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Brian Bennion

MARIA Hayes' video of the echidna poking around a termite nest in bushland south of Eugene St at Bellbird Park featured in today's paper is heartbreaking.

The sound of bulldozers 100m away moving toward its habitat is confronting.

You can see it at www.ipswichtribune.com.au thanks to Maria and the Bellbird Park Preservation Group.

Drive along the Cunningham Highway near White Rock and South Ripley and you will see two or three wallabies killed on the side of the road.

The pace of development through the western corridor is unstoppable.

Look through the pages of today's paper and Deputy Premier Steven Miles is talking up the investment in road infrastructure to bring forward 8,900 lots in the Ripley Valley; Mayor Teresa Harding is talking about a new pound and a new waste transfer station at Redbank Plains to service the fast growing corridor; and The Greens and Member for Blair Shayne Neumann are trying to deal with the housing crisis in the Ipswich region.

Development of the sensitive environment of the sloping land heading to Woogaroo Creek at Bellbird Park has been opposed by local residents for years.

A development application submitted by Singaporean-based developers CB Developments to build a 340-lot estate on the 33ha site at Eugene St was rejected by the council in 2018.

When the Bellbird Park Preservation Group approached Ipswich City Council to investigate buying land over 12-26 Eugene St under the Enviroplan program, only local councillors Paul Tully and Nicole Jonic were in favour of the purchase.

Mayor Teresa Harding and the rest of the council voted in line with the recommendation from council's planning officers that it was determined not to be a "strategically sound investment" after a desktop assessment and an independent kerbside evaluation of the site.

The report to council acknowledged the area contained a "number of natural and ecological values, and has value to the local community".

There is no stopping development through the western corridor.

Even bones and a fossilised coral reef found on the development site near the Deebling Creek Aboriginal Mission grounds didn't stop AV Jennings moving in with a convoy of construction vehicles and police to support them evict protesters at 4am.

That land, even though the old mission land is protected under the State's Heritage Register, was zoned a priority development area by the State Government and even a unanimous vote of Ipswich City Councillors telling the State Government to review the mission land's inclusion in the Ripley Priority Development Area has fallen on deaf ears.

There have been some interesting letters to the editor published in the *Ipswich Tribune* in recent weeks on the cost of development and community input on planning. Our State MPs and councillors need to start listening to their constituents.
