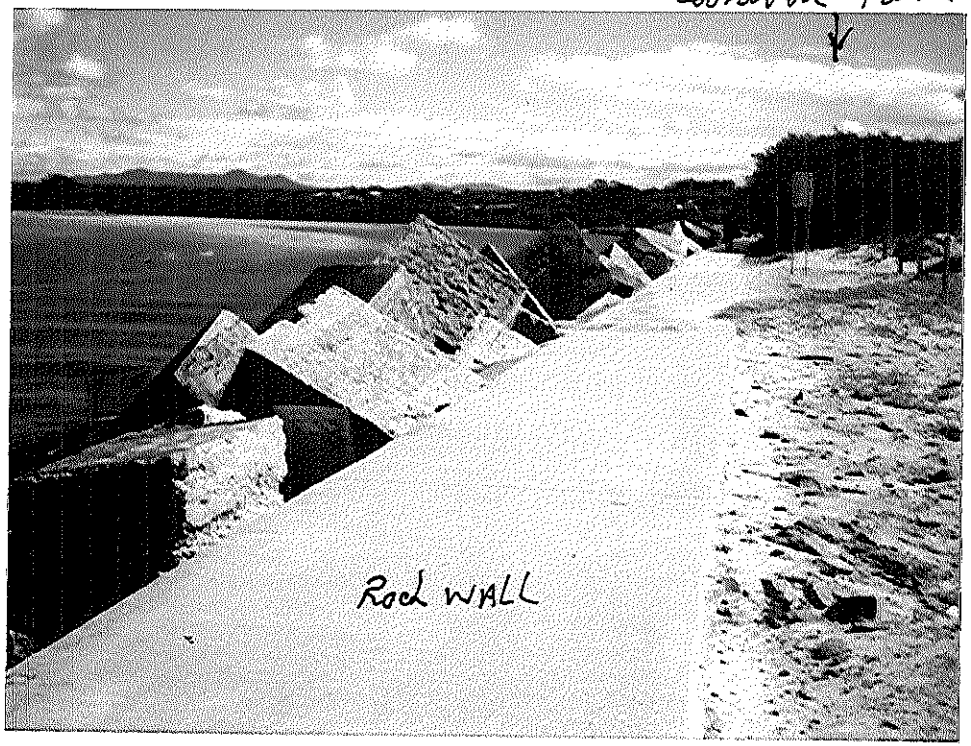
the NAMBUCCA HEADS N.S.W COUNCIL CARAVAN PARK BECAUSE OF THE SAND BUILD UP IN THE ENTRANCE A STORM SERGE OF WATER FROM A STORM, FLOODED AND DAMAGED ALL CARAVANS, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALK WALL. BUILT FOR SAFTY RESONS, ? ? ?



ALL YOU SEE IN THE PHOTOS WHERE DAMAGED BY A STORM SERGE NO TSUNAMI HEAR. BUT CAN HAPPEN:

PHOTOS TAKEN BEFOR STORM DAMAGE:

