



Hon. Paul Lucas MP



Queensland
Government

Our ref: MC26642

Your ref:

17 JAN 2007

Minister for
Transport and Main Roads

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

Dear Mr Laurie

**Re: Petition No. 754-06 - request for a passing lane at the intersection of
Atherton - Herberton and Wongabel Roads near Atherton**

I refer to a petition lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Ms Rosa Lee Long MP, Member for Tablelands, requesting a passing lane be constructed at the intersection of Atherton - Herberton Road and Wongabel Road near Atherton.

The Wongabel Road is a local council road, for which Atherton Shire Council is responsible. The Atherton - Herberton Road is a state-controlled road.

I am advised that Main Roads has inspected the intersection and has assessed that it is of a safe standard for drivers to negotiate, while observing their responsibilities to drive to the conditions, and that it satisfies the department's duty of care obligations.

I understand the concerns of petitioners following an accident involving a single vehicle travelling on the Wongabel Road towards the intersection on 17 November 2006. Following the accident, Main Roads carried out an investigation and found that the condition of the Atherton - Herberton Road did not contribute to the accident. For traffic on the Wongabel Road, the sight distance was found to be well above minimum standards looking towards Atherton, and it meets minimum standards looking towards Herberton, providing sufficient visibility for drivers to safely negotiate the intersection.

However, Main Roads will install a side-road junction sign on the Atherton - Herberton Road, opposite the T-intersection facing the Wongabel Road, to warn motorists that the Wongabel Road is about to end at an intersection. The sign will be visible to approaching traffic on the Wongabel Road.

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Drivers are responsible for driving to the prevailing road conditions, including road alignment, regardless of the signed speed limit indicating the maximum legal speed at a location. When driving on a curve, such as the alignment of the Wongabel Road approaching the intersection, drivers should slow down. However, the department will also recommend that Atherton Shire Council remove a 100km per hr speed sign on the Wongabel Road that is located just before the intersection.

I am advised that the petitioners' request to upgrade the intersection by installing a passing lane on the Atherton - Herberton Road will not assist motorists turning from Wongabel Road nor would it have prevented the accident on 17 November 2006.

Intersections are assessed for upgrading on a priority basis, taking into account a number of factors. These include traffic volumes, safety issues and accident history. Main Roads records show that there has been no recorded traffic accidents at this intersection in the past five years up to the accident on 17 November 2006.

Due to the current level of safety at the intersection, including its layout, adequate visibility, and no significant accident history, as well as the low traffic volumes, it is not currently listed as a priority for upgrading.

Main Roads will continue to monitor the performance of the intersection and to assess its future priority for upgrading along with other intersections across the network.

Yours sincerely

PAUL LUCAS MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads