




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 28 March 2019

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Townsville, Road Infrastructure

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.32 pm): As a fellow member in Townsville, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, you know that we are effective voices down here in delivering for Townsville. We have the water pipeline and the stadium, and we are doing hospital upgrades. We have to come down here and be even noisier, because Canberra is not listening. As the local member for Thuringowa, I have a good track record of delivering on road infrastructure—Herveys Range Road upgrade in 2015-16, \$7.6 million; and, of course, Riverway Drive, \$36 million, that has become a catalyst for development applications before the Townsville City Council worth over \$100 million. One of them has been approved and work is now underway on Riverway Plaza in Kelso, \$36 million. We also have the Coles DA and another one off Beck Road.

When it comes to roads, last year in the state budget I got a further \$36 million for Townsville Ring Road Stage 5. That was nine months ago. The LNP representative in Townsville, that silent old fellow—what is his name? Macdonald? I have never seen him. He has to be one of the most useless politicians I have ever met, because he is absolutely not effective in our city. We have missed out on \$180 million for the Townsville Ring Road Stage 5. Some punter in Canberra announced yesterday the Roads of Strategic Importance program funding of \$730 million for inland roads. No doubt the member for Traeger is happy with that because it is funding from last year.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HARPER: I am not taking your interjections. When I read that, I said, 'Where does Townsville fit into Roads of Strategic Importance?' You know, Mr Deputy Speaker, we are the major regional city outside of Brisbane and we got nothing on the eve of the budget post a flood disaster. When we need jobs, we have silence from the federal Morrison government. They are letting Townsville down, they have let themselves down and they have let our city down. They do not care about North Queensland. We got nothing for Townsville Ring Road Stage 5. Our money was on the table a year ago.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HARPER: I am not taking your interjections. I will proudly keep representing our patch. I will fight for it. I am demanding that the Morrison government listens to the people of Townsville and backs us in. Right now, more than ever, we need jobs and we need the funding for the ring-road.