

Carol & Bob Parkinson

7 November 2011

The Committee Secretary  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on  
Infrastructure and Communications  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

Dear Sir

With Interest I learned of the new legislation concerning the placement of telecommunication towers. Back in 1999 Optus decided to put a phone tower 120 metres from our home and only 80 metres from one of our neighbour's home. We were as a nearby community never notified by Optus of their intension.

The two public notices which were displayed on the land were not easily assessable. One was at the property (farm) gate which was at the end of a dead end road some 2.5 km from my home by the shortest route. The other sign was hung on a barb wire fence along a limited access road with a speed limit of 80 km/hr with no ability to pull over and read even if you were aware of a sign being there.

We were informed that it is illegal to stop on a limited access roads unless your vehicle is broken down or in an emergency.

The topography was never taken into account when calculations were made of the exposure levels of EME from the proposed tower. The tower is situated on very low land not much above the high tide level whereas we are on elevated land several metres above the AHD/RL as are our neighbours.

It was only after a local resident became aware of the proposal that they letterboxed our area on 1 June 1999. This only allowed the community just three days to lodge a submission against the phone tower.

We protested strongly for nearly 5 months, but eventually they had erected their tower. Now two other carriers have co-located and Optus have sold the tower.

The radiation from this phone tower is beaming straight at our home 24/7.

We are very concerned for our health due to the emission of EME from this phone tower. Even though we are told that the emission levels are below what is allowed by the Federal Government, overseas countries have much lower levels allowable.

The stress which this phone tower has subjected our family to is a real health issue. We are both retired and medical research has shown that stress is a killer. Either way the phone tower's emissions and the stress are both health issues for us.

As a result of our protesting we had a web site put up in December 1999 telling the full story of Optus's Brighton Mobile Phone Tower, which we have kept on line ever since.

<http://www.rag.org.au/optus/default.htm>

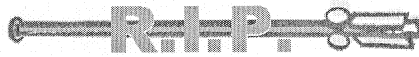
Our local Federal Member the Honourable the Deputy Prime Minister Wayne Swan MP even took the time to address the Federal Parliament on Thursday 25 November 1999 on our community's behalf.

We fully support the proposed amendments and we are willing to allow our submission to be made public and to appear before the Standing Committee and give oral evidence if required.

Yours faithfully

Carol & Bob Parkinson

## History



- 2 Public Notices of intention to apply for permission to erect a mobile Phone Tower on display.  
One on land but no access to read. On side of highway where stopping is not allowed. Second at the end of no through road used by a local farmer to access his home and paddocks.
- 1 June 99 Local resident letterboxes adjoining neighbours making them aware of proposal this allowed residents three days to lodge submissions opposing the tower.
- Brisbane City Council approved application on 18 August 1999.
- One of the objectors was not notified of the BCC approval due to a clerical error and therefore was not aware of appeal rights. The resident was then allowed until 11 November 99 to appeal against the approval.
- On 19 October construction work started on the worksite for the phone tower.
- Residents complained to the Brisbane City Council and the work ceased at days end.
- A further complaint was made to the Department of Main Roads because the construction crew were accessing the site via a limited access road without permission. This access was in complete contravention of the conditions imposed by Department of Main Roads contained within the approval conditions supplied to Cable and Wireless Optus in August.
- The local newspaper covered the illegal pre-emptive work on the site in the Northside Chronicle 26 Oct.
- A public Meeting was called and held on the 30 Oct by local

concerned residents at Decker Park.

- A petition calling on the Brisbane City Council to revoke their approval for the Phone Tower.
- The local Councillor suggested that the residents contact Optus not the Brisbane City Council.
- Optus were invited to attend this meeting but did not attend or reply.
- Radio Station 4KQ carried a prerecorded interview on 2 November 99 expressing concern about the health effects on the local community.
- Optus blatantly ignored the residents until 45 minutes after 4KQ carried the interview.
- A phone call from Scott Clements from Optus expressed the view that Optus was not aware of any community concern up until the time of the radio interview.
- When a small community meeting was arranged in a resident's home for the 4 November Optus was invited along with their trained media officer. The Federal Member Wayne Swan attended but Optus later refused to attend.
- Channel 9 Brisbane Extra's crew taped a segment next morning on 5 November show the same night. Mayoral Candidate, Gail Austen, spoke in support of the residents concerns.
- Protest meeting held at the site on Saturday 6 November with protest signs attracting passing motorists' attention to the tower site along with who wanted to build it.
- The local School St Kierans Catholic Primary offered to donate the use of their hall to convene a public meeting over the Optus phone tower proposal. The local Rotary offered to chair the meeting to be seen as a neutral body to control the meeting. When Optus were invited they again declined. Yet Cable & Wireless Optus stated policy on their web site says, "Cable & Wireless Optus is always keen to listen to, and

work with, local communities. We recognise that locating base stations within communities can sometimes cause concerns.

