



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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MAROOCHY RIVER CATCHMENT

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (6.20 p.m.): I rise to speak about the Maroochy River catchment area, in particular my concerns in regard to infrastructure and buildings being built upon the flood plain. When I was first elected into this parliament a major issue that was running was the Yandina bypass. At that time my concerns about a new infrastructure being built across flood plains were well documented, given the poor history of government agencies being able to accurately flood model and understand the impacts that those structures would cause.

Unfortunately we have seen, with other government construction such as the Nambour bypass, a history where the flood modelling was wrong. There was an underestimation of what the impact of those structures would be. When the Nambour bypass was built they actually had to go back and put additional flood pass ways underneath that road because they got it wrong. When the Sunshine Motorway was built across the flood plains of the Maroochy River area there were also unintended consequences where the flood waters hit those structures and there was insufficient drainage under those waterways to deal with that. There was a back up of water which caused a greater flood impact upon other people.

We have also seen landowners in the vicinity of a number of these structures who have suffered the adverse impact of flood waters hitting these structures and impacting on them with higher than normal flood levels. The message I have here is that while there has been flood modelling that has been used in the past with government infrastructure and also with private property developers, I believe it has been totally inadequate. Even today, when people are considering building upon flood plains, the councils require them to undertake flood modelling. It is a piecemeal attempt to deal with an issue which I believe needs a whole-of-catchment address with modern technology because those flood studies to date have been inadequate. We know that flood mitigation is limited, particularly when there are surges in high rainfall times. When there are extraordinary rain events, flood basins do not provide any mitigation.

So there is a great concern about how much these flood plains can take without having an impact upon those other people in the catchment area—an impact upon lives, property and the environment. I am calling on the government to support a whole of Maroochy River valley catchment study with the latest technology. If members look at the veracity of the past flood studies they will find there are many flaws, even where it has been applied to government infrastructure. It is time that this was done right. It is too important when people are trying to put inappropriate structures on areas that should never be built on, and certainly not in the way they have been in the past.