

Our Ref: ID 3288  
Your Ref: DA/2024/763

5 August 2025

Jason McIntosh  
VARA Consulting  
Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway  
Swansea NSW 2281

Via email

email: [jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au); [emmilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:emmilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au);  
[Shakira.Muldoon@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Shakira.Muldoon@maitland.nsw.gov.au)  
CC: [lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Maitland Council team,

### **Development Application for 559 Anambah Road Gosforth**

Vara Consulting have requested additional advice regarding the proposed alternative flood access along River Road to support the Development Application for 559 Anambah Road Gosforth. We understand that the proposed road is:

- proposed to be fully funded by Thirdi, with no cost to local or state government.
- proposed to provide alternative access during flood events for existing and future residents, when Anambah Road is flooded.
- described as “temporary,” however we are not aware of any funding confirmed for the Western Link Road which is proposed to supersede the proposed alternative access route.
- able to support up to 249 Lots from Anambah before failure<sup>1</sup>, and therefore would not support the 900 potential lots across the urban subdivision.

**We refer to our previous advice letters dated 04 November 2024 and 27 June 2025.** As outlined in our previous advice, all proposed dwelling lots are located on land above the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) event for both riverine and local catchment flooding<sup>2</sup>. However, the site is currently frequently isolated (approximately 20% AEP) when Anambah Road, the current access route, becomes flooded by high hazard flood water for several days<sup>3</sup>, as occurred in May 2025.

We therefore **support** the introduction of an access and egress route, proposed to be along River Road, to reduce the frequency and duration of isolation of the proposed community.

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<sup>1</sup> Barr Planning. 2025. Response to Request for Additional Information, page 9

<sup>2</sup> Northrop. 2025. Flood Impact and Risk Assessment – Revision B, Figure BC6-1

<sup>3</sup> WMA Water. 2010. Hunter River Branxton to Green Rocks Flood Study

We **appreciate the consideration of alternative solutions** to “locked gates” to restrict general use while enabling timely access for emergency services and the community when required. However, we recommend:

- That the gates can be opened and closed remotely or in person by Council when Anambah Road is flooded (and /or closed as a consequence of flooding).
- That the gates have an emergency override to open when there is no power (for example during a severe weather event, power is often lost).
- That the road is maintained to an appropriate standard.
- That the road is able to withstand local flooding up to the 1 in 500 year event, if feasible.
- Ensuring the road is in place prior to development occurring to avoid placing a large number of people at risk of frequent and potentially long duration isolation.

**As the authority under the *Roads Act 1993* to close and maintain local roads, Council must be satisfied with any proposed emergency access arrangements for the development at 559 Anambah Road, Gosforth.**

Please feel free to contact our team via email at [rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au) should you wish to discuss any of the matters raised in this correspondence. The NSW SES would also be interested in receiving future correspondence regarding the outcome of this referral via this email address.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'P. Cinque'.

Peter Cinque  
Senior Manager, Emergency Risk Management  
**NSW State Emergency Service**

## Emmilia Marshall

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**From:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <rra@ses.nsw.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 August 2025 9:12 AM  
**To:** Jason McIntosh  
**Cc:** Florian Caillon; Robert Huxley; Brian Swaine; NSW SES Risk Reduction; Emmilia Marshall; Shakira Muldoon; Lisa Ignatavicius; Northern Zone Ops; Carolyn Storrie  
**Subject:** Response ID 3288 RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)  
**Attachments:** 20250805 NSW SES ID 3288 Response DA 559 Anambah Road Gosforth.pdf

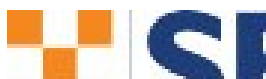
Good morning Jason,

Thank you for your email.

Please find attached response.

Kind regards.

