



Mr Roberts,

The Hampton Park Primary School (HPPS) School Board recently received MRWA's response to media enquiries regarding Northlink's impact on the school. It is extremely disappointing that the Board and HPPS initially learnt of MRWA's response through Channel Nine media. Additionally, the Board believes that there are several misleading or erroneous statements in the MRWA release that need clarification.

Before I address these specifically, I would like to make the point that the school is called Hampton Park Primary School. You twice refer to the school as "Hamptden Primary" which seems to demonstrate the low level of importance MRWA regards the impacts on the school by the Northlink project.

Clarification 1

The current underpass will be retained until a new underpass is constructed as part of the project, possibly in 12 to 18 months time. Furthermore, additional car parking will be provided at the school to replace temporary parking on road reserve that will be taken up with the improvements to the Tonkin Highway/Morley Drive interchange. The school's principal is aware of these plans and is supportive.

Board response: This is the first time that MRWA has stated that the current underpass will remain open until a new underpass is constructed. Discussions with MRWA personnel as recently as late July 2015 always stated that the current underpass and associated car park were scheduled to be removed permanently in January 2016.

In July 2015, MRWA stated they were specifically requesting the tenderers for the Northlink Project to supply viable alternatives for parents to access the school for 2016. It is confusing that your response indicates the underpass would remain available during construction yet simultaneously MRWA has been asking tenderers to provide alternative access solutions on the assumption the underpass was closed permanently during construction.

To date, all past written correspondence from MRWA corroborates this assertion including the Northlink webpage FAQs section which states:

The existing underpass will need to be closed to enable works to proceed. The Contractor that will undertake these works will consult with the school community to ensure safe access is maintained during construction.

You state there will be additional car parking provided at the school to compensate for the loss of the 'temporary' car park. Although, the additional parking bays out front of the school are welcome, if these additional bays are to be built for parents due to the 'temporary' car park closing then why do they need the underpass if they now park out front of the school?

Finally, in my discussions with the HPPS Principal, he has never indicated that he had knowledge of the underpass remaining open at all times.

Clarification 2

Hampden Primary School has enjoyed the use of a temporary car park and underpass located within the Tonkin Highway reservation for several decades. A concession was given by Main Roads at that time to allow such a facility on a temporary basis, on the agreement that it would be removed when Tonkin Hwy was eventually upgraded.

Board response: MRWA highlights the fact that the car park on the eastern side of Tonkin Hwy was temporary, yet makes the admission that parents of children attending the school have been using it for several decades. A car park that has been used for decades can hardly be said to be 'temporary'. Please provide the HPPS Board with copies of all documents and correspondence setting out the terms of the agreement referred to by MRWA by which use of the car park was agreed to be 'temporary'.

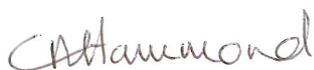
Clarification 3

Main Roads has also agreed to improve vehicular access to the school through improvements to the local road network, additional parking at the school and a "kiss and drop" facility at the school. Funding arrangements for this work are almost finalised and the aim is to have these changes completed this coming summer period (during school holidays) so that the new arrangements are in place prior to start of school in 2016 and commencement of NorthLink construction works.

Board response: The Board welcomes the construction of the 'kiss and drop' facility as well as the additional parking bays for the school. As the Board is reluctant to inform the wider school community of these plans until funding has been secured (which is still an outstanding issue), please advise as soon as funding arrangements are complete so that we can communicate the same to the school community.

Thank you for your time.

Regards



Clint Hammond
HPPS Board Chairperson