



Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET40902
Your ref: A677309

20 May 2021

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 3436-20, lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 20 April 2021 about the need to stop garaging of islander cars at Redland Bay for shorter vehicular access routes to Russell, Karragarra, Macleay and Lamb Islands.

The Palaszczuk Government acknowledges local demand for alternative access to Russell and surrounding islands. However, considering a bridge to meet this demand would require extensive investigation and significant investment in not just the bridge, but the surrounding transport infrastructure. To deliver such a project, the Palaszczuk Government would first be required to determine a suitable route and investigate the feasibility and costs to provide a bridge. This would require a guarantee of investment in terms of infrastructure costs and rates of return. Further, the Palaszczuk Government would also need to be assured that any proposal represents best value for the people of Queensland. I also note that neither Redland City Council nor Gold Coast City Council have requested investigating or undertaking any studies into facilitating such a project.

The Queensland Government established Building Queensland to prioritise the state's major infrastructure needs. Any proposal of this size would need to be assessed by Building Queensland—now part of the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning—against other projects across the state. Currently, there is a large number of safety and other high-priority projects competing for limited funding across Queensland and a bridge to these South Moreton Bay Islands would need to be assessed against these competing priorities. Consequently, the current island ferry and barge services will continue to provide access for the foreseeable future.

SeaLink Queensland holds a service contract for the delivery of passenger ferry services with the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) as required under Queensland's *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994* (TOPTA). This contract provides SeaLink Queensland the exclusive right to operate a passenger ferry between Weinam Creek to the Southern Moreton Bay Islands. TOPTA only regulates prescribed passenger ferry services. As such, TOPTA does not require a vehicular ferry service or barge to be regulated in the same way as passenger ferry services. Consequently, should a private operator wish to operate a short haul barge on this route, they are free to do so without a service contract with TMR.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Bailey'.

MARK BAILEY MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads