



Speech by

Vicky Darling

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Hansard Thursday, 12 November 2009

CURLEW PARK, SANDGATE

Ms DARLING (Sandgate—ALP) (9.18 pm): The users of Curlew Park, Sandgate, can look forward to improved safety as they travel to the park to play sport, have a picnic, use the off-leash area or ride their bicycles along the cycleways. Boom gates are currently being installed at Curlew Street where the road crosses the railway line between the Sandgate and Shorncliffe stations.

I have been advocating for safety improvements at Curlew Street since I was first elected in 2006, and I was petitioned by parents in 2007 who urged me to have boom gates installed at the crossing. Hundreds of students from the local schools use these sports fields every week, and there had been reports of children on bikes rushing across the lines after the flashing lights had begun. Last year my advocating paid off, when the then transport minister, John Mickel, approved installation of automated pedestrian safety gates, signage and audible warnings.

While I was satisfied with this as an interim measure, I continued to push for boom gates at the crossing. As far as I am aware, this is the only crossing within the Brisbane City Council area that does not have boom gates, and drivers are often caught off guard because they expect to see the dropping gates. There have been five reported near misses at the crossing this year alone. I am thrilled to inform the House that the transport minister, Rachel Nolan, has approved the boom gates, with work due for completion by the end of November. The pedestrian crossing will also be upgraded with a rubber panelling system to be installed to minimise the gap between the track and the crossing surface.

Approximately \$43 million in state funding is currently allocated to open level crossing protection to access and upgrade sites across the state. I would like to thank Wendy Horrocks for raising awareness amongst parents at Shorncliffe State School and St Patrick's College for organising the petition for these safety improvements. Thanks also to the transport ministers who listened to my pleas on behalf of the Sandgate community, and thanks to the council for their collaboration on the boom gates. I know the Curlew Park Sports Association has great plans to improve the sports grounds, and I know this will go a long way to keeping the home and visiting teams safe as well as the many other school students and local residents who use the fields.

But there is still one level crossing of concern to my local community, albeit one with boom gates. I thank the Brisbane City Council for finally submitting its business case and road design for a flyover at the Telegraph Road level crossing. I have never stopped fighting for safety improvements at Telegraph Road, and I will continue to urge my government to conduct a speedy assessment of the council's flyover plan so that we can keep moving towards a solution at this crossing.