I object to the granting of SSD status for North Byron Parklands. We residents of the area in north Byron believe that North Byron Parklands should be subject to the usual planning development restrictions of other festivals and events and should be controlled through the Tweed and Byron Shire Councils. We are a small shire with a low rate payer base of about 17,000. Increasingly we have have borne the cost of rate increases to assist with road damage.

North Byron Parklands have consistently breached the conditions of the 5 year trial. They have not listened to local indigenous elders and have not contributed to major infrastructure of the shire by improving roads or facilities, only provided funds to businesses who benefit directly from the festival.

There are major issues with ground water contamination from waste and also with evacuation should a fire, flood or other emergency take place. We residents are left at significant risk should all emergency resources be directed to the site.

We have made a number of submissions to both the IPAC and directly to the premier and the ministers for planning and police, however it appears that nothing we say about the impact of increasing festivals on the local community makes any difference to decisions made. The only responses we receive from letters objecting to the SSD status have been from the Byron Shire mayor and councillors.

Ballina is a marginal state electorate. The residents here believe we are not heard by the current government. We will vote accordingly at the next election.