



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR MILLER**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2021

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Gympie Bypass**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.05 pm): Last night the member for South Brisbane stood in this place and knowingly repeated false claims about the government's dealings with the Kabi Kabi people and cultural heritage issues on the Gympie bypass project. I am advised that during the cultural heritage process for the Gympie bypass one individual raised a claim of Aboriginal cultural heritage on an area known as Rocky Ridge. My department has worked closely with the Kabi Kabi people since 2014, carrying out studies at Rocky Ridge, including comprehensive cultural heritage surveys based on their feedback and long association with this region.

All claims of cultural heritage at the site have been thoroughly investigated, with reports going back to 1976. No tangible evidence of Aboriginal cultural heritage has been found at the site. The Kabi Kabi traditional owner group is the native title claim group and registered Aboriginal party for the area which represents the interests of the Kabi Kabi people. A cultural heritage management plan with the Kabi Kabi traditional owner group was endorsed in 2018. I met with representatives of the Kabi Kabi people, including elders, and they expressed faith in the process and its outcomes.

When no tangible evidence of Aboriginal cultural heritage was found, the individual who made the original claim over the site broadened their claim to a much larger area. I am advised that the name Djaki Kundu has only recently come into use in respect of the Rocky Ridge site. I am also advised that the individual involved in the claims over the Rocky Ridge site has met with the member for South Brisbane and members of the Greens party. The same individual was also involved in an unsuccessful Supreme Court action to stop work on the Gympie bypass.

I invited the member for South Brisbane and her party colleague to a detailed briefing from my department on these matters on 17 February. I also attended, and the facts relating to this matter were fully provided. The member was given every opportunity to ask questions of a cultural heritage expert working in the department. During that meeting I was stunned to hear the member question the legitimacy of the Kabi Kabi traditional owners' native title claim. When I asked the member whether she had met with them, she confirmed that she had not. Despite knowing the facts, the member came into this place last night and made deeply offensive remarks about dispossession and about an alleged failure to listen and falsely claiming belittling and delegitimising of Kabi Kabi people. The government is committed to working closely with traditional owners and preserving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage.

It is clear the Greens party and the member for South Brisbane are exploiting First Nation people for their own political purposes. In doing so, the member for South Brisbane and her Greens party colleagues are actively undermining the proper role and functions of the registered traditional owner group that gives a voice to the Kabi Kabi people. The member for South Brisbane has been given the chance to hear them speak and to learn but has so far chosen not to. I cannot recall a clearer example

of such political hypocrisy and opportunism from the Greens party. The government believes in and supports the native title process. We believe in working in consensus. For the benefit of the public, I table a letter from me to the Greens party and a letter from the member.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 25 February 2021, from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Mark Bailey, to the member for South Brisbane, Dr Amy MacMahon MP, regarding the Gympie Bypass project [197](#).

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 22 January 2021, from the member for Maiwar, Mr Michael Berkman MP, to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Mark Bailey, and the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Hon. Craig Crawford, titled 'protect the Djaki Kundu' [198](#).

*(Time expired)*