



Speech by

Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Tuesday, 3 June 2008

AIRPORT LINK

Mr HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (11.56 am): Since the last sitting, the Queensland government has announced the largest road project in Australia with the progress of the Airport Link underground toll road, the Windsor to Kedron section of the northern busway and the airport roundabout upgrade. As the Premier highlighted this morning, Airport Link will allow motorists to travel between Bowen Hills and the airport roundabout in as little as six minutes and will bypass up to 16 sets of traffic lights. The Windsor to Kedron section of the northern busway will be part of a wider Brisbane network that will almost halve average bus travel times and save 20 minutes on a peak-hour journey. The airport roundabout upgrade will allow motorists to save 10 minutes travelling to and from the airport and remove one of Brisbane's biggest bottlenecks, which I know many members have commented on before.

I am also pleased to advise the House that, alongside the main infrastructure that is so vital to the development of congestion-busting policies of this government, BrisConnections—the successful consortia for the Airport Link-northern busway project—has included a range of community and social benefits in its designs. One outstanding achievement is an increase in Brisbane's parkland of almost 40,000 square metres, including turning the infamous Toombul car park—the one that many members on the north side would appreciate is where shoppers are warned that parking might be a problem in extreme flood conditions; I have always thought that those signs should be changed to: 'This car park floods at the drop of a hat'—into parklands. That car park, which does flood at the drop of a hat, will be turned into parklands along Schulz Canal for the enjoyment of the whole community. More than one million new plants and 5,400 new trees will be planted within the corridor to enhance the inner northern suburbs' green space and streetscapes. This will support and enhance the wonderful green elements of that corridor that already exist. I make mention of Pop's fig only to support its important role as an icon to the local community of the inner northern suburbs.

A key benefit for cyclists and pedestrians is the fantastic new pedestrian crossing under the busy Lutwyche Road, which is part of the Lutwyche busway station design. This will be a much safer, simpler and more convenient crossing and is a direct response to safety concerns raised by the community in planning for these projects. This innovative design will remake, I contend, the suburb of Lutwyche with genuine connections on a human scale across Lutwyche Road—something that has been missing for a number of decades. Further, this crossing allows connection of the existing bikeways east of Lutwyche Road to both new and existing pathways that connect the extensive and popular Kedron Brook bikeway. Connecting through to the proposed Kedron Park busway station which will also service Kedron State High School and the growing Queensland Emergency Services complex.

There are also new cycle connections between Clayfield and Toombul Shopping Centre and Toombul Railway Station. I am confident that these major improvements will encourage more people to get active and healthy by walking and cycling, and gaining access to an outstanding public transport system being extended through the northern busway to the north side of Brisbane.

City North Infrastructure, or CNI, the special-purpose vehicle charged with delivering the three projects, has opened a visitor information centre at 109 Gympie Road, Kedron. The centre is staffed by a

team of project specialists from CNI and BrisConnections who are busily advising the community about our plans for these projects including the changes to the reference design. It is already a very popular location on the north side for those who are very interested in this extremely important project and I would encourage everyone, especially those locals who have not been there yet, to get out and look at what the projects mean for them.