




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

Record of Proceedings, 16 February 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba Second Range Crossing

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.54 pm): I rise to speak about a very important project in my area—the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. The Toowoomba Second Range Crossing has been sitting around waiting to be done for years and years and years under Labor governments with no action being taken at all. The previous Labor member was in office for 11 years and was a minister in cabinet and not one cent was spent towards getting this project underway. Absolutely nothing was done during that time. Under the LNP government we commenced the project and money was funded in the budget. It is a fantastic project. It is 41 kilometres. It will take thousands and thousands of trucks off James Street through the centre of Toowoomba, but more than that it will allow the people of Toowoomba—mums and dads—to drive north across south without having to do battle with industrial traffic.

Recently I was very fortunate to be allowed to visit the site. Whilst visiting the site, photographs and video were taken and I really wanted to give a bit of an update to the people of my electorate about what was going on and the 1,800 jobs that have been created. Unfortunately, although Nexus was very generous in allowing me access to the area and to take photographs, today I have been told that I am not allowed to use the video footage that was shot on that day and I am told that that has been blocked by the minister's department. I would hate to think that people would be playing politics with this great community project that is being 80 per cent funded by the federal government—an LNP federal government I might add—and which had a full commitment from us while in office. I am told the minister is visiting my electorate on Saturday and will be standing there with video cameras and the media taking shots. I do not know what he is going to do with that footage. I assume the department will allow him to use it as an elected member of this House.

I am very disappointed about this. This project goes through the heart of my electorate. It affects thousands of people—thousands of Queenslanders who live in my electorate. They deserve to know what is going on. For the minister or the department to be blocking me from telling them that and showing them the footage, showing them the progress and allowing them to see what is going on on the ground where their money is being spent when they are being denied access to see that is very disappointing. It is something I would not expect from an open and transparent government, but clearly it has something to hide. Clearly it has politics to play. I wonder if former member Kerry Shine will be standing next to the minister taking a photo opportunity on Saturday so that he can promote himself in an election whilst the current elected member has been denied access. I wonder if the minister will do that. I wonder if he is too embarrassed to come into this place and say that he will reverse it and allow me to use the footage and allow me to let my constituents know about this wonderful project—this wonderful LNP project—that is delivering a great piece of infrastructure and delivering 1,800 local jobs.