

# Energex tells council: Give us \$5m or the river gets it

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ENERGEX has refused to back down from its demand that Logan City Council contribute \$5 million to the cost of moving the Loganlea to Jimboomba power line off the Logan River.

In a letter dated August 1, Energex CEO Terry Effeney told Mayor Pam Parker her offer of in-kind assistance “falls short” of the 50-50 cost sharing requirement of Energex’s Community Power Line Enhancement Program (CPEP).

Cr Parker said she was “very displeased” with Mr Effeney’s response.

“Council is not in a position to fund the \$5 million being sought by Energex to fund its planning mistakes,” she said.

“Further, it is not council’s core business to be building power lines.

“It would be an unacceptable burden on the Logan community.”

Cr Parker said council had made offers of assistance for environmental offsets worth \$1.1 million and other commitments which could be absorbed into its existing operations budget.

“We as a council believe this is the best approach and consider it a substantial contribution to the project,” she said.

Mr Effeney insisted nothing short of a \$5 million contribution would change Energex’s plans to build the power line along the river.

“Our position remains that any further funding above and beyond the ‘least cost viable option’ should not be carried by all electricity customers in south east Queensland but by the direct beneficiaries and those requiring the additional expense,” Mr Effeney said.

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“Both the Logan Village and Loganview Road deviation proposals considered in recent correspondence carry a budgeted additional cost in the order of approximately \$10 million in direct costs, subject to detailed design.”

Cr Parker said Energex had failed to provide council with a detailed cost breakdown to justify the claim of \$10 million in additional costs.

She said council had issued a Right to Information (RTI) request to secure Energex’s cost estimates.

Mr Effeney said a decision must be reached by August 15, or the company would proceed with the original plan.

“The line design is now complete, negotiations with almost all landholders are well progressed, and the placement of orders for the major line components is imminent,” he said.

Cr Parker said council would continue to oppose the planned route.

“Council has stood strongly beside our community in opposing this poorly planned proposal and we have found Energex difficult to deal with throughout the whole planning process,” she said.

“The government should rein them in and work with us and our community to protect the Logan River for future generations.”

The stoush over the planned high voltage power line from Loganlea to Jimboomba has been running since 2008.