



Hon. Paul Lucas MP



20/4/06
**Queensland
Government**

Our ref: MC20460

Minister for
Transport and Main Roads

Your ref: 611-06

13 APR 2006

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000



Dear Mr Laurie 

**Re: Petition No. 611-06: Bruce Highway (Cooroy to Curra)
Strategic Planning Study**

I refer to a petition lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Ms Elisa Roberts MP, Member for Gympie, on 15 February 2006, about the Bruce Highway (Cooroy to Curra) Strategic Planning Study.

The Honourable Warren Truss MP, federal Minister for Transport and Regional Services and local federal member for Wide Bay, launched the public display of the five route options in November 2005. The study is being conducted by the Department of Main Roads, with federal government participation and overview. Main Roads acknowledges that this is a sensitive issue for many people in the study area and as with any major road planning study encourages and welcomes feedback.

The state government believes that because the federal government is funding the study and eventual highway upgrade, it would be a matter for federal Minister Truss to rule out any of the existing route options. However, the joint study team has been directed to look at new route options.

To better understand community concerns, I met with Ms Elisa Roberts MP, Member for Gympie, Councillor Mick Venardos, Mayor of Cooloola Shire Council, and members of the Cooroy-Curra Consultative Committee (CCCC). Most recently, I have viewed the study area by helicopter with elected representatives including Minister Truss to see the potential impacts first hand.

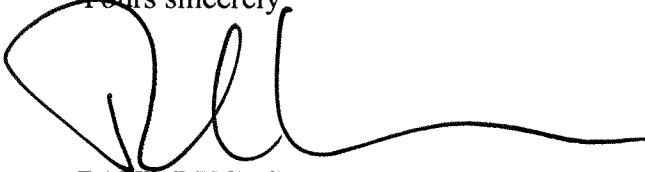
The study team is reviewing the nearly 2000 submissions received during the 12-week consultation period which finished on 27 January 2006. Late submissions will also be considered.

Using this feedback, the study team will work closely with the CCCC and local councils to re-examine the existing options and to consider new options. South of Gympie, the study team is considering options that make greater use of the existing highway corridor.

Once a preferred option has been determined, it will be displayed for further community comment. Main Roads expects that the study will be completed and a final corridor adopted, by the end of 2006.

I am committed to securing federal funding for the upgrade to begin once planning is completed and a suitable route has been identified. I strongly agree with the views expressed by the community that action needs to be taken in order to address the safety concerns on this section of the federally-funded national highway, which is acknowledged as one of the worst sections of road in Australia. A bypass of Gympie is the only real solution.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Lucas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL LUCAS MP

Minister for Transport and Main Roads