*Daniela*



**Daniela Mitreski**  
**Program Support Officer | Emergency Risk Assessment Branch |**  
**Emergency Management Directorate**  
NSW State Emergency Service – State Headquarters  
E [rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)

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PO Box 6126 Wollongong, NSW 2500  
[www.ses.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ses.nsw.gov.au)



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**From:** Jason McIntosh <jason@varaconsulting.com.au>  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 August 2025 2:33 PM  
**To:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <rra@ses.nsw.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Florian Caillon <florian@thirdigroup.com.au>; Robert Huxley <robert@thirdigroup.com.au>; Brian Swaine <brian@thirdigroup.com.au>

**EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Elspeth,

Thank you again for your time on the phone earlier today.

As discussed, I'd like to confirm the following key points from our prior correspondence regarding the proposed upgrades to River Road:

- The upgraded River Road connection will provide alternate access for existing residents of Gosforth and future residents in Anambah when Anambah Road is cut off due to flooding.
- The upgrades are fully funded by Thirdi, with no financial contribution from local or state government or other agencies.
- While this connection is described as "temporary," that term refers only to its eventual superseding by the Western Link Road (currently under design and environmental assessment by Council). Thirdi's proposal, however, enables River Road to remain a functional alternate access route indefinitely should the Western Link Road be delayed or not delivered.

Regarding the use of the term "locked gates", I'd like to clarify that this was used only to express the intent for controlled access. Controlled access is necessary for two reasons:

- i. The application received community objections from residents in the Windella Estate based on perceived traffic concerns.
- ii. The existing River Road reserve is only 20.115 m wide. Under Maitland City Council's MOES (Manual of Engineering Standards), this would typically support no more than 300 lots under normal access conditions.

Accordingly, access to River Road is proposed to be restricted and activated only during flood events when Anambah Road is impassable.

To address SES's concerns about the limitations of locked gates, we have explored a range of alternative access control measures that would restrict general use while enabling timely access for emergency services and the community when required:

**1. Automated Boom Gates with Emergency Override**

Normally closed; can be opened remotely by SES or Council. May be integrated with flood warning systems or emergency service keycards.

e.g. Bungarabee Park, Blacktown (below)



## 2. **Retractable Bollards (Hydraulic or Electric)**

Remain raised under normal conditions; retract via remote activation or flood alerts.

## 3. **Traffic Control Barrier with Surveillance & Intercom**

Monitored gate with CCTV and intercom, enabling live access approval during emergencies.

## 4. **Swing Gate with Flood-Sensor Triggered Activation**

Automatic activation of access point when Anambah Road reaches flood thresholds.

## 5. **Traffic Lights with Emergency Phase Activation**

Remain inactive/red under normal conditions; activate to allow directional flow during flood events.

We would greatly appreciate SES's feedback on the viability of these alternatives, and respectfully request that SES provides a formal response confirming:

- A. That NSW SES recognises the public benefit of the proposed River Road access in providing connectivity during flood events; and
- B. That while SES does not support the use of locked gates, it is open to working with Council and the proponent to identify a suitable alternative access control mechanism. As I mentioned, we are happy for Council to condition the consent to this effect but note your point regarding SES's role as a non-integrated referral agency.

We remain committed to working collaboratively to find a practical, safe, and operationally acceptable solution.

Thanks,

**JASON MCINTOSH** | 0417 689 270  
Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway  
Swansea NSW 2281  
[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)



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**From:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Friday, 1 August 2025 12:58 PM  
**To:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>  
**Cc:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

Thank you Jason, I have forwarded your email to Elspeth.

Kind regards.

*Daniela*



**Daniela Mitreski**  
**Program Support Officer | Emergency Risk Assessment Branch |**  
**Emergency Management Directorate**  
NSW State Emergency Service – State Headquarters  
E [rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)

93-99 Burelli Street Wollongong, NSW 2500  
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---

**From:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>

**Sent:** Friday, 1 August 2025 12:50 PM

**To:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>

**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

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Good afternoon Daniela,

Thank you for your response and for forwarding my email to Elspeth.

Given the time-sensitive nature of the matter, I would very appreciative if you could please ask Elspeth to return my call as soon as Elspeth is available next week.

Thanks,

**JASON MCINTOSH** | 0417 689 270

Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway

Swansea NSW 2281

[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)

**VARA**  
CONSULTING

---

**From:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Friday, 1 August 2025 10:08 AM

**To:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>

**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

Good morning Jason,

Thank you for your email.

Elspeth O'Shannessy is the Manager of the Emergency Risk Assessment Team and unfortunately is unavailable today to return your call and will return to the office next week.

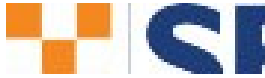
I have forwarded your email to Elspeth.

Please continue to use the RRA email address as the centralised contact method to get in touch with our Team.

Thank you for your understanding.

Kind regards.

Daniela



**Daniela Mitreski**  
**Program Support Officer | Emergency Risk Assessment Branch |**  
**Emergency Management Directorate**  
NSW State Emergency Service – State Headquarters  
E [rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)

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---

**From:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>  
**Sent:** Friday, 1 August 2025 9:34 AM  
**To:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

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Hi Daniela,

Thanks for the response. I had a missed call from someone of NSW SES on Wednesday afternoon - the person identified themselves as Elle in a voicemail message. I have tried to return the call a few times since but have been unable to get through. Is there a number I can call to talk with someone that is familiar with the application?

Thanks,

**JASON MCINTOSH** | 0417 689 270  
Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway  
Swansea NSW 2281  
[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)

**From:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 July 2025 9:36 AM

**To:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>

**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

Good morning Jason,

Thank you for your emails, I've forwarded both to Ana for her information.

Kind regards.

*Daniela*



**Daniela Mitreski**

**Program Support Officer | Emergency Risk Assessment Branch |  
Emergency Management Directorate**

NSW State Emergency Service – State Headquarters

E [rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)

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**From:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 July 2025 8:52 AM

**To:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley

<[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>

**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

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Hi Ana Maria,

I tried giving you a call this morning on (02) 4251 6111, but the helpdesk wasn't able to find your direct number. They kindly put me through to another line, and I've left a voicemail message - though I'm not sure if it will make its way to you.

If you're available, would you mind giving me a quick call after 11:00am today? We think a short chat might be the easiest way to clarify a few things about the application, rather than going back and forth over email.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,

**JASON MCINTOSH** | 0417 689 270  
Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway  
Swansea NSW 2281  
[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)

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**From:** Jason McIntosh

**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 July 2025 5:11 PM

**To:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Emilia Marshall <[emilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:emilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au)>; Shakira Muldoon <[shakira.muldoon@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:shakira.muldoon@maitland.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Steve Barr (<[sbarr@barrpandp.com.au](mailto:sbarr@barrpandp.com.au)> <[sbarr@barrpandp.com.au](mailto:sbarr@barrpandp.com.au)>); Samuel Liu <[sliu@barrplanning.com.au](mailto:sliu@barrplanning.com.au)>

**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

Dear Ana,

Thank you again for your detailed response and ongoing engagement.

We wish to clearly clarify a critical point regarding the function of River Road within our proposal for 559 Anambah Road.

River Road is not being proposed as an “emergency access” or “evacuation route”. These terms are not appropriate in the context of our application and may lead to misunderstanding. The proposed use of River Road is simply to enable safe and practical day-to-day movement for existing and future residents during flood events, when Anambah Road is inundated and cut off. This ensures people can continue their normal lives during such events—accessing work, school, medical care, etc.

Importantly, River Road will also provide reliable access for emergency service providers to residents in the area (including the existing Gosforth community) who may otherwise be isolated during a flood. It is not intended as a conduit for evacuation, nor is it promoted as part of any formal evacuation strategy. The flood constraints on the subject site simply do not warrant the need for evacuation, even in the most severe Hunter River or local catchment flood events.

We appreciate SES's constructive role in this process and remain available to collaborate further on the design and communication of the access strategy to ensure alignment with broader flood resilience objectives.

Thanks,

**JASON MCINTOSH** | 0417 689 270  
Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway  
Swansea NSW 2281  
[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)



---

**From:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 July 2025 2:46 PM  
**To:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>  
**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Emilia Marshall <[emilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:emilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au)>; Shakira Muldoon <[shakira.muldoon@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:shakira.muldoon@maitland.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Steve Barr (<[sbarr@barrpandp.com.au](mailto:sbarr@barrpandp.com.au)> <[sbarr@barrpandp.com.au](mailto:sbarr@barrpandp.com.au)>); Samuel Liu <[sliu@barrplanning.com.au](mailto:sliu@barrplanning.com.au)>; NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

Dear Jason,

Good afternoon and thank you for your email.

We appreciate you clarifying the proposed access strategy for the development proposal at 559 Anambah Road.

I just wanted to clarify that while the NSW SES support the alternate access, for the safety of the community we do not support this access being restricted/conditioned by any factors that may impede/delay evacuation during a flood event. This can become particularly dangerous in a flash flooding environment such as the local catchment, providing very limited warning time for the community to take protective action. Restricted/controlled access could potentially introduce another vulnerable link in the evacuation process and, as touched on in our previous email, can become problematic in large scale flooding events when emergency services resources are already in high demand. That's why, from an emergency management perspective, the NSW SES support that the proposed access via River Road remains publicly accessible and that is maintained to an appropriate standard for use in wet weather to support existing and future communities.

We also recommend careful consideration of cumulative impacts of future development on evacuation capacity for the broader Anambah Urban Release Area (AURA), and strongly advise working with Council as the consent authority to consider the evacuation capability for future development in the broader context ensuring it can provide for safe evacuation of future communities, while maintaining that of existing communities.

I hope this helps.

Warm regards,



## Ana Maria Chitu

Planning and Research Officer | Emergency Risk Assessment



E [rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)

Suite 5, Level 9, 1 Rider Boulevard,  
Land of the Wangal Clan of the Eora Nation,  
Rhodes NSW 2138

[www.ses.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ses.nsw.gov.au)



---

**From:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 July 2025 11:14 AM

**To:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Emilia Marshall <[emilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:emilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Steve Barr (<[sbarr@barrpandp.com.au](mailto:sbarr@barrpandp.com.au)>); Samuel Liu <[sliu@barrplanning.com.au](mailto:sliu@barrplanning.com.au)>

**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

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Dear Ana Maria,

Thank you for your considered response and for acknowledging our approach to flood access and the function of River Road as part of the broader Anambah Urban Release Area (AURA) access strategy.

We are pleased that SES supports River Road as a valuable alternate flood access route, and we agree with the benefit to the broader community.

To clarify two key aspects of the proposed strategy for 559 Anambah Road:

### 1. Interim Use of River Road

River Road is described as a “interim” flood access solution only in the context that it may be superseded by the Western Link Road (Windella Road), if and when it is delivered. Should the Western Link Road not proceed within a reasonable timeframe - or at all - River Road remains available in perpetuity. In that sense, it is a fully viable long-term flood access solution unless and until it is replaced by the Western Link Road.

### 2. Purpose of Controlled Access

The controlled access arrangement for River Road is not intended to restrict use by emergency services in any way. Rather, it is a deliberate and measured response to ongoing community concerns from existing Windella Estate residents about the permanent opening of River Road to general traffic. These controls aim to manage day-to-day vehicle movement while ensuring that alternate access remains unfettered during flood events. We note SES's advice regarding the potential operational challenges of restricted access during large-scale flood events. To address this, the access control system will be designed with SES-compatible solutions (e.g., automated gates with remote override, signage, and a clearly defined Emergency Access Management Plan), to ensure reliability and ease of use by emergency services. We are happy to engage further with SES to ensure the final design aligns with emergency services management requirements.

In relation to SES' comment regarding consent conditions, we also wish to provide further context around the Western Link Road. While it is identified in the strategic access framework for the AURA, Council is currently leading the design and approvals process for that road in collaboration with another landowner. This work has occurred independently of Thirdi, who has not been involved in the planning or funding discussions to date, nor has Council sought Thirdi's input. As such, and critically, our application for 559 Anambah Road does not rely on the delivery of the Western Link Road to proceed. Our access strategy is fully functional based on existing road infrastructure, with River Road forming the basis for alternate flood access.

We appreciate the collaborative approach taken by NSW SES in reviewing this proposal, and we remain available to further discuss the details of the Emergency Access Management Plan or broader development access strategy as required.

Thanks,

**JASON MCINTOSH** | 0417 689 270  
Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway  
Swansea NSW 2281  
[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)

**VARA**  
CONSULTING

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**From:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Monday, 28 July 2025 1:10 PM  
**To:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>  
**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Emmilia Marshall <[emmilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:emmilia.marshall@maitland.nsw.gov.au)>; Brian Swaine <[brian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:brian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Robert Huxley <[robert@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:robert@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Florian Caillon <[florian@thirdigroup.com.au](mailto:florian@thirdigroup.com.au)>; Steve Barr (<[sbarr@barrpandp.com.au](mailto:sbarr@barrpandp.com.au)>) <[sbarr@barrpandp.com.au](mailto:sbarr@barrpandp.com.au)>; Samuel Liu <[slu@barrplanning.com.au](mailto:slu@barrplanning.com.au)>; NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: RESPONSE TO SES COMMENTARY – DA/2024/763 – 559 ANAMBAH ROAD, GOSFORTH (Your Ref: ID2702 & ID3159)

Dear Jason,

Thank you for reaching out and we appreciate your considered response to our advice letter, along with clarifying the function of River Road.

We note that the use of River Road is intended to be a temporary alternate access route engineered to provide improved flood resilience, and that consistent with Council's views for the Anambah Urban Release Area (AURA), the long-term access strategy is to deliver a western road link through to Windella Road and the New England Highway. However, understanding the flooding constraints in the broader area, any additional alternative emergency access route that can be used long-term (as opposed to a temporary basis) during a flooding event would benefit the community, particularly noting the potential for future expansion of the population within the AURA.

In this context, it is important to consider if the western road link is confirmed and funded, and the timeframe until completion of this road. We understand that the applicant for Anambah DA1 at 381 Anambah Road, Anambah is engaging *"in delivering the Wyndella Road upgrades and subsequent lead-in road (western road link) upfront. The western road link will be the main access point for the applicant's land holding. The applicant acknowledged that the development application would need to be conditioned to ensure the western road link is delivered prior to the issue of a subdivision certificate for the first allotment."* (**Ethos Urban, 2025, Statement of Environmental Effects, page**

12) We suggest a similar condition may be explored and put in place for this proposal at 559 Anambah Road to mitigate risk by having the appropriate infrastructure in place prior to development occurring.

It is understood that the aim of providing controlled access via River Road is to manage any negative traffic impacts to Windella Estate residents in non-flood periods. We note that SES-compatible lockboxes, remote access systems, or automated gates, supported by signage and a clear Emergency Access Management Plan, are being proposed to manage this. In relation to this approach, the NSW SES advise that generally locked gates/restricted access can add complexities for warnings, emergency response and evacuation and could cause delays; this becomes particularly problematic during flooding events of large scale when resource demands are already quite high, therefore this is a less desirable solution from an emergency management perspective.

Please don't hesitate to reach out should there be any questions.

Warm regards,

**Ana Maria Chitu**

Planning and Research Officer | Emergency Risk Assessment



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**From:** Jason McIntosh <[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 23 July 2025 5:09 PM

**To:** NSW SES Risk Reduction <[rra@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rra@ses.nsw.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Lisa Ignatavicius <[lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lisa.ignatavicius1@ses.nsw.gov.au)>; Emilia Marshall

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**Att: Mr Peter Cinque**

Dear Peter,

Please find attached response to correspondence received from NSW SES via Maitland City Council on the above project. Note I will also upload a copy of this to the Planning Portal.

Feel free to call me directly if you wish to discuss.

Thanks,

**JASON MCINTOSH** | 0417 689 270

Suite 9a, 172-178 Pacific Highway

Swansea NSW 2281

[jason@varaconsulting.com.au](mailto:jason@varaconsulting.com.au)

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