

'Dangerous upgrades'

Residents frustrated at being 'ignored' about changes

■ Tessa Mapstone

FRUSTRATED residents of Verrierdale locked in a year-long dispute with the Sunshine Coast Council say upgrades to Doonan Bridge Rd have made it more dangerous.

Verrierdale Residents Group (VRG) president Mark Jones said an independent engineers' report, commissioned by the council, into the now sealed stretch of road confirmed the group's fears.

"That is, council's constructed sharp corner is substandard and unsafe," Mr Jones said in a letter to Sunshine Coast Council's chief executive officer.

"The guard rails installed in Stage 3 are excessive."

Sunshine Coast councillor Steve Robinson said the road upgrade was undertaken and signed off by an independent Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland, and an independent peer review of the design was undertaken by a separate RPEQ.

"The latest stage of this road upgrade, based on revised designs, is almost complete and provides a significantly improved road for both local residents and motorists who travel through this area," Cr Robinson said.



THUMBS DOWN: Residents are not happy with a corner on Doonan Bridge Rd.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Mr Jones told the *Coolum News* the group raised its concerns with the council early on, but he felt its voice was ignored.

"This sharp corner has a history of accidents when it was gravel, now it's sealed it's even more dangerous," he said.

"Before people were limited in their speed because of the gravel and corrugations.

"We made an alternate design, but the council ignored it and continued to build this dangerous sharp

corner.

"They've built it now I can't see them going back and rebuilding it now it's done."

Cr Robinson said the council made every effort to address issues raised by residents during the upgrade.

He said the council had multiple meetings with residents regarding design options, commissioned peer reviews and a road safety audit by independent and accredited road engineering consultants.

"While project delays have occurred in undertaking these reviews, changes requested by the Verrierdale residents that were considered safe and appropriate were implemented by both independent and council engineers and designers," Cr Robinson said.

Once works are complete a permanent speed limit of 70km/h – approved by the Speed Advisory Committee – will be implemented.

The Verrierdale Residents Group's safety concerns

extended to the number of guard rails erected on the road, which Mr Jones said created a danger to drivers and animals from the adjoining wildlife reserve.

He said the group would like to see guard rails removed, but his greatest frustration was feeling ignored.

"The biggest issue is the fact they wouldn't listen to our concerns and wouldn't forward the independent report when they received it, we had to get it from our MP Dan Purdie," Mr Jones said.