

Question on Notice

No. 418

Asked on 21 April 2021

MR J MCDONALD ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Questions on Notice No. 1104 for 2020 and Nos. 6 and 170 for 2021—

Will the Minister commit to consultation by the department with the Lockyer Valley Regional Council, the community and me on the priorities to be delivered over the next four years?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Lockyer for the question.

In 2020, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) completed planning for intersection upgrades on Toowoomba Connection Road (previously the Warrego Highway) at Withcott. A total of \$513,000 was allocated to this planning with future upgrades being considered against competing statewide priorities for funding allocation. TMR is currently undertaking planning for priority upgrades between Dinmore and Helidon Spa. A key strategy for the investment of the \$546.84 million will be interim safety treatments while longer term projects indicated in the Warrego Highway Upgrade Strategy (2012) are delivered between Dinmore and Helidon Spa. Project details and timing are subject to further planning and negotiation with the Australian Government.

A key foundation for this transformational investment in the Warrego Highway is transparent and continuous community consultation. Since August 2020, TMR has met with all federal, state and local government elected members who represent the communities that will benefit from this investment in the Warrego Highway. TMR continues to meet with key industry stakeholders, landowners and local government staff on a regular basis. This continuous engagement, including that with the Member for Lockyer, has been critical in informing the priorities to be delivered over the next four years.

I note, too, that the previous Newman Government cut almost \$100 million from upgrades to the Warrego Highway, including:

- \$88 million of a \$96 million project to duplicate the Warrego Highway from Nugent Pinch Road to Charlton
- \$3.8 million for intersection improvements between Ipswich and Withcott, in the Member's own electorate and
- \$6.3 million for intersection works on Warrego Highway between Ipswich and Toowoomba.

The *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2020–21 to 2023–24* outlines \$26.9 billion over the four-year period. Of this, approximately \$745 million is committed across TMR's Darling Downs district, estimated to support an average of 860 direct jobs over the life of the program.