



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR HILL**

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## **MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **Hill Electorate, Roads**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (8.34 pm): As I travel around my electorate, I see a number of roadworks projects either underway or near completion, so I do acknowledge the good work that the region has lobbied for which is being undertaken by TMR, with many projects now being done by RoadTek and local contractors. However, there are some significant road projects along the coast and on the Tablelands that require urgent attention.

I recently joined concerned residents and representatives from the Tablelands Regional Council who expressed the urgent need for the last six kilometres of the Upper Barron Road to be fully upgraded. Tablelanders cannot believe that this section of a state main road, which is a popular tourist route and is used daily by school buses, trucks and residents, is still only one single lane. One resident advised that their kids refuse to use the bus shelter at the front of their property because they get showered with rocks and dust from heavy vehicles. The local bus rider who travels this section of road four times a day says it is too narrow and unsafe, with constant damage to the bus from passing trucks and traffic. However, his biggest fear is for the safety of kids.

In a big acknowledgement, there has been some outstanding work on the Palmerston Highway over several years. While there is much work still taking place, it is time to fix the bad section between Henrietta Creek and Goolagan Creek. Everyone knows that section. Significant works are taking place right now to the Atherton to Mareeba road. However, the works are not catering for overtaking lanes. This is a priority to reduce risks along this well-travelled main route.

We have been constantly disappointed that funding requests to both state and federal governments for Ootann Road have been ignored, despite constant lobbying from local communities and businesses. Ootann Road is a 90-kilometre route in the Mareeba and Tablelands local government area. It is a north-south link between the Burke Developmental Road and the Kennedy Highway, servicing significant cattle grazing, farming and production areas throughout Far North Queensland. At the moment, trucks and road trains have no choice but to use the Bruce Highway or constantly unhook to go through the Atherton Tablelands because Ootann Road is often in such a deplorable condition that it causes constant damage to transport. I call on the minister to address these road issues which, if fixed, would provide a significant economic boost and alleviate road safety concerns in the region.