

## Submission to Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry

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### **Topic**

Increased flood risk to homes in Pallara due to past sand extraction activities, man made structures and the use of outdated flood modelling to plan and approve future development in Oxley Creek catchment.

### **Introduction**

The suburb of Pallara is located between Forest Lake, Parkinson and Willawong; Pallara has rural setting with some low lying land which was inundated in parts to about 1 metre during the 1974 Oxley Creek flood event. In the recorded history of Brisbane this area has not flooded before or since [but due to modifications to the waterway over the last 40-50 years from sand mining activities our properties are now threatened with increased flood levels.](#)

### **Issues**

Oxley Creek has a history of sand extraction which has been poorly managed by both industry and government, this extraction has resulted in major changes to the natural land form and modification to local waterways. Sand mining in the Pallara area has increased the flood risk to local resident's homes, flood water that once flowed down the main Oxley Creek channel is now funnelled directly towards resident's homes.

Since Pallara was included in the Urban Footprint in the SEQ Regional plan there has been an almost obsessive push by both developers and Brisbane City Council to have the low lying areas of Pallara opened up to residential development. This push comes despite the fact that no [catchment wide](#), best practice 2 dimensional flood model exists for [Oxley Creek](#) which would inform planners of both the current flood pattern or the impact of future development on catchment flood levels.

Brisbane City Council's current Flood Flag map for Oxley Creek is based (I am advised by a BCC waterways officer) on 1984 terrain data and does not recognise roads and bridges built after that time. These [roads, bridges, associated filling and other large scale filling](#) in the catchment act as major barriers to the natural flow of flood water down Oxley Creek increasing the flood levels in the surrounding area. This increase in flood levels makes BCC's Flood Flag mapping for Oxley Creek obsolete, and puts any developments based on this flood mapping at greater risk to higher flood levels than shown.

As a concerned resident of Pallara I request the Flood Commission of Inquiry to investigate the appropriateness of future development in Oxley Creek catchment before a [catchment wide](#) flood study is completed for Oxley Creek, and to take what ever action is required to ensure the rehabilitation plan for the Holcim Oxley Creek mine site results in maximum flood mitigation possible for the adjoining properties which were there before mining started.

Yours sincerely  
Robert Scott

## Issues

1. Town Planning
  - **The current BCC City Plan 2000 does not include a sufficient diversity of planning classifications** thus limiting council's ability to achieve the best use of low lying land not suitable for low, medium or high residential development but still suitable for use as residential acreage development.
  - Recent, current and future development planning in the Oxley Creek catchment is based on **out dated terrain data and superseded flood modelling technology**.
2. Flood Modelling
  - **No holistic best practice 2 dimensional flood model** of Oxley Creek catchment is available to inform planners.
  - Current BCC Flood Flag mapping for Oxley Creek is **based on 1984** terrain data which **does not take into account major man made barriers** to the free flow of flood waters in Oxley Creek
  - **Inconsistent advice from BCC** about time frame for when a new flood model of Oxley Creek will be completed
3. Development in the Oxley Creek catchment
  - Currently **out dated terrain data and superseded flood modelling technology is being used to assess and approve development applications** in the Oxley Creek catchment such as the: Sherwood Road Bus Depot, Paradise Wetland Neighbourhood Plan, Lower Oxley Creek South Neighbourhood Plan, Flagstone, New Beith and Greenbank.
4. Modification of waterways due to past sand extraction activities in Oxley Creek.
  - **The mismanagement of large scale sand extraction in the Oxley Creek catchment over approximately 40 years** has resulted in major alterations to the land form and flood characteristics of the waterway **resulting in increased flood risk to private homes in the catchment**.
  - Inadequate and out dated license agreements **limit governments ability to legally enforce best practice rehabilitation** requirements for mine sites such as Holcim's Oxley Creek mine.
5. Man made barriers to the natural flow of flood waters built since 1974
  - **Major roads and bridges have been built across Oxley Creek since the 1974** Oxley Creek flood event which will have major impacts on local flooding in the suburbs of Pallara and Willawong examples are Learoyd Road and the Logan Motorway.