



Speech by

Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Tuesday, 5 June 2007

STAFFORD ELECTORATE, INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (11.56 am): The dynamic Queensland economy and the growth of south-east Queensland in particular are creating great opportunities for our state, including the residents and businesses in my own electorate of Stafford. The growing pains being caused by this growth include the need to meet the huge infrastructure demands of Brisbane and the south-east. That is why I am very proud to have joined the Beattie Labor government, which has established an outstanding and strategic South East Queensland Regional Infrastructure Plan and Program. In the context of the extensively consulted and deliberated South East Queensland Regional Plan, this program of infrastructure development is a tremendous blueprint for the industry and indeed the community.

Two very important elements of this infrastructure program are planned to service the whole of Brisbane's north side but will have significant negative impacts on communities in my own electorate. The northern busway is a vital section of the Beattie government's ongoing development of our city's public transport network. The Airport Link toll tunnel project will address, with improved public transport, the traffic congestion experienced every day on Brisbane's inner north side. While the government is delivering the busway and the Airport Link project is being delivered as a PPP, a public-private partnership, both will be designed and constructed together, sensibly ensuring the highest level of coordination on the delivery of these vital pieces of infrastructure.

The impacts of these projects on residents and the communities in my electorate are significant. They include the resumption of properties, including homes and businesses. They include huge impacts on the local community during the construction and operation phases of both projects. In particular, I have been very concerned about the potential impacts on the learning environment of the Kedron State High School in my electorate. Indeed, on behalf of the students, parents and staff at Kedron State High School, I raised these matters in correspondence with the Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure and indeed with the Lord Mayor of Brisbane in November last year. I was very pleased that the Deputy Premier responded to my concerns promptly and I was given excellent briefings on the project responses to community concerns to that point. I note that I am still waiting for something more than an acknowledgement card from Councillor Newman.

In the same way as other members in this House whose communities are being affected by infrastructure development—say, by a dam or other vital infrastructure in our growing state—I want to see flexible and responsive processes which respect the concerns of the affected community. I note the answer given by the minister for main roads in question time today highlighting how this can be done sensibly and responsibly and how people need to take the lead on responding to the infrastructure needs of our communities by ensuring that they go ahead but that they negotiate good outcomes for the communities in the process.

That is why I was very pleased to be part of providing an opportunity for representatives of the Kedron State High School community and the Woolloowin State School community, which is on the border of my electorate, to meet with the Deputy Premier and with the Minister for Education and Training. As a consequence of this meeting and our ongoing representations, the Coordinator-General has included as a condition of approval a specific requirement that innovative solutions will be sought regarding the potential

impacts of the Airport Link project on both Woolloowin State School and Kedron State High School. I want to thank the Deputy Premier for her understanding of the concerns of the local communities and for responding so well in the context of this PPP—an experience that is new to the affected communities.

Bids from the private sector will be sought this month. I can assure Kedron State High School P&C President, Adrian Quinn, and Woolloowin State School P&C President, Colleen Chapman, that I will work with them and the school communities to ensure that each of the short-listed bidders are well aware of the concerns and proposals for mitigating works at each of the schools. The Airport Link project represents a \$3 billion opportunity for private sector consortia. This means that there are three billion incentives for these bidders to respond creatively and genuinely to the concerns of the local community. I will continue to work with my local communities in a variety of ways to respond to the challenges of these significant infrastructure projects on the inner-north side of Brisbane.