Caravan Park



SAND

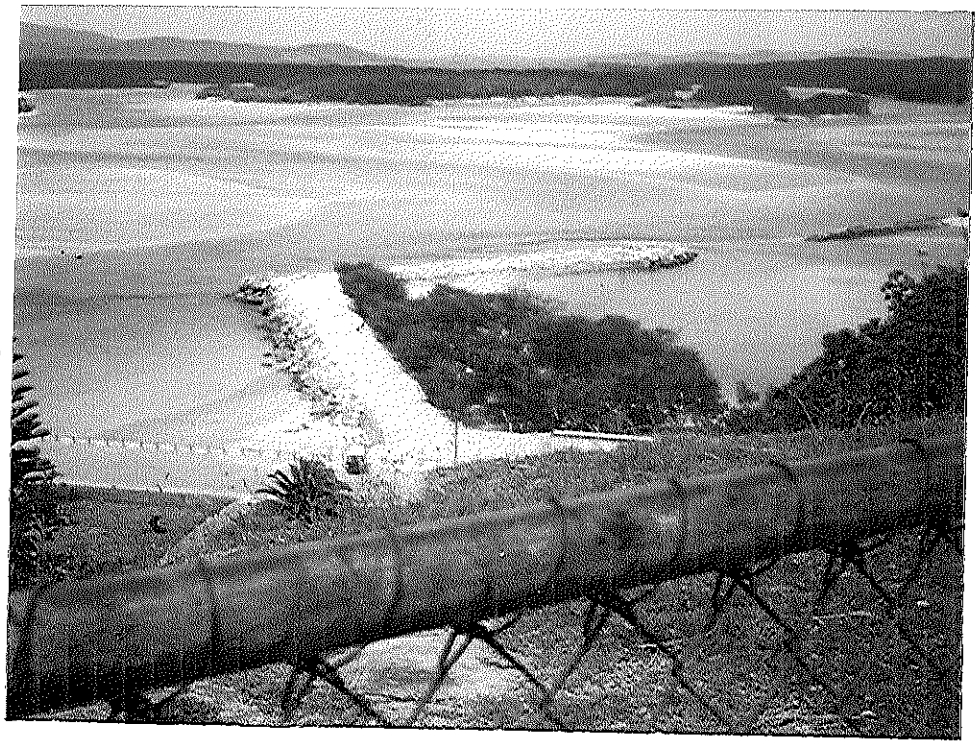
C. Park

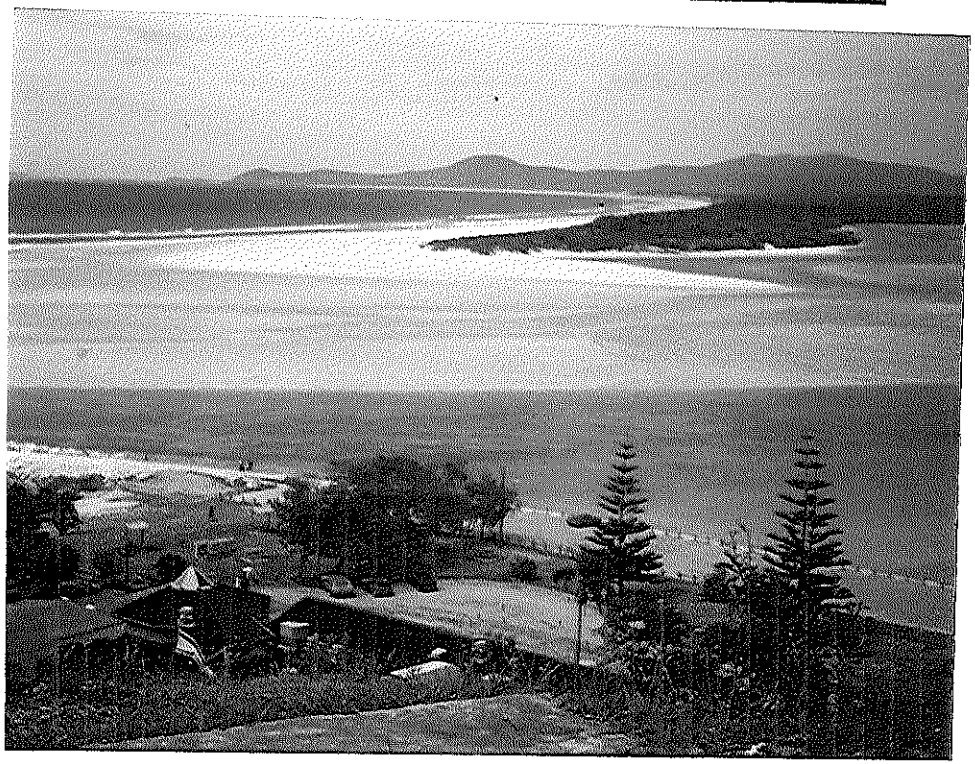
NAMBUCCA HEADS RIVER SANDED UP, IN MANY PLACES;

Caravan Park that was swamped by the sea water;
came over the rocky wall above;

THERE was NO TSUNAMI NEAR JUST TIDAL WAVES IN SERIES BY THE STORM.

