



SEATH HOLSWICH MP