



Speech by

**Jarrold Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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## **NERANG STREET AND NICKLIN WAY INTERSECTION UPGRADE**

**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (7.37 pm): I rise this evening to draw to the attention of the House the absolute debacle that was the planning and consultation process for the Nerang Street and Nicklin Way intersection upgrade. In October last year, a letter was sent to some businesses on Nicklin Way providing information, including maps, regarding the Department of Main Roads' plans for an intersection upgrade. The letter did mention that some parking spaces may be removed from Nicklin Way. However, there was no indication on the map where those spaces might be and which businesses would be affected.

In early May this year, a further letter was sent to some businesses detailing that work was to commence on the project later that month. This letter contained the same map as the one that was sent in October but, amazingly, this time all of the car spaces that were being removed as part of the intersection upgrade were detailed. So the consultation letter to businesses made a reference to the possibility of parking spaces being removed, then there was no further consultation other than a new letter outlining that the project would begin in the coming weeks and clearly detailing which car parks were going—all of them. For the benefit of the House, I table copies of the maps.

*Tabled paper:* Main Roads maps of Nicklin Way/Erang Street intersection upgrade [\[2439\]](#).

The consultation process for this project was a complete farce. The minister's department has admitted that in a public meeting held recently with the business owners. Despite what the minister may think or has been told, half of the businesses never received a letter at all and some of the businesses received only one of the two letters that were sent regarding the project. On top of that, there was no clear indication that the first letter was, indeed, the consultation process seeking feedback, and the cunning way the maps were changed between October and May is a disgrace. Is it any wonder the owners and managers of these small businesses were outraged?

I am pleased to see that, after a week of intense negotiations between the department, myself and the business owners and operators, the project was at least stopped for review. I thank the minister for that. On behalf of the business owners I submitted a list of proposals and suggestions that would satisfy their car-parking requirements and still permit the intersection upgrade to proceed. Why does it take all of this drama to get the process right? After the consultation process was revealed as obviously flawed, a review of the database was undertaken by the Main Roads regional office and the database amended. This should have happened before the initial letter was sent in October.

At a time when the economy is in recovery mode and jobs are at a premium, saving these small businesses is pivotal to the local economy. On-street car parking is vital to their survival, given the amenity and access to the major arterial road in the Nicklin Way. What was even more dumbfounding for me is that engineers in the CoastConnect project team have indicated that they wish to extend the road to include a high-speed bus lane which retains the on-street car parking, yet engineers and planners from the same department, Transport and Main Roads, have said that on-street parking cannot be safely retained. So with a merging lane for cars it is not safe to keep on-street parking, but put a bus lane there and somehow the government thinks that is safe enough.

I ask the minister: why is there no consistency in terms of safety provision by his department? I would hope that when this project planning is now reviewed a commonsense approach is taken by those planning the upgrade and the government retains the on-street car parking for all the businesses impacted and affected.