



Hon. Paul Lucas MP



Queensland
Government

Our ref: MC17948

Your ref: 554-05

Minister for
Transport and Main Roads

23 DEC 2005

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Re: Petition No 554-05 - Upgrade of Proserpine-Shute Harbour Road

I refer to a petition lodged by Ms Jan Jarratt MP, Member for Whitsunday, on 22 November 2005 with the Legislative Assembly about the upgrade of the Proserpine-Shute Harbour Road and the installation of traffic lights at Paluma Road, Island Drive, Shingley Beach and Adina Street.

The Proserpine-Shute Harbour Road is the only arterial road servicing the coastal area of the Whitsundays. The Department of Main Roads has undertaken analysis of predicted future traffic flows along the road. The traffic analysis indicated that some intersections will require upgrading between now and 2015.

The study indicated that the need for upgradings would largely be driven by developments accessing Shute Harbour Road by way of side roads. Timing of upgradings is dependent upon the rate and extent of development.

Main Roads has developed preliminary layouts for these intersections. Signalised intersections, roundabouts and alternative treatments have been considered. Main Roads has not developed a set of preferred treatments.

During April to June 2005, Whitsunday Shire Council undertook community consultation on the Whitsunday Structure Plan. Relevant alternative treatments for intersections were included in this plan.

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Under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* (IPA) a developer must assess the traffic impacts of the development and recommend ameliorative measures to address these traffic impacts.

When reviewing development applications, Main Roads can only apply development conditions that are reasonable and relevant to the development. Main Roads cannot direct the adoption of community preferred solutions if they are not reasonable and relevant to the development.

The processes in the IPA contain statutory timeframes that Main Roads must comply with. These timeframes do not allow for a comprehensive community consultation process to be undertaken on the ameliorative proposals put forward by the developer.

However, in accordance with the IPA, individuals have a right to make a submission to the local government on any proposed development. The local government must take these submissions into account when considering the approval of the development.

Of the four intersections named in the petition, Paluma Road, Shingley Beach and Adina Street intersections require upgrading by developers in order to ameliorate the traffic impacts of the respective developments.

The proposals put forward by the developers have addressed the issues of not only vehicular traffic but also bicycles and pedestrians, especially school children and people with a disability. The treatments are acceptable to Main Roads.

The Whitsunday Shire Council independent consultant's traffic report has recommended traffic signals as the preferred option for the Paluma Road intersection.

With respect to Consultation on the Island Drive project started in 1999. In July 2005 council resolved to support the installation of traffic signals. As part of the ongoing consultation, Main Roads has been working with the Whitsunday Way Committee to ensure that the correct traffic solutions are adopted that not only addresses the traffic issues but also the amenity of the Whitsundays.

Further consultation was available to every member of the community during the community cabinet meeting held in Proserpine in October 2004. In addition, I have personally received deputations from council, the Whitsunday Chamber of Commerce and local residents on the issue of traffic signals in the Whitsundays.

With the case of Malcomson Street, consultation provided the community with adequate information on the project and sought community views on the information provided to assist Main Roads in the decision making process. Community consultation is not a voting exercise to determine the solution.

I am advised that Main Roads is fully aware of the issues of traffic signals versus roundabouts in the Whitsundays and does not have a traffic signals only approach. Main Roads has recently completed the construction of a roundabout at Waterson Way intersection and another is currently programmed at the Beach Road intersection. Also, roundabouts are the preferred solution for access to the future Port of Airlie development.

The state government recognises the importance of the Whitsundays to the future growth of tourism. However, this rapid growth will result in a significant increase in traffic on the Proserpine-Shute Harbour Road, especially as it is the only arterial road.

It is the responsibility of Main Roads, to ensure that the State-controlled road operates in a safe and efficient manner for all road users, including bicycles and pedestrians, especially school children and the disabled.

Main Roads will continue to execute its obligations under the IPA with respect to development applications, and follow its normal procedures of consultation on upgrading projects on the Proserpine-Shute Harbour Road.

In recognition of the community's views at both Island Drive and Paluma Road intersection, I have offered Whitsunday Shire Council the opportunity to use roundabout solutions, provided pedestrian and cycle movements were adequately catered for and that there were no additional costs either in the short or long term, to the state government. On both occasions, council has elected not to proceed with this option.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Lucas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL LUCAS MP

Minister for Transport and Main Roads