

BRIGHT ELECTORATE

Ms FOX (Bright) (15:39): When elected in 2006, I made some key promises to the people of my electorate, and one of them was that the state government would commit \$5.4 million (that figure includes the value of land given by our government) to building a major road across Lonsdale Highway linking the suburbs of Hallett Cove, Trott Park and Sheidow Park. The then federal government had committed to the project, as had the council who were to run the project. Once the state committed \$4.5 million to the road, it could go ahead.

Madam Deputy Speaker, standing here and talking about the successful completion of a big road in the southern suburbs may not sound very exciting but I must tell you what the final completion of this major piece of infrastructure—now known as Patpa Drive, opened by premier Mike Rann on 18 December—actually means to the residents of Hallett Cove in the electorate of Bright.

First and foremost, the existence of this road now ensures much better access to retail, civic and educational facilities, and it improves public transport as well as pedestrian and bicycle access. Secondly, the road has allowed the redevelopment of the shopping centre; in fact, the only shopping centre because, for many years, the Hallett Cove Shopping Centre was the only one for miles around. It was very run down. Not to put too fine a point on it, it was ramshackle, poorly maintained and far too small.

To undertake the very significant redevelopments needed, the property owners needed to improve access to the site, as well as an assurance that customers from Sheidow Park and Trott Park would have easy access to the centre. Once the road was given the go-ahead, it meant that the shopping centre could effectively be rebuilt. This, in turn, has meant that we have seen an increase in casual retail employment in the area as well as the establishment of a police shopfront and other new and exciting tenants. I am informed that the new centre will be completed in July this year and I, along with the local residents, am really looking forward to it.

Thirdly, the road opens up the suburb of Hallett Cove in a way that has not been seen before. It seems strange to say this now but, before the road was built, the residents of Hallett Cove, Trott Park and Sheidow Park were divided by a huge highway that could not easily be crossed. To do so, one had to drive north and navigate through a whole pile of roads.

Coincidentally, I was on Google Maps this morning and I noticed that Google has not added the new road, which is quite surprising. I hope that Google will add Patpa Drive to its maps. These charming and sought after suburbs are now joined by Patpa Drive, and a number of people have told me what a difference it makes, not just in terms of geography but also psychologically. No community likes to feel entirely isolated, and Hallett Cove is no longer as isolated as it was.

In relation to the name of the road, Marion council—an excellent council, I might add—ran a community competition to find a name for the road. Patpa means 'southern wind' in the Kurna language. It was also the name of the nearest train station when the railway was running through the area.

Finally, this project demonstrates what all levels of government can do when they work together. Once again, I would especially like to commend the Marion City Council; its mayor, Felicity-Ann Lewis; its CEO, Mark Searle, and Southern Ward councillors, Cheryl Connor, Rob Durward and Joel Bayliss. They have been passionate supporters of this project and, without them, it literally would never have happened. I would particularly like to commend Cheryl Connor for her passionate advocacy of this road for many years. Just out of politeness, I should mention that the former member for Bright, Wayne Matthew, was also involved in this project, and I was very glad to see him at the opening of the drive.