




Speech By
Samuel O'Connor

MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2018

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Helensvale Railway Station, Parking

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.37 pm): I rise today to speak about an issue that annoys people and impacts their lives more than many other interactions they have with government: parking around public transport. The entirety of the light rail stage 2 from the hospital to Helensvale is in my electorate of Bonney. With a cost of around half a billion dollars I want people to use it as often as possible. Whether you are commuting to work, heading into uni, just going down to Pacific Fair for the day or taking a quick trip into Southport, the G:link takes just about as long as it does to drive. It is a similar story with our rail services. The *Gold Coast Bulletin's* recent survey found 77 per cent of people would rather take the train to Brisbane than drive on the M1, but they do not predominantly due to the cost. I have no doubt difficulties in parking would factor in as a deterrent to catching the train as well.

People in our area need easy parking to access public transport. I am proud to have Helensvale station within my electorate because it is a vital hub. It is where light rail meets heavy rail. Every day I eagerly await the approval of the visit and briefing request I submitted to QR in January. Helensvale is the access point to light rail for anyone who lives in the surrounding suburbs of Arundel, Pacific Pines and the areas further north. I want it to be as easy as possible for my locals to use the heavy rail so they actually travel to Brisbane from Helensvale. Not only that, but this station is vital for those making the one-stop trip to Nerang station to watch the Suns at Metricon. It is an important ritual for our regularly dejected Suns' fans to be there to support each other on the train home.

Commuters want to use the public transport from here but at present they are forced to park on the grassed areas and verges around the station. Every day we are seeing easily 80 to 100 cars parked like that, let alone how many are parking within the Westfield car park. Commuters are forced to risk big fines from council. I am told they would be slugged with a \$157 fine if the City of Gold Coast was to take action. Soon we will also have thousands of new residents just across the road at the Surrounds estate.

We need greater investment in park-and-ride facilities at our stations when they are clearly at capacity. In yesterday's budget we saw funding for Brisbane, Springfield, Virginia, Lindum, Geebung, Lawnton, Darra and Salisbury stations. If it is good enough for all of them, it is good enough for Helensvale. There is an upgrade underway at Helensvale station, but I am not confident that the car parks to be returned will be enough with the new bus interchange. We simply need more car parks or less people will use our public transport.