




Speech By
Samuel O'Connor

MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 16 September 2021

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Coomera Connector, Land Purchase

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.00 pm): I rise to raise the matter of the recent purchase of land by the Department of Transport and Main Roads for the Coomera Connector in Helensvale for \$76 million. That massive payment was to a developer for land bought barely two years ago for just \$20 million. The minister has played this down, claiming it is simply part of the process of buying land when building a road, but what he has not admitted is that the government's failure to plan has led to the payment of an extra \$56 million to a developer.

In 2015, light rail stage 2 used the corridor that had been planned for the second M1 since the mid-1990s. I will table documents from 2006 showing how the road would have fitted back then.

As members know, I am a huge supporter of light rail and I believe that the chosen route was correct, but when that decision was made the government should have also planned the whole corridor and made sure they had space to fit a future road in it. The government's design also provided for a car park to the east of the station, taking more of the space needed for the road, rather than using their existing land on the heavy rail station side or having a design that factored in the road. Clearly, the second M1 was nowhere on their radar.

In 2016, the sod was turned for the Helensvale light rail station and developer Villawood announced the Surrounds estate would include 1,500 apartments in what was promoted as a public-transport orientated community on the empty land across from the road. I table the press release with plans that show the location of those 1,500 apartments.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to the Intra Regional Transport Corridor, Beattie Road to Nerang-Broadbeach Road 4 Lane and Hov Planning, road corridor development plans [1413](#).

Clearly no-one planning the light rail talked to anyone else in the department because, just a year later in 2017, the road corridor was gazetted but it was nowhere near wide enough. I table that embarrassing oversight, which has been removed from the TMR website.

Tabled paper: Map from the Department of Transport and Main Roads titled 'Road Declaration Plan No. FSCR113-4-B' [1414](#).

The corridor was finally updated years later in 2019—which I table as well—after I raised these concerns, but by then it was too late. The developer formally purchased the land later that year.

Tabled paper: Map from the Department of Transport and Main Roads titled 'Road Declaration Plan No. FSCR113-4-C' [1415](#).

The government only corrected their mistake this year. Finally, I table the RP data with the sale information showing this extraordinary payment.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents from Core Logic titled 'Country Club Drive Helensvale QLD 4121' [1416](#).

If Gold Coasters did not know that the government is not serious about the second M1 by the fact that no tangible work has started on it in seven years, this proves it. Those huge payments for land that will mostly not be used make up half of the funding spent so far on that road. That failure to plan is

not good enough so I ask the Minister for Transport and Main Roads: why did the government take more than four years to resume land they clearly should have known would be required for the second M1, what other resumptions will be required for it and what has the government done to act before the prices potentially increase massively on those blocks as well?