

Minister for Infrastructure
Minister for Local Government

Level 1, 7 Franklin Wharf, HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: 03 6166 9408
Email: Minister.Vincent@dpac.tas.gov.au



Ms Jen Butler MP
Member for Lyons

21 MAR 2025

c\ - Laura.Ross@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Ms Butler

Thank you for asking the following constituent question of me in the House on 5 March 2025:

My question is on behalf of Illawarra Road landowners. Planning to upgrade Illawarra Road from a B Road to National Highway began in 2020 with the Public Works Committee approving a budget of \$80 million in 2022. The Committee was incorrectly advised that community consultation raised no major landowner concerns. Illawarra Road carries many slow-moving farm vehicles, creating unresolved challenges for repurposing. Since a truck stop opened in early 2023, fast moving heavy vehicle traffic continues to increase significantly.

This project, due for completion last year, remains three quarters unchanged despite four years of requests from landowners and local councils. Based on safety and noise concerns, State Roads has rejected lowering the remaining 100 kilometres an hour speed limit to a uniform 90 kilometres an hour. A recent consultant's report proposing alternatives was also dismissed. Has the Minister reviewed this report? Could the Minister advise the House why landowners' concerns and recommendations have been ignored?

This roads project is of great importance to the state, and to me as the responsible Minister. As you are aware, I have been engaging directly with neighbouring landowners through conversations and visits since joining the Cabinet. Landowner concerns in relation to the works have been considered throughout the design process on this multi-stage project, and I will continue to listen to them.

Illawarra Road is a key link in our State Road network and provides access to the freight hubs in Hobart and the north and north-west regions of Tasmania. The road provides a time-saving transport link as it eliminates the need to travel via Launceston when travelling between the south and north-west of the state.

In recognition of this, the Illawarra Road corridor was included in the National Highway network by the Australian Government in March 2015. The National Highway status is confirmation of Illawarra Road's importance as the direct connection between the Midland Highway and the Bass Highway.

The key objective of the Illawarra Road upgrade from the Perth Link Road to the Bass Highway is to improve the road to a Category 1 standard and achieve a three-star AusRap safety rating. Something that should be considered important by all road users.

The project is progressing in stages due to the length of the road being upgraded and the complexity of the design. Working collaboratively with stakeholders, including adjoining landowners, is a large part of this. It has been and continues to be important for the

Government to come to agreeable solutions that minimise impacts on the lifestyles of those landowners. Based on this engagement, adjustments have been made to designs and the issues raised have been carefully and considerably worked through by the project team to be incorporated where at all possible.

Stage 1 of the upgrade between the Longford roundabout and Bishopsbourne Road was completed in February 2023, with designs currently being finalised for the remaining three stages.

The design for Stage 2A was revised to address concerns raised by a landowner regarding the impacts on a hawthorn hedgerow with the design yet to be finalised. I expect the construction tender to be advertised in late-2025. The Meander Valley Council approved the Development Application for Stage 2B, from the Bass Highway intersection south towards Longford in October 2023 and the design has been finalised with the construction tender having recently closed.

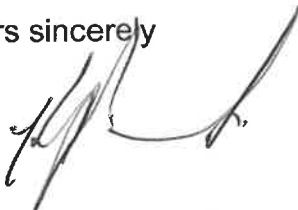
The design for Stage 3, between the Perth Link Road and east of the South Esk River, is also being progressed with the tender for construction to be advertised in mid-2025. Following consultation with Northern Midlands Council, provision of a shared path to the eastern side of the South Esk River is now to be included in the design and delivered as part of the Stage 3 works.

The Department of State Growth has received requests from both neighbouring landowners and Council for a reduction in the speed limit along Illawarra Road from 100km/h to 80km/h. Any changes to speed limits on the State-owned road network need to be independently assessed and approved by the Transport Commissioner, the responsibility for which sits with the Minister for Transport. Any decision would be made in consideration of the Illawarra Road project objectives of improved transport efficiency, and the Department has responded to all stakeholders who have made request for a speed limit reduction.

I have also reflected on your comment regarding the Public Works Committee receiving incorrect advice during its hearings, and suggest if substantive allegations of the Committee being misled are to be made the appropriate forms of the House be used to ensure any evidence can be considered appropriately.

As we do on many issues, I welcome you to contact me directly to share concerns from your constituents on any project we may have on the State Road network.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kerry Vincent', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Kerry Vincent MLC
Minister for Infrastructure