



Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET 35123

Your ref: A512831
17 DEC 2019

Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition number 3203-19 lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 26 November 2019 about cancelling the Coomera Connector Project.

The Palaszczuk Government has committed to progressing the southern section—between Nerang and Coomera—as Stage 1 of the project, with community consultation recently completed and business case development to commence in early-2020.

Stage 1 of the Coomera Connector will improve transport capacity and accessibility, while also reducing trips on the M1 by:

- encouraging up to 60,000 vehicles per day to use the Coomera Connector for local trips
- providing more reliable travel times between Brisbane and the Gold Coast
- delivering an alternative north-south route between Coomera and Nerang, including additional crossings of the Coomera and Nerang rivers.

The Palaszczuk Government has funded \$10 million towards the necessary planning work in the 2019–20 budget, which has been matched by the Australian Government. The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is undertaking this work which will include extensive environmental studies and will deliver best practice environmental outcomes in the project corridor.

The northern section of the Coomera Connector—between Loganholme and Coomera—will be progressed as part of future stages. In the meantime, TMR is undertaking community consultation to ensure that the community has a say on future infrastructure along the length of the corridor. In the northern section, this will include TMR considering alternative routes put forward by the community, particularly around the locality of Eagleby to link with the Logan Motorway and M1 at Loganholme.

I can also advise that the Coomera Connector is not being planned in isolation, but as part of an integrated transport network in consultation with local government authorities.

The Palaszczuk Government is, in fact, currently delivering a three-stage rolling program of M1 upgrades in the northern M1 corridor:

- Stage 1 – the M1/M3 Gateway Merge upgrade (southbound) is under construction. Works are progressing well and due for completion in quarter two of 2020
- Stage 2 – the Eight Mile Plains to Daisy Hill upgrade (northbound). Construction is expected to begin at the completion of Stage 1
- Stage 3 – the Daisy Hill to Logan Motorway upgrade is currently in the planning phase.

The Palaszczuk Government is also delivering an upgrade in the southern M1 corridor between Mudgeeraba and Varsity Lakes, with work due to be completed in mid-2020. Work on the next section—between Varsity Lakes and Tugun—will commence immediately afterwards.

The Palaszczuk Government's upgrade to Exit 57 (Oxenford) is underway and prioritises improving motorist safety and traffic flow through the interchange. The Australian Government has now matched the Palaszczuk Government's commitment to upgrade Exit 41 (Yatala South) and Exit 49 (Pimpama), bringing the total investment to \$192.6 million. These projects will deliver a number of safety benefits to motorists using the M1 and surrounding local road network, improve traffic flow and efficiency at the interchanges, and improve reliability of access conditions for freight movements and transit times for all motorway users.

In addition to upgrading the M1, the Palaszczuk Government is committed to improving public transport services throughout South East Queensland. The Cross River Rail project, for example, will provide two new tunnels under the Brisbane River and the CBD. The additional river crossing provided by Cross River Rail will provide capacity for more services via a new route, linking with the Gold Coast heavy rail line directly to new CBD stations at Woolloongabba, Albert Street and the Exhibition.

As part of Cross River Rail, three new Gold Coast stations at Pimpama, Helensvale North and Merrimac will be delivered. Connectivity to Pimpama and Helensvale North stations from the Coomera Connector will be integrated within the Coomera Connector planning. This \$120 million commitment will be realised with Cross River Rail creating better connectivity for communities in the Gold Coast and encouraging people to use public transport and ease congestion on the M1.

Another example of the Palaszczuk Government's commitment to improving the public transport network is the \$709 million extension of the Gold Coast Light Rail project, from Broadbeach to Burleigh. Following a competitive tender process, a contract for the design and construction of Stage 3A is expected to be awarded in late-2020. The preferred bidder will construct the infrastructure required, with an expectation to engage local workers and industry to work on the project. The extension could be operational by 2023.

I am advised that in addition to submitting this petition, the principal petitioner also provided feedback as part of the formal community consultation process during November 2019. All feedback provided by the community during the consultation period will be considered by TMR and inform future planning for the project.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



MARK BAILEY MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads