



FLINDERS SHIRE COUNCIL

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SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUSTRALIA'S REGIONAL AREAS

Flinders Shire Council believes that the economic development and indeed the continued viability of remote communities is severely hampered by inadequate funding for road development and maintenance.

Council seeks the committee's support for upgrading and sealing roads in North West Queensland and, in particular, the Kennedy Developmental Road between Hughenden and the Lynd.

The Kennedy Developmental Road Study Report – July 1994 (prepared by Cardno and Davies in association with R J Nairn & Associates) showed construction and sealing between The Lynd Junction and Boulia is economically justified. The report recommended the following priorities for construction -

1. Winton to Boulia;
2. Hughenden to Winton; and
3. The Lynd Junction to Hughenden (southern section first)

Winton to Boulia is now complete and Hughenden to Winton will be completed by Christmas 2000. Formal planning, survey and design activities should now be commenced for The Lynd Junction-Hughenden section.

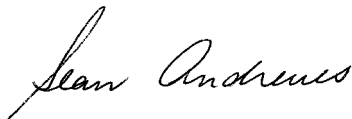
By way of background, this 265 kilometre section of road has significant strategic importance. Approximately 172 kilometres is in Flinders Shire and 83 kilometres in Etheridge Shire. It is mostly unsealed and existing sealed sections generally need to be reconstructed and upgraded. Major watercourses in Flinders Shire, Whitecliffs excepted, have bridges or large box culverts and an adequate standard of flood immunity. Watercourse crossings in Etheridge Shire are mainly raised concrete floodways over culverts with a low to moderate (ie inadequate) level of flood immunity. Several of the floodways in Etheridge Shire are submerged under flowing water for some time after rain although the road remains "open with care" for high clearance vehicles – access for conventional vehicles is largely academic as black soil sections effectively prevent conventional vehicle and truck access.

The road is currently rated for Type 1 Road Trains (ie doubles). Upgrading and realignment works are required to allow Type 2 Road Trains (ie triples). Subject to cultural and heritage clearances, realignment works to improve sight distances and vertical grades should be completed in 1999/00.

The major benefits of upgrading and sealing the Hughenden - Lynd section of the Kennedy Developmental Road are -

- contribution of the strategic road network by providing another contiguous north-south route with the potential to divert a large number of trucks away from the more congested and hilly coastal roads (this road provides the most direct and potentially fastest, safest and most fuel efficient road transport link from Cape York / Cairns / Atherton Tablelands to Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide via Hughenden, Winton, Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall, Tambo, Augathella etc) and, being west of the Great Dividing Range, provide road access when coastal flooding cuts existing north-south routes;
- contribution to the strategic road network by providing another contiguous east-west route (The Outback Highway) that provides the most direct and potentially fastest, safest and most fuel efficient road transport link from Cape York / Cairns / Atherton Tablelands to Perth via Hughenden, Winton, Boulia, Alice Springs, Yulara etc);
- contribution to the rural sector by reducing costs faced by graziers, fruit and vegetable producers etc (reduced cost of transport due to better roads, less damage to livestock and produce);
- contribution to the road transport sector by reducing costs faced by road users, (reduced fuel consumption due to better running surface and more constant speeds, reduced wear and tear to vehicles, lower accident rates);
- contribution to the tourism sector by increasing access to tourist attractions and improved tourist routes;
- contribution to western communities by increasing volume of passing traffic and tourists;
- contribution to community as a whole by improving road safety, reducing the road toll, reducing heavy vehicle traffic volumes on coastal roads and reducing reliance on heavy fuel guzzling four wheel drive vehicles; and
- contribution to the viability of the Melbourne - Darwin Fast Train Project by providing appropriate access to Atherton Tablelands produce.

Council has obtained considerable support for this project from other shires in northern and western Queensland.



S M Andrews
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER