



Speech by

Hon. STEVE BREDHAUER

MEMBER FOR COOK

Hansard 25 March 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Nerang-Broadbeach Road

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (9.50 a.m.), by leave : I rise on this occasion to advise the successful outcome of consultation with community groups in the Carrara area of the Gold Coast who are affected by the Nerang-Broadbeach Road issue. In December 1998, after considerable community discussion and consideration of options, I made a decision to approve the alignment for the Nerang-Broadbeach Road. In making this decision, it was clear that there would be some people who may not be happy with it. Whilst I was not intending to revisit the alignment issue, I was prepared to consider enhancement to the approved alignment if there were persuasive reasons to do so.

For several months, Main Roads officers have been seeking community input into the concept planning of a section of this road between Ross Street and Nielsens Road. The local community was particularly concerned that a section of the existing pavement be retained so that it could be used as a service road linking properties between Ross Street and the Carrara market area near Goodings corner. Representatives of the three Carrara community groups met with my director-general and district director of Main Roads to argue the case for an enhancement to my decision on the alignment to the Nerang-Broadbeach alignment route. The Department of Main Roads worked with the Carrara groups to expand the alignment decision and to consider their proposed alignment enhancement.

I congratulate the Carrara community groups for establishing an excellent working relationship with Main Roads. As a result, the three Carrara community groups called a public meeting on Sunday, 6 March 1999 to put up to the whole community an enhancement proposal. The meeting held in the community hall of Emmanuel College was attended by approximately 300 residents, who overwhelmingly endorsed the principle of the roadway system explained by Mr John Worrall, District Director, South Coast Hinterland. The three Carrara residents groups requested the Director-General of Main Roads to make recommendations on the enhancement to me. I gave the recommendation serious consideration and I have now approved those changes. The enhancement of the alignment will improve access to the area for emergency services, it will improve public transport services and it will improve the amenity of the area for local residents. Furthermore, this initiative is not expected to result in any significant increase in overall project costs.

The outcome is the result of lengthy consultation between Main Roads personnel and all stakeholders affected by the road alignment in this area. I congratulate those community representatives who have continued to search for a solution which meets their needs without any detrimental effects on others.

This outcome was confirmed in a recent letter from the Carrara organisations in which they have commented that—

"Not only was the meeting an overwhelming success, it also conclusively demonstrated what is achievable when interested parties act in a cohesive and responsible manner, do not allow the subject to become politicised by any level of Government, person or community group and there is mutual respect and appreciation on matters that effect and determine resolutions."

This positive outcome has been achieved in spite of the efforts of the member for Nerang to derail the consultation process.

Mr CONNOR: I rise to a point of order. I find that offensive and untrue. I did not try to derail——

Mr SPEAKER: Is the member for Nerang asking for the comment to be withdrawn?

Mr CONNOR: I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr BREDHAUER: I withdraw. Furthermore, members may recall that in October 1998 the member for Nerang made allegations of official misconduct against a Main Roads officer in respect to this matter and, in particular, to the lack of public consultation. The member for Nerang threatened to refer the matter to the Criminal Justice Commission. I strongly refuted these allegations in a ministerial statement of 10 November 1998. As part of the normal protocol on parliamentary allegations of official misconduct, the matter was referred to the CJC by my department on 20 November 1998 and the CJC subsequently requested a departmental report be prepared to allow their full assessment.

This report was provided, and on 1 March 1999 the CJC advised that, based on the available information, it agreed with the report's conclusions that there is no reasonable basis for suspicion of official misconduct by any public officer. I table a copy of the letter from the CJC to my director-general, which he has provided me in this regard. The determination of the CJC supports the validity and success of the public consultation process and leaves the member for Nerang accountable for his questionable use of parliamentary privilege.

Mr CONNOR: I rise to a point of order. The CJC did not even inquire into my evidence in relation to this. They have not interviewed me whatsoever.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr CONNOR: I ask him to withdraw it. It is offensive.

Mr SPEAKER: No, the Minister has not mentioned the member in that respect.

Mr CONNOR: He has referred directly to me, and I find it offensive. It is unfair, untrue and I had no opportunity to respond to this.

Mr SPEAKER: Did the Minister refer directly to the member for Nerang?

Mr CONNOR: I ask him to withdraw.

Mr BREDHAUER: If the member finds something offensive, I will withdraw it. That is the easiest way.

The determination of the CJC supports the validity and success of the public consultation process and leaves the member for Nerang accountable for his questionable use of parliamentary privilege. He should apologise to all those he has maligned.
