

The Honourable Justice Catherine Holmes

Dear Commissioner,

### **Submission to Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry**

Our submission relates to land use planning through local and regional planning systems. Ipswich City Council (ICC) had advice in the 1990s that Wivenhoe Dam would act as a flood mitigator for the Ipswich flood plain and as a result amended the Q100 reference point to permit development in low lying areas. These areas were all adversely affected by the January 2011 floods.

Now, ICC seems conflicted between promoting development and imposing a moratorium on further development in the flood risk zones. Currently, it is approving developments in these low lying areas just above the existing Q100.

Also, ICC has advised that it is powerless to revoke approvals already granted.

A development that is of deep concern to us and our neighbours is the Leda Development project at the old North Ipswich Railway Yards (Lots 51-55 SP222487 North Ipswich). The reasons for concern are:

1. The project involves the filling of the flood plain to establish a platform which is 60 cm above the Q100 level to build hundreds of units and aged person homes.
2. The project puts the future residents, including aged persons, in a high flood risk zone
3. The project puts existing houses opposite at increased risk of flood damage because the Flood Study justifying the development did not adequately address local flow changes
4. The project involves burying contaminated waste in the flood plain – the ongoing earthworks during this current wet season have exposed contaminated material

Long term residents in the Woodend area are already noticing changes in flow patterns as a result of the development – a marked increase in bank slumping on the bank opposite the development (these residents had experience 1974 flood).

This project may indeed be legal, as the developer and ICC have assured us. The building of Bremer Waters, an 'over 50's lifestyle village' at Moores Pocket inundated with the recent flood was also legal. But things have changed. With the knowledge that Ipswich is a city located on a river delta, it should never again be permissible to:

- undertake earthworks on a contaminated site on a flood plain in a wet season
- build up a flood plain because the diversion and flow changes will affect others
- build hundreds of medium density units in a high flood risk zone

We call for:

1. Raising of the Q100 or declaration of a flood risk zone that recognises a high risk of flooding
2. A moratorium against the further housing development in this zone, especially for medium/high density housing
3. Prohibition against reclaiming land for development within flood plains
4. Mandatory RL declarations with flood risk ratings for all property transfers and new rental agreements from this point forward, with Real Estate Agents being an important agent for

- reminding residents not to be complacent about the possibility of floods into the future decades ensure that people can make informed decisions about flood risk
5. Flood level maps freely available to the public in perpetuity

The fact that this clearly inappropriate development has not been stopped already but allowed to proceed is an indication that State Government and ICC are reluctant to change the status quo in the light of the January flood event. .

We emphatically condemn expansion of development into the Bremer River flood plain. Good catchment management practices would have riparian revegetation on river banks – not encroaching development. Citizens and the Bremer River would benefit enormously from the Council following it's own Waterways Health Strategy.

We call upon the Commission to do whatever it can to prevent this and other inappropriate developments in the Bremer River flood plain. We are available to answer any queries from the Commission.



Yours sincerely,  
Nick White and Elizabeth Tilbrook



Woodend Qld 4305

1<sup>st</sup> April 2011