2 MEN walking across River AT LOW TIDE with Boards





see just HOW SANDED up the River is Nambucca River N.S.W

(all the Rivers in Queensland are somewhat like this

Many Fish Kills in this River

Office of the Premier

For reply please quote: *MC/PR – TF/11/459 & TF/11/780 – DOC/11/6114*

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31 JAN 2011

Mr Ron Backwell
[redacted]

Dear Mr Backwell

Thank you for your letters of 30 December 2010 and 4 January 2011 concerning stricter planning controls to avoid damage to homes during floods. I have been requested to reply to you on the Premier's behalf.

The contents of your correspondence have been noted.

This matter has been referred to the Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe MP, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning for his consideration and direct reply to you.

Again, thank you for bringing your views on this matter to the Premier's attention.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

M Weaver
Director
Executive Correspondence

COPY

Queensland Government

Hon Stirling Hinchliffe MP
Member for Stafford

Queensland Government

Minister for Infrastructure and Planning

Our ref: MC11/536

14 FEB 2011

Mr Ron Backwell
[redacted]

COPY

Dear Mr Backwell

Thank you for your letter of 30 December 2010 and 4 January 2011 to the Premier about the recent unprecedented weather events which have impacted the Queensland community, infrastructure and economy. The Premier has forwarded your correspondence to the Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe MP, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning. The Minister has asked that I respond on his behalf.

You may be aware, the Premier the Honourable Anna Bligh MP announced a Statewide independent Commission of Inquiry on 17 January this year to forensically examine Queensland's unprecedented flood disaster.

The Commission, which has broad powers under the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950*, will take public submissions from across Queensland and I encourage you to raise your concerns and ideas through this inquiry, so that they are included in the informed and robust considerations of the Commission.

You may also be aware, Queensland has a planning and building framework that addresses many land use issues (including flooding) which influence where, how and if development occurs. This framework seeks to balance these issues to ensure that Queensland communities are able to develop and grow in an ecologically sustainable way. The Commission of Inquiry may include consideration of these matters and particularly their contribution to the flooding events and the immediate response.

The Commission's considerations are also likely to include the activities of Local Governments in the planning and development sphere and decisions of the Coordinator-General in relation to dam construction and management among other matters.

The Commission's Terms of Reference are attached for your information and further information can also be accessed at www.floodcommission.qld.gov.au.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Principal Advisor

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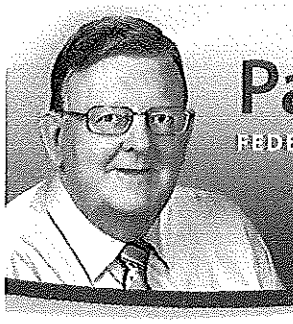
ABN 65 959 415 158

Terms of Reference removed here



Paul Neville MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR HINKLER

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January 5, 2011

COPY

Mr R Backwell

[redacted]

Dear Mr Backwell

Thank you for sending me copies of the correspondence you sent to the Premier and Prime Minister regarding flood amelioration activities.

The ideas you raised are already being generally discussed by affected Councils – most recently Rockhampton Regional Council – in terms of flood-prone land being resumed by Council and used for non-housing purposes ie parks and sporting fields. Of course, this implies adequate compensation and/or relocation.

I think this is an idea worthy of further discussion as it would prevent the destruction of homes and greatly reduce the costs involved in endlessly rehabilitating land and facilities affected by flooding.

Your idea about dredging rivers is also worthy of further consideration, and I'll take your thoughts on board but it is expensive and the State Governments tend to concentrate around posts. I, for one, would like to see work done on the mouth of the Elliott River which is silting up. I have had several Ministers and Shadow Ministers to see it. I may well raise it during the future meetings regarding the current flood crisis.

Thanks again for writing to me Mr Backwell.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Paul Neville
Federal Member for Hinkler

JACK DEMPSEY MP

State Member for Bundaberg

Shadow Minister for the Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change
Shadow Minister for Sport & Recreation

COPY

January 18, 2010

Mr Ron A Backwell
[redacted]

Dear Ron

Thank you for your letter to me in relation to your concerns regarding the recent flooding in Queensland.

I have noted your comments and will certainly bring them to the attention of my colleagues at our Shadow Cabinet meeting where we will be discussing what can be done in relation to flood mitigation in the future and how communities have been affected.

I always appreciate the time and effort that members of the community take in bringing important matters to my attention to help us work to improve Queensland's future.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

Jack Dempsey MP

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

BUNDABERG
REGIONAL COUNCIL

COPY

3 February 2011

Cr Lorraine Pyefinch

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Mr Ron A Blackwell
[redacted]

Dear Mr Blackwell

Thank you for your informative letter and comments about river management and flooding.

In response to your recommendations, I would like to offer the following comments.

FLOOD LEVELS:

In 2003, the State Government introduced State Planning Policy (SPP) 1/03 – Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide. I have attached a copy for your information.

I have also attached an extract from The Queensland Development Code. This document lists all expected Building Standards (as defined by the Building Codes of Australia) that are relevant and applicable to Queensland. Section NMP 1.5 – Floor Heights, states that the acceptable floor height of a habitable room is:

(a) located at least 300mm above the ARI 100 flood level for the site, or
(b) where the ARI 100 is not known, 300mm above the highest recorded or expected (by the local government) flood level.

Generally speaking, the properties inundated in the most recent flood event in December 2010 were older homes and businesses that had been approved and subdivided many generations ago – well before these modern planning requirements were in place.

Bundaberg Regional Council currently uses the planning schemes adopted by the four former councils (Bundaberg City; Burnett; Isis and Kolan Shire Councils). These plans are available for viewing at our council service centres or via the council website.

All of these planning schemes make reference in some form to the expectation that any new developments must take into consideration risk factors such as flooding, and apply the expected standards to mitigate these risks.

The former Bundaberg City had well established flood mapping (released in 2005 in response to the introduction of SPP 1/03) and had a formally adopted flood height – i.e. Defined Flood Event (DFE). All new buildings must be constructed so any habitable rooms are at least 300mm above the DFE level. I have provided an example of the flood mapping overlay that demonstrates how members of the public are able to freely access this information to make decisions about future property purchases.

The former Burnett Shire had flood and storm tide risk area mapping of the lower Burnett River but had not completed flood risk studies for the remainder of the Shire. Mapping of these local streams has been ongoing since amalgamation and a draft report is near completion.

The former Isis and Kolan Shire planning schemes were less sophisticated but also require any new buildings constructed within the areas identified as at risk of flooding to locate any habitable rooms at least 300mm above the 1% AEP (Q100) flood level.

If you have access to the internet, go to the Bundaberg Regional Council website and click on QUICK LINKS >INTERACTIVE MAPPING and follow the prompts to bring up a map of the region. All information currently available about risks such as flooding can be viewed by applying various overlays on the map. It is possible to "zoom in" to street level to identify individual properties and their potential risk.

If you do not have access to a computer, please visit a Council Service Centre and ask for assistance.

Since amalgamation in 2008, Council embarked on a process to develop a new Planning Scheme that will bring together the four former plans and standardize the conditions and requirements to reflect current State and National Codes and Standards.

Council is still waiting for clarification from the State and Federal Governments in relation to future policy regarding Climate Change and whether any such issues need to be factored into our new Planning Scheme requirements.

Some years ago there was a funding program available to local Councils to partner with the State and Federal governments to share the cost of flood mitigation strategies and land purchases in vulnerable areas. In light of the

most recent flood event, we are urging the State and Federal government to consider re-introducing joint funding programs and to work with councils to reduce the flooding risk of these established urban areas.

DREDGING:

With regard to rivers and drains, the Burnett River up to the town reach has not been dredged for many many years. Although the Burnett River in the town reach area was dredged regularly in the past, the Port of Bundaberg (now managed by Gladstone Ports Corporation) is now only responsible for maintaining the berth, swing basin and access channel for major shipping using the bulk sugar terminal and wharf.

We are waiting for the results of a hydrographic survey of the Port area and the river channel from the Burnett Traffic Bridge to Burnett Heads to ascertain the risk to vessels since the flood. Dredging and reopening of the Port of Bundaberg is of extreme importance given it is a major economic driver for our region. As Bundaberg is the busiest Customs clearing port on the East coast of Australia for International recreational vessels, we urge the State and Federal Government to take whatever measures are necessary to ensure the river is cleared of debris and dangers to navigation as soon as possible.

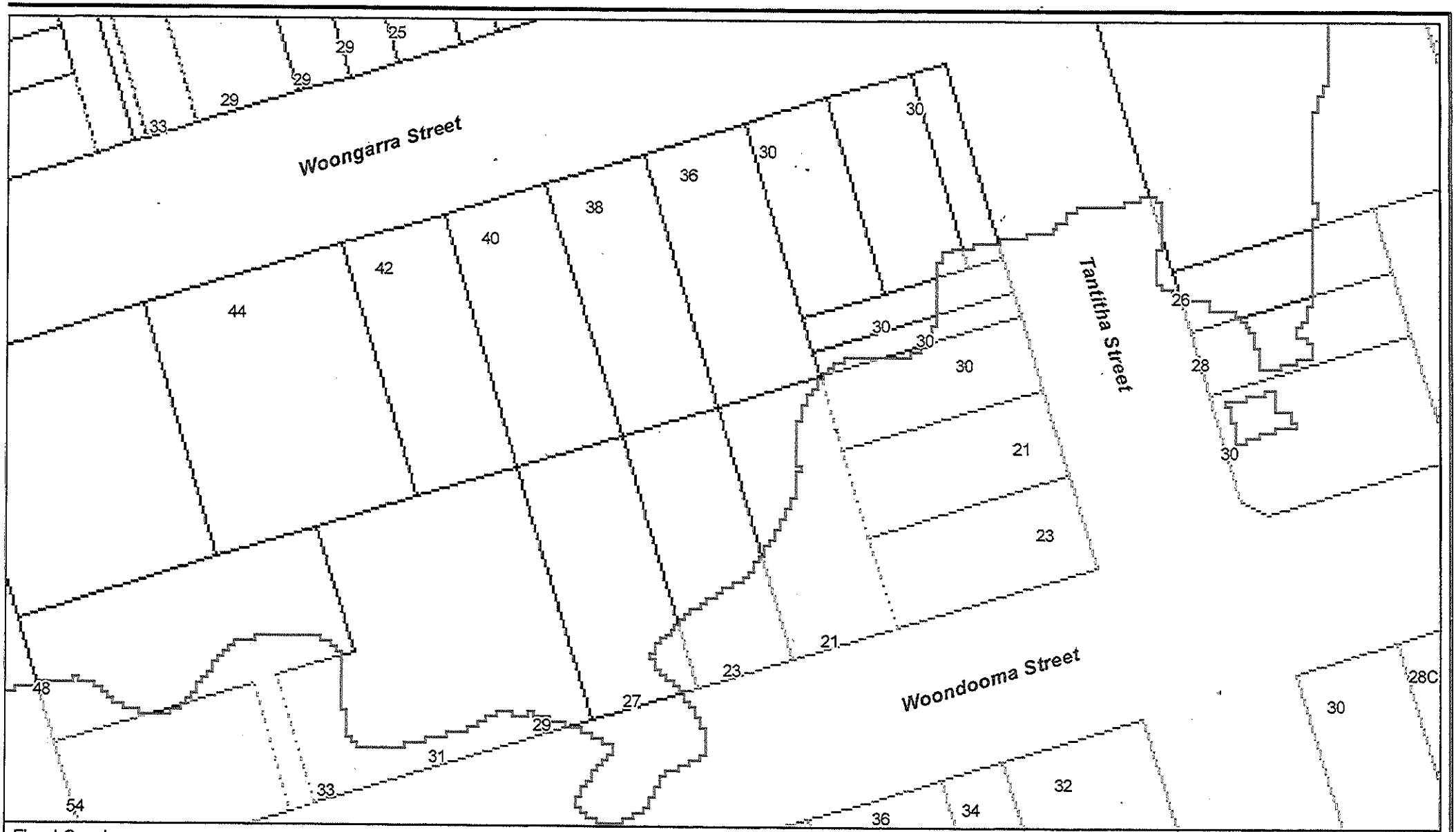
Once again, thank you for taking the time to write to council. If you would like to discuss further, please don't hesitate to contact me again.

Sincerely

[redacted]

Cr Lorraine Pyefinch
Mayor - Bundaberg Regional Council

This is a print out from the Bundaberg Regional Council website. The blue line indicates the 2% AEP 50yr ARI Flood level.



Flood Overlay
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Scale 1:997 on A4 Sheet

BUNDABERG REGIONAL COUNCIL

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