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2/30-32 Byron Street
Lennox Head NSW 2478

The Mayor
Councillor David Wright
Ballina Shire Council
Cherry Street
Ballina NSW 2478

28th April 2018

Dear Mayor,

A request has been received to provide further opinion in regards to the cause of the alleged damage to the dwelling adjacent (number 7) to the Morton Bay Fig on Council owned land on Castle Drive, Lennox Head.

I have not been privileged to inspect the property of the alleged damage, yet I do have more of an understanding of the physiology and capacity of tree roots than most. Tree roots start as absorbing roots; non lignified, single-celled structures which divide and branch, becoming more lignified with age and becoming part of the woody root system. Root morphology is controlled by soil type, moisture, drainage and environmental conditions and seldom fit a pre-determined model. They respond to stimuli such as available moisture and a favourable temperature.

The buttress of the Fig is substantial as it should be for the structure, but all tree roots taper quickly from the root crown and buttress, then, dominated by long, tapered, relative small lateral roots. These small roots can extend some distance from the tree absorbing water and nutrients.

There is no evidence that the tree has caused the damage and the science and research in my previous report and others supports this.

The damage to the house is most likely from soil movement or subsidence of the "cut and fill" site. Site preparation, structural engineering and house design have been inadequate for soil type and the significant natural structure nearby.

Due diligence completed by the owners before purchase, i.e. competent building inspection, would have highlighted the adjacent significant Fig Tree and any structural concerns with the property.

5.1 **Notice of Motion - Castle Drive - Fig Tree.DOC**

In the event the tree is removed, root death will result. The possibility of soil slumpage is elevated and the potential of further subsidence or structural problems.

In my opinion, due process and thorough investigation of the house site has not occurred or been forthcoming for peer review. The tree is an easy target to construct a trail of misinformation and justification and it is astounding that a tree of this magnitude, public amenity and local significance can be condemned to appease one household.

Yours sincerely



Consulting Arborist – AQF Level 5 in Arboriculture
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Quantitative Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) Assessor
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