



Speech by

Peter Wellington

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard Tuesday, 5 June 2007

KENILWORTH-EUMUNDI ROAD

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (12.21 pm): I rise on a matter of public interest to my electorate and to many visitors to the Sunshine Coast and hinterland, which is the continuing poor state of the Kenilworth-Eumundi Road. The Kenilworth-Eumundi Road is a significant state government road in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast. This road was the subject of discussions between the Minister for Main Roads and Transport and me during the last sitting of parliament. Since that meeting, I have continued to receive complaints from drivers who use the road about both the deteriorating state of the road and the real conflict between road users who use the road as a tourist route and those who use it as a heavy haulage road.

Last week, a driver contacted me to share his recent driving experience on this road. He told me that while he was driving along the road, the driver of a heavy haulage truck and trailer attempted to overtake him. This movement happened just before another large truck and trailer approached. I understand that it was only through the quick-thinking action of the driver of the ute that a serious, if not fatal, accident did not occur.

Immediately after the near collision occurred, he and the driver of the truck stopped. The driver of the ute expected the overtaking truck driver to congratulate him on his driving actions, which avoided a very serious, if not fatal, accident. Instead, the driver of the truck berated him for not driving at 100 kilometres an hour. He said, 'This is a 100-kilometre speed zone and you should be driving at 100 kilometres per hour.'

This road is a designated tourist route, No. 22. It is also a heavy haulage route and every day hundreds of vehicles cart material from a local quarry to the development on the Sunshine Coast and the region. We have a real conflict between local residents and tourists who want to enjoy the experience of driving along the Kenilworth-Eumundi Road, which is a promoted and designated tourist drive, and the heavy haulage drivers who are racing against the clock to transport the maximum amount of material, which their employers want them to do. There is a very clear conflict of interest. I hope that the minister and his department will be able to bring forward the need to improve the safety of this road and also to upgrade the road to meet the competing demands of road users.

Another recent complaint I received was in relation to the level of intimidating tailgating behaviour of some of our heavy haulage drivers. Only on Saturday another driver said to me, 'Peter, my wife is now too afraid to drive our car along the road because of the intimidating driving behaviour of some of our truck drivers.' This is a public road and our residents and businesses should feel relaxed about driving on this road without the intimidation of some other road users.

I realise that a range of ministers are responsible in this issue: the Minister for Main Roads and Transport, the minister for tourism, the minister for police and so on. I acknowledge the work that our police officers have been doing in paying attention to the road, but the reality is that we have a very real conflict that needs urgent attention.

The thousands of heavy haulage trucks and trailers moving road material on the Kenilworth-Eumundi Road are simply satisfying contracts called by the state government to upgrade and build new

roads in the region. Again, I use this opportunity to call on the Minister for Main Roads and Transport to ensure that, before the state government departments or their contracting agencies accept tenders for the supply of road base material, they consider the implications of the transportation of that material along the road and consider the urgent need for the road to be upgraded.

In the time that I have left, I also wish to mention the need for a pull-off lane on the Nambour to Mapleton road. Only last night I attended a community meeting at Mapleton in relation to this issue. Tomorrow in this House the Clerk will table petitions calling for the upgrading of the unofficial pull-off lane. Tomorrow the Clerk will also table petitions from residents in my electorate calling on the minister to upgrade and improve the safety of the Kenilworth-Eumundi Road.

I use this opportunity to reiterate the importance of those two roads to the minister for transport and, more importantly, to his senior department staff who are required to provide the minister with important information so that he is able to make the important decisions required of him. I ask the minister to again listen to my calls and those of my constituents and the hundreds of visitors who travel the Kenilworth-Eumundi Road, as we ask for the upgrading of this road.