



Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**


**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Riverway Drive, Upgrade**

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.58 pm): Today I am excited. It is a great pleasure to report to the parliament that, after years of promises to duplicate one of our major arterial roads in Thuringowa, Riverway Drive stage 1 has become a reality. Riverway Drive stretches 10 kilometres from Thuringowa Drive to the Ross River Dam. Riverway Drive stage 1 will see Riverway Drive duplicated from Gollogly Lane to Allambie Lane. For years the 24,000 locals have suffered frustration and traffic gridlock along the stretch of road spanning the three suburbs of Condon, Rasmussen and Kelso.

After living in Kelso for some 15 years—a place that I am proud to call home and raise my family—I think that I can speak with a degree of authority and can attest to the level of frustration fellow residents feel each morning and evening on their way to and from work and school runs. It is no surprise that, as a then candidate in late 2014, the No. 1 issue for constituents of this major section of Thuringowa was to actually deliver the duplication of Riverway Drive as promised by the previous LNP member, who even went to the trouble of announcing via a billboard that only the LNP could deliver Riverway Drive in the months leading up to the 2015 state election. Locals are not silly. They saw through this ruse and spoke with their feet and elected a fellow local who was committed to working hard to deliver the duplication of this important road corridor.

Standing in this place today just after two years in, I am absolutely wrapped with progress to date. In 2016 I fought for and received the \$30 million in funding, and I thank the Deputy Premier, who funded this through the State Infrastructure Plan, and Minister Mark Bailey, who knows that I have been like a dog with a bone on the duplication of Riverway Drive and was never going to let it go. The Riverway Drive stage 1 duplication is not an easy task. The detailed design has taken some time given Townsville's main water supply exists via a pipeline under that same road which is over 30 years old and presents a challenge, but it is a challenge the winning local contractor BMD is up to. BMD is local and knows what it is doing and has a great track record of delivering major roads like Dalrymple Road last year.

The Riverway Drive project is not only a job creator; it has become a catalyst for other projects in the area, with the Riverway shopping precinct undergoing a multimillion-dollar redevelopment for locals. I want to thank locals from the Upper Ross Community Voice group and the users of the Loam Island facility who have provided feedback along the way. I went back to the minister and helped to secure more funding for an extended project scope that will include extras like car parking, lighting and boardwalk sections that will improve pedestrian and road safety and increase civic pride in the area.