



Speech By  
**Daniel Purdie**


**MEMBER FOR NINDERRY**

---

Record of Proceedings, 18 April 2023

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Bli Bli Bridge**

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (7.23 pm): On behalf of the Bli Bli community, I would like to put on the record, while he is in the chamber, my sincere thanks to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Last year the minister announced \$800,000 to plan future and long overdue upgrades to the Bli Bli bridge. Just in case you missed it, just last month the minister announced it again—not another \$800,000 but just reannounced the same \$800,000.

I can assure the minister that the irony is not lost on the Bli Bli community, who for years have been calling for this antiquated bridge to be upgraded. If the bridge could talk, it could tell a fascinating tale about how a small farming community evolved into one of the fastest growing suburbs on the Sunshine Coast. When the historic 165-metre structure was built in 1959, it bore the proud title of the longest prestressed concrete bridge in Queensland. The iconic bridge was built for a cane train which serviced the Nambour sugar mill for more than 30 years—and it is still known locally as the cane train bridge.

At the time of its construction, according to Census data, there were just over 200 people living in Bli Bli. Today, that number is estimated to be over 10,000 people. However, incredulously, not only is the bridge still standing but finally, after years of lobbying the state government, it has caught the attention of the minister.

Bli Bli, as I mentioned earlier, is one of the fastest growing suburbs on the Sunshine Coast. However, you could be excused for overlooking that if you are forced to cross the narrow two-lane bridge every day. Pedestrians, cyclists and anglers share a tight pathway down one side of the bridge adjacent to two lanes of heavy traffic that can carry up to 15,000 vehicles a day. It is also a main thoroughfare now between the Bruce Highway and the new international Sunshine Coast airport.

Locals have been complaining of rust and disrepair on the fencing and structure of the bridge for a number of years. Four years ago, in 2019, a 20-tonne limit was applied as a temporary safety measure due to legitimate structural concerns. That load limit remains in place today.

Mr Acting Speaker, I can assure you that the Bli Bli community know just how lucky they are having twice as many reasons to be hopeful that it will not take another 60 years before the ageing bridge is upgraded. Thank you to the minister, as I acknowledged, for taking the time to reannounce the funding for this vital next stage of planning for this long overdue infrastructure project. I, along with my community, am now filled with anticipation that the minister's generosity is repeated when it comes to allocating all the funds required to complete these upgrades in the upcoming state budget.

Similarly, communities on the other side of the river in my electorate, including Coolum and Peregrine Springs, will also be waiting with bated breath, hoping the minister's benevolence might extend to fast-tracking the long overdue motorway upgrades and other congestion-busting road and safety improvements across our region.