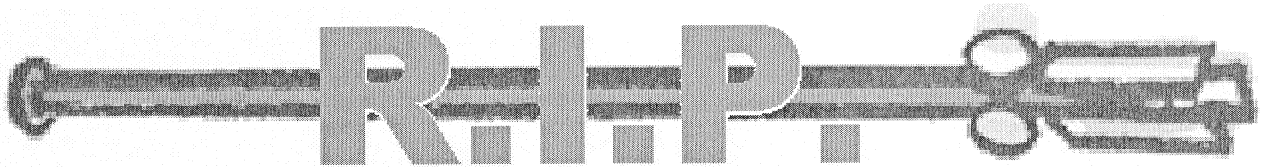
With this in mind we take a precautionary approach to siting and installing of mobile base stations facilities - ensuring that all reasonable care is taken, recognising and understanding public concerns which may exist."

- Cable & Wireless Optus community consultation meetings when you can arrange one take the following form. They will meet with residents on a one to one basis but will not stand in front of a group residents no matter how small. Their consultation policy does not allow for you to be told about their proposed phone towers only that they will cause no problems once they are there.
- Local residents have applied to the Brisbane City Council for permits to hold peaceful protest meeting outside their Fortitude Valley Office about once a week where they display their protest sign.
- **Now the Group has a web site and we are asking for your contributions. If you are also fighting a telecommunications tower we are willing to add a link to your site. Just send us an e-mail. If you have found any other actions that attract attention of the companies involved in installing phone towers, we would be pleased to receive an e-mail from you or your group.**
- **.. "United we stand divided we fall."**
- **Optus on the other hand seem to want to divide and conquer.**

**We oppose any Phone Towers adjacent to homes, schools, or other sites where**

young people spend their time because of  
our health concerns for their future.

E-mail our group:  
[say.NO.to.optus@rag.org.au](mailto:say.NO.to.optus@rag.org.au)

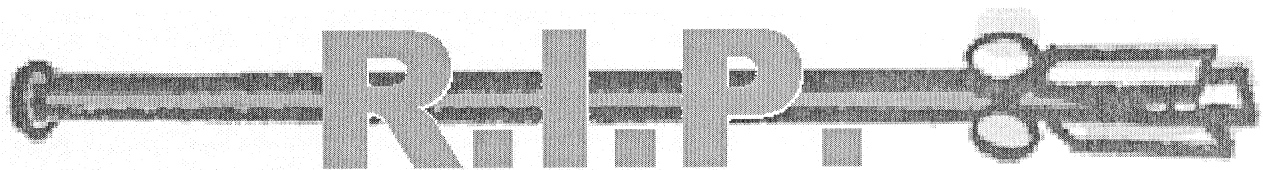


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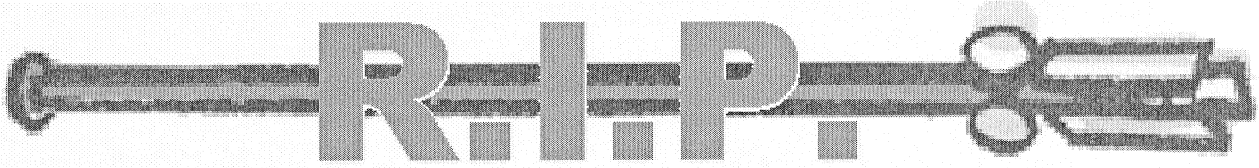
*as a community service.*



Outcomes of consultations carried  
out by  
Brighton residents and forwarded on  
to  
Optus

- No tower whatsoever
- The Redcliffe Golf Course has an unused 40 acres & the Redcliffe City Council also has another 40 acres of land (equally 80 or so acres) which is remote and uninhabited snaking around the Pine river, with a direct focus into Brighton and Margate.
- In the middle of the river itself.
- Access can be made with boats, dredges and pile-drivers.
- The isthmus located within Brisbane City Council areas (locally called "the island")

- On the remote & uninhabited point *way past* Brighton Park and the old Sanderson's kiosk site.
- On the remote & uninhabited areas on the opposite bank of the river in the Pine Rivers Shire.



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