

COMMENTS BY ENVIRONMENTAL PRESENTERS ON THE VERBATIM REPORT FOR THE FALMOUTH CRUISE SHIP TERMINAL DEVELOPMENT HELD ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2007 IN FALMOUTH , TRELAWNY.

29/10/07

- 1) During the public discussion Mr. Roland Gayle (ODPEM) mentioned the Falmouth Wetlands and Martha Brae River Estuary Management done by Dr. Dale Webber et.al in 1998. This report speaks to the ecological baseline aspects of estuary and does not address flooding potential in the estuary. In speaking with Mr. Gayle, his mention of report was more directed at the ecological sections of the report and not specifically the hydrological assessment.
- 2) The report did not speak to a specific date of historic flooding, for instance 2001 as mentioned by Mr. Gayle, but it does clearly indicate that recurrent flooding is a common occurrence within the town and on the floodplains. The ODPEM was contacted regarding the data within its flood database and that response is still forthcoming. The ODPEM has an electronic map showing historic records of floods that are held by the WRA (Water Resources Authority) and this was used to indicate the presence any major flood event the report.
- 3) Mr. Gayle commented on the typical flow path of flood waters within the city of Falmouth. This on-the-ground information will be taken onboard by the final design drainage engineers for the development. The report indicated that a detailed flood risk assessment should be done as part of the final design works and this will be done by the developer. The assessment will look in detail at the return periods of flooding in Falmouth and make designs recommendations, in collaboration with the Local Authorities (LA), as to the return criteria for extreme and normal events. The flood risk assessment will also look at the potential for increased flood risk for surrounding developments in Falmouth Gardens, Rock etc – areas mentioned by Mr. Gayle during the public discussion that he felt would be exposed to increased risk. The flood risk assessment will also look at the “dragline” and the engineering options that can be used to upgrade that drainage line within the development footprint.
- 4) Mr. Gayle mentioned that the EIA assessment “ignored previous things” which is an unfortunate statement and equally not correct. The visual presentations are condensed, simplified versions of the larger report and not all elements can be incorporated into the public presentations. The report is tasked with looking at the impacts of the development on the immediate surroundings, looking specifically at pre and post runoff comparisons, reviewing the proposed drainage works and addressing sedimentation/contamination issues that may arise during and after construction. These were addressed in full within the EIA report. Mr. Gayle’s mention of the stadium (which has its own EIA) and the effects of Daniel Hills deforestation are unfortunately outside the scope of the project.
- 5) Subsurface percolation devices were, unfortunately, misinterpreted by Mr. Gayle as the main solution to remove surface water from the town – it is patently not. Percolation is but one of the solutions for disposal of storm water from the development; it is a one of the technical solutions that can be applied in a targeted way to control runoff from very small areas such as walkways etc. The aim of percolation is to minimise and control the storm water at source in order to reduce its effect downstream. Percolation devices as dry wells, infiltration trenches etc are quite useful, even in areas of high water table, at controlling and managing surface runoff, as long as the device is situated above the water table. Ground elevation to give additional distance between groundwater and the base of the infiltration device are commonly used. And given that the development will be raising ground levels, the use of such methods is not without merit.
- 6) Issues of flooding outside of the project areas are normally the domain of the LA and not project developers. What the developer will seek to do is to ensure that no increased flooding is realised by any surrounding lands, especially downgradient, due to the development. Overall the EIA report as it pertains to storm water has indicated to the developer the potential areas for impact and the developer has committed to ensuring that these are appropriately addressed.