

The Hon. Barnaby Joyce,
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

Dear Minister Joyce,

Fix the Federally-Funded Moruya Bypass

The Moruya Bypass Action Group represents people of the Moruya community who have come together because they are greatly concerned about the selection process for the preferred Moruya Bypass route announced recently. The proposed **8 km land-bridge** will have a significant impact on productive agricultural land, rural properties and people's homes, local businesses and the environment, as well as the amenity and social fabric of our town.

We believe that the Moruya community deserves the best bypass solution possible. This has clearly not been delivered to date by Transport for NSW (TFNSW), so we are writing to you in your capacity as Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development to ensure that the **80% federal funding** upon which this project depends must be conditional upon delivery of a comprehensively planned bypass based on genuine community consultation which generates tangible benefits for our residents and visitors.

We are greatly concerned about the tokenistic and flawed community consultation undertaken to date by TFNSW on the Moruya Bypass, which is without doubt the most significant transport project ever undertaken not only in our town but in the Eurobodalla region. The community has been given insufficient and at times conflicting information about the various corridor options, with little time to consider whether the preferred option is the best one for our town and community.

The initial TFNSW "consultation" occurred just weeks after the catastrophic Black Summer bushfires had ravaged our community, and during the initial lockdown period from the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. This was not a suitable time to ask the community to provide feedback of such long-lasting strategic importance. The second round "consultation" was equally disappointing, with the community confronted with facile answers drawn from an inadequate and flawed TFNSW options report, together with a dubious questionnaire deliberately constructed to deliver support for the preferred option. No additional information was provided, and many critical questions were unable to be answered by TFNSW staff.

The community are particularly concerned that the preferred route does not properly integrate with the new Eurobodalla Hospital currently under development in Moruya, despite soothing assurances to the contrary from TFNSW. The facts speak for themselves - in order to deliver patients to the new hospital from the north (where the largest population centres and patient numbers are located), the preferred route will require southbound emergency vehicles to drive 2 kms past Moruya, then turn

around and drive 1.5 kms back towards the north, before finally turning into the hospital across the stream of southbound traffic from town. This is sheer madness when there are shorter, cheaper and better connected options available with fewer property and environmental impacts, such as the **alternative purple option**, which ran a close second according to TFNSW, yet was discarded.

TFNSW bureaucrats have already caused enormous community anger and incredulity over their approach to the southern portion of the Milton-Ulladulla bypass around Burrill Lake, and community concern in Moruya is escalating rapidly over the route chosen by TFNSW for our bypass. If the Moruya bypass project remains on its present course, it will deliver an unnecessarily long and destructive substandard outcome now **costing upwards of \$750 million** which will become a major issue for the seat of Gilmore in the upcoming Federal election.

We therefore urge you to exercise your Ministerial powers in regard to funding the Moruya Bypass by requiring that TFNSW engage in genuine community consultation regarding this critical project, in order to deliver a shorter, cheaper and less destructive bypass route which is seamlessly integrated with the new Eurobodalla Hospital.

In order to better assist your understanding of the gravity of this issue, we have attached a copy of our bypass submission to TFNSW. Apart from acknowledgement of its receipt, we are still awaiting a considered reply to the multitude of serious issues raised in our submission.

We trust that we can look forward to your favourable consideration of this critical issue for the Eurobodalla community,

Yours sincerely

John Murray

on behalf of
Moruya Bypass Acton Group

Date : 6/8/21
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