



## Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET 55082  
Your ref: A1345146

**06 DEC 2024**

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

Dear Mr Laurie

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I refer to the interim response to petition 4137-24 about Highfields State School (HSS) pedestrian safety, by the former Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services, Mr Bart Mellish MP, which was tabled on 10 October 2024.

On 1 November 2024, I was appointed as Minister for Transport and Main Roads and, as such, I am now the responsible Minister to respond to this petition.

The safety of road users is a key priority for the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR). All feedback from the community about road safety issues is appreciated and taken seriously.

I can advise that, in March 2023, TMR investigated a request from the Department of Education (DOE) for a school zone to be installed at this location. DOE's request was in response to a student who had exited the school onto the highway after their carer had left and before school had begun.

TMR undertook investigations—including a speed limit review—and held discussions with DOE and HSS to review the proposed school zone in accordance with the relevant guidelines. At that time, TMR's investigations found that vehicles utilising the drop off/pick-up facility in the service road beside the highway are operating safely and not causing excessive congestion. Furthermore, the crossing locations on the New England Highway at Borghardt Road and Highfields Road intersections are signalised and were deemed to facilitate safe crossing for pedestrians. However, given the recent circumstances, I have asked TMR to review this decision and reconsider the implementation of a school zone along the stretch of the New England Highway in question.

I note the continued advocacy of the Member for Toowoomba North in relation to this matter and his strong support for the Highfields State School community, especially including positive road safety outcomes in this area. I look forward to continuing the conversation regarding this matter.

TMR has noted there may be opportunities for additional safety improvements for students, such as road safety education, increased utilisation of the Borghardt Road drop off/pick-up facility or increased school supervision. TMR will continue to work with DOE regarding recommendations for improvements for safe school transport. This will be considered for future implementation in line with any subsequent result of the review mentioned above.

Regarding the request for the installation of fencing between the footpath and the New England Highway near HSS, TMR monitors the operation of the state-controlled road network on an ongoing basis and prioritises safety upgrades according to statewide needs. I will ensure that TMR considers this installation for future prioritisation as part of planning for safety upgrades across the state-controlled road network.

Regarding the request for speed, red light and mobile phone-use enforcement, TMR has advised new installation locations for these enforcement types are based on crash history. Crash history is used as the best available indicator of where future crashes are likely to occur, and therefore where to prioritise available enforcement resources to achieve greatest potential to prevent future crashes. It should be noted mobile phone cameras enforce both mobile phone and seatbelt offences and consider both offence types in site selection.

TMR has reviewed the most up-to-date crash history for the New England Highway between Nichols Road and Reis Road East to consider any eligible locations and/or intersections for new fixed road safety camera enforcement.

TMR's road crash data, which is sourced from the Queensland Police Service, shows that since 1 January 2019 there have been two crashes eligible for consideration in mobile phone and seatbelt camera site selection and one crash involving a motorist disobeying red traffic signals on this section of the New England Highway. These three crashes resulted in four people receiving medical treatment. This crash data is current to 31 May 2024 for fatal crashes and 31 December 2023 for non-fatal crashes.

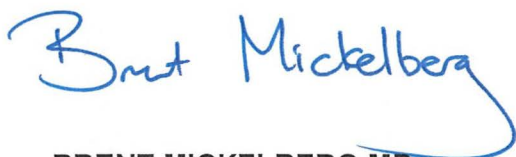
Based on this crash data, I am advised that TMR has no plans to install new fixed camera enforcement as there are other locations in Queensland with a higher number of crashes and for which the available cameras are prioritised.

Most of the road trauma savings from speed camera enforcement is attributed to the general deterrence created by the mobile speed camera program. The unpredictability of when and where mobile speed cameras will be operating encourages motorists to follow the speed limit across the road network, not only where fixed cameras are installed, to avoid penalties.

There are a number of mobile speed camera sites in Highfields. TMR operates moveable mobile phone and seatbelt enforcement cameras in unpredictable ways across the state to encourage legal mobile phone and seatbelt use.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



**BRENT MICKELBERG MP**  
**Minister for Transport and Main Roads**



Minister for Transport and Main Roads  
Minister for Digital Services

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10 October 2024

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Mr Neil Laurie  
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Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 4137-24, lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Trevor Watts MP, Member for Toowoomba North on 10 September 2024 about Highfields State School.

As the Government is currently in caretaker mode, I am unable to provide a substantive response to the petition at this time. Therefore, under Standing Order 125 6 (a), I am providing this letter as an interim response to the petition.

In accordance with s 59 A of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* and Standing Order 31, I request that this interim response be tabled during the period that the Legislative Assembly is dissolved.

Yours sincerely

**BART MELLISH MP**  
**Minister for Transport and Main Roads**  
**Minister for Digital Services**