

From:
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Flah Flooding event Alstonville night of 29 march
Date: Thursday, 7 April 2022 10:32:05 AM
Attachments: [Letter to BCC re flash flooding Alstonville 29 March 2022.docx](#)
Importance: High

Hi,

Attached for your consideration is a report of my experience in a flash flooding event in Alstonville – between Ballina and Lismore – on the night of Tuesday 29 March 2022. After 430ml of rain had fallen in less than 6 hours. Copies of this report have also been sent to individual BCC councillors and relevant BCC employees and to Tamara Smith, NSW State Member and Customer Liaison Transport NSW.

Looking forward to your response

To Ballina City Council,

On the night of Tuesday 29 March and early morning of the following day Alstonville experienced 430ml of rain in less than 6 hours. This resulted in the detention basin between Mellis Circuit and the Bruxner Highway bypass filling and overflowing through house yards and into some houses in Mellis Circuit.

We live in _____ and the water came through with great force. Tide marks of debris on the outside walls of the house indicate that the water rose to a depth of approximately 27cm at the back of the house and over 30cm on the eastern side. The floor level of the house is 30 cm above the paved back patio. Luckily no water came into the main part of the house however if the very heavy rain had gone on any longer the whole house could have been flooded. As it was, the only room affected was a sunroom at the back of the house which is set at a lower level and the water came into it to a level of approximately 10cm – seeping in under the glass sliding doors. This room is tiled so little damage was done. Just a couple of mats soaked in muddy water and a thin layer of silt to be cleaned out. There was some seepage through the brick foundation walls into the garage attached to the house but it was minimal.

There is a drain pipe 600ml in diameter which runs from the detention basin down the eastern side of our place _____. Its job is to deal with any excess of water in the basin. However, it wasn't even nearly coping with the amount of water around that night. Where the pipe meets the street the water was fountaining up to almost head height with great force, making a roaring sound and spreading across and along the street. The force of the water was strong enough to lift a large concrete cover and swing it out of position. That pipe certainly didn't deal with the overflow water from the basin. There is a grassy spillway at the eastern end of the basin designed carry away any excess water into a large culvert which runs into Crawford Park.. I understand from one of the neighbours living near the spillway that it was NOT flowing strongly with water that night. So any excess water was instead overtopping the main bank and then over a lesser bank immediately behind the back yards and into _____ Street. The street was flooded and water was running through several houses and sheds across the road from our place and at least two houses on our side of the road.



Water nearly gone in sunroom – footmarks in mud



From our place across road at daylight – road completely covered



Debris line on white fence



showing depth of wate at peak of flood..... and drain cover after flood

The water flowed in diagonally across our back yard leaving a swathe of leaves and mulch debris. It then filled the whole yard back and front. I slept through the first half hour of the drama but was wakened by two fire engines with lights flashing and engines running. One neighbour in a wheel chair had to be evacuated. Neighbours were more awake than I had been and seemed to be everywhere. They indicated that the water had been flowing with great force earlier. Even so, even though I had not seen the worst of it, it was quite frightening with front yard $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water, the whole road surface under water, the big drain fountaining noisily and the sewerage system making strange gurgling noises which I presume was excess water getting into that system... and rain was still falling. I don't think anyone got much sleep that night.

It was a frightening and shocking experience. And the thought that this could happen again in the future and could, in fact be, worse if the rain continued longer, is frightening. Especially as everybody knows – **it doesn't flood in Alstonville!!**

Urgent action on this stormwater drainage is needed if we are to avoid more damage to property... and possibly people. And to the reputation of Alstonville as a safe, flood free town.

In hope

- Resident
Alstonville

Owners