




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR HILL

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2018

ADJOURNMENT

Hill Electorate, Road Infrastructure

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (7.25 pm): It is with great frustration that I once again bring to the attention of the House a road that desperately needs to be upgraded and sealed, and that is the Herberton Petford Road to Irvinebank. The road is in a deplorable state and needs to be sealed. Year in, year out the road is graded and the rocks still project through, so it does not alleviate the problem or produce a smooth, safe road. This road is a main arterial road connecting the communities of Watsonville and Irvinebank in the south-west and extends through to Petford in the north-west of the Tablelands which provides a shortcut to Chillagoe. It also saves 30 kilometres for travellers who are travelling from Mount Garnet in the south to Herberton. Rather than going through the Atherton Tablelands, road users are able to take the shortcut to Chillagoe and likewise to Dimbulah. Every year this road deteriorates to an unusable standard that requires continuous grading. However, this causes rocks to project out through the road which leads to significant vehicle damage and unsafe driving. Herberton Petford Road is also a designated school bus route so this places children's lives at risk and it costs up to \$20,000 each year to repair the damage to that school bus.

We cannot keep asking the Mareeba Shire Council to grade that road every year. If we put bitumen over the top we would not have this problem year after year. It is very important that we upgrade and seal that road. We do not want to keep resheeting it. It is a waste of money and a short-term solution. I have tabled petitions, letters and photos in the House on numerous occasions, and yet while we appreciate the small amount allocated and the fraction of road that has been sealed it does not go far enough. The problem would be solved if this significant piece of Tablelands road infrastructure was just sealed once and for all. I will now read an email sent to me by Dr Robert Keane. He says—

I am writing this in response to the awful state of the gravel road Watsonville to Irvinebank.

I had a stroke and a heart attack in August of last year ...

As I bump over the corrugated road each week when I am being driven to town ... I think, what's happening to my rates money.

I get nothing for it, neither curbing, nor lighting, nor postal delivery, nor garbage disposal and certainly not roads that don't tire my system.

This email is one of many I have received from residents begging the government to stop throwing money away and instead implement a permanent solution. I call on the government to stop wasting money and seal this section of road once and for all.