




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Record of Proceedings, 17 July 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Beechmont Road Upgrade

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.46 pm): I rise to update the House on the Lower Beechmont community's efforts to secure a feasibility study into a future upgrade of Beechmont Road between Elimbah Court and Jardine Road. Earlier this year, as members will recall, I spoke in this House about Beechmont Road and how this section of road desperately needs to be upgraded to secure the safety of Beechmont and Lower Beechmont residents and visitors. Despite Beechmont Road being a major tourist route for interstate and international visitors to Lamington National Park, motorists have been forced to stare down near misses as they navigate this narrow stretch of road. Having visited Lower Beechmont and driven on this road myself countless times, I know firsthand just how dangerous this section is.

The local community has undertaken significant community consultation to identify the next major road safety priority of the community, and this is the stretch that they want upgraded. This is the third major stage of works needed to secure the safety of Beechmont Road, which in 2008 was named by RACQ as the worst state controlled main road. There have been eight fatalities on Beechmont Road in the past decade, six of which have involved motorcyclists. Sadly, two separate accidents claimed two lives in a single day only two weeks ago.

Unfortunately, the Minister for Main Roads has confirmed this section is 'not a priority' for this Labor government after the Better Roads for Beechmont Committee and I wrote to him directly, urging him to take action before another fatality occurs. We asked the minister to undertake a feasibility study for a future upgrade of this section, which would undoubtedly be a sensible step in the right direction. Instead, the minister has chosen to play politics with road safety, refusing to consider a feasibility study and simply crossing his fingers in the hope that yet another fatality will not occur.

He only conceded to 'direct' TMR to investigate options to improve line marking along this section of Beechmont Road. The problem with this direction, as the minister should have been aware, is that his own department has previously advised the Better Roads for Beechmont Committee in a series of 2013 emails that 'there is insufficient space for any centre line marking'. Despite this email trail, which I table for the information of the House today, the minister stated in response to my question on notice last month that he had 'not received' any advice from his department that line markings could not be installed and that his previous advice 'had not changed'.

Tabled paper: Emails, dated July and August 2013, between representatives of Better Roads for Beechmont and officers of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, regarding centre-line marking for bends on Beechmont Road between Elimbah Court and Jardine Road [\[836\]](#).

Despite having had 30 days to request an updated briefing note from his department to answer my question on notice, it remains unclear whether the minister chose to do so.

It has become apparent that, as residents of Lower Beechmont are forced to wait in fear for another fatality to occur on Beechmont Road, we have a Minister for Main Roads who is flying blind. I again implore the minister to step out of George Street and visit my electorate to see just how safe he feels when travelling this stretch of road. The safety of my residents should be a priority for the minister, and I will not give up until this issue is addressed. I will continue to work hard with my colleague the member for Beaudesert, Jon Krause, who has some 1,200 residents who drive up to Beechmont every day as well.