



Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET48386
Your ref: A1080550

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20 April 2023

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 3867-23, lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Dale Last MP, Member for Burdekin on 28 March 2023 about the Bruce Highway at Merinda.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is aware of flooding on the Bruce Highway—between Delta and Merinda—during extreme rainfall. TMR understands the concerns of the community and the inconvenience caused when the road is temporarily closed.

Work has recommenced on the \$31.4 million Bruce Highway (Bowen–Ayr), Bowen Connection Road to Champion Street intersection widen pavement project. This project is part of the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program (BHUP), jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments. The BHUP is a \$13 billion, 15-year program of works to improve safety, flood resilience and capacity along the entire length of the Bruce Highway.

This project was designed to deliver priority safety improvements to almost six kilometres of the Bruce Highway, between the Bowen Connection Road and Champion Street intersections. The scope includes the provision of road widening to accommodate wide centre line treatment, roadside hazard removal, guardrail installation and intersection upgrades.

TMR has confirmed that the current funding committed for this project does not accommodate significant flood immunity measures beyond the form of maintaining, extending and replacing drainage. TMR's focus is the timely delivery of the approved safety improvements on this section of the Bruce Highway.

I acknowledge the feedback about the flood resilience at this location. However, I am advised by TMR that this issue is attributed to a number of factors which are difficult to mitigate. I trust this information is of assistance.

Peter's Flats is a natural low-lying floodplain, and as such, will always be susceptible to water inundation during extreme rainfall, such as the weather event experienced in January 2023. The tidal influence during these events also contributes to the inability of water to flow away at high tide times.

Some of these factors were investigated as part of a \$57.5 million project to upgrade the Sandy Gully bridge and approaches—north of Merinda—which was delivered in 2017 and significantly improved flood immunity to 3.7 kilometres of this section of highway. However, a current and full hydrological analysis of issues in the vicinity of Merinda would need to be undertaken as part of a flood immunity improvement project. I can advise there is currently no funding allocated to this activity and it will be considered against other competing priorities across the entire state-controlled network.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Bailey', with a long, sweeping tail stroke extending downwards and to the right.

MARK BAILEY MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads