

THE NIMBIN GOODTIMES

Your FREE community paper

Velvet Leaf Edition
August 2019

81 Cullen Street
Nimbin 2480
Phone 6689-1148
nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com

Blockade ramps up action to stop Byron bypass

by Omega Breakspear

Environmentalists are continuing their campaign to stop the Byron Bay Bypass Project, despite intimidation from the Byron Shire Council, the Police and the Hazell Bros contractors.

Threats of arrest, fines and the usual accusations of 'get a job' have failed to deter them.

Protestors set up a blockade campsite in Butler Street, Byron Bay on 12th July last month in response to the start of works on the site. They are doing non-violent direct action as a last resort to halt the construction of the Bypass Project.

The blockade is on part of the old Byron Markets site, the rest of which is to be turned into a bus terminal and multi-story car park.

The Byron Council website states that this is a major infrastructure project. It is industrial scale land clearing and construction over the last of the significant wetland and forest next to the town.

It will irreversibly change the nature of Byron, turning it from an eco-friendly village into another mega suburb of the Gold Coast.

Byron Council's plan to relocate the critically endangered Mitchell's Rainforest Snail, the Black Bitten and Pale-vented Bush Hen and other threatened species, together with the use of BioBanking, is negligent and unworkable.

The Council's contractors have already chain-sawed down and woodchipped a 200-year old Coastal Cypress as well as other protected species trees since the works started, with no remedial response.

Local Minjambal indigenous custodian Aunty Robin K. Stone is calling for an immediate stop to the Bypass which will bulldoze a sacred site called the 'Tree of



Photo: Omega Breakspear

Shame' and drain the wetlands which are very important to local indigenous mob.

"We have the grey-headed bat, the small one that's nearly extinct, plus a number of snakes and endangered frogs that live in this area.

"These things need to be preserved, together with our sacred sites," Aunty Robin said.

There has been longstanding community opposition to this project. The Butler Street Community Network ran an unsuccessful 12-month legal battle against the Byron Council in the Land and Environment Court

to stop the development in 2017.

The Council won the case at a cost of \$450,000.

Despite the project being approved by the Greens-dominated Byron Council, strong objections to it have been made by Greens MP Tamara Smith, former Greens Mayor Jan Barham and retired Greens Senator Ian Cohen, who have supported both the court case and the blockade.

Jan Barham has placed two full-page advertisements in editions of the *Byron Echo*, which question how rigorous the environmental assessment process has been,

and call for a new independent survey to be undertaken.

As Liam, one of the activists blockading at the site, said on ABC radio, "We've got jobs and we want a future." He has been a landscaper and is a scuba diver, and understands the impacts this development will have on the local ecology.

Show your support and call in to the blockade camp in Butler Street. Help save Byron, called Cavinbah or 'meeting place' to the Bunjalung nation.

► Byron Markets move, see Page 14

at RAINBOW POWER we do things a bit differently...

Qualified Sales Staff vs Call Centre

We live with solar ourselves, and we offer weekend training courses so our customers can feel confident with their new solar system

Realistic Assessments vs Huge Claims

You can trust us to realistically assess your needs and design a system that is right for you.



Modern Showroom vs Garage

We have one of the largest solar system showrooms in the southern hemisphere. Come and get hands on experience with working solar systems.

Best Value vs Lowest Price

Our experience is that good design + the right gear + a professional installation = the best long term value.

32 years in business vs get in, get money, get out

We are a public company, owned by the workers and committed to our customers.



Call us now : 02 66891430 or visit rpc.com.au to build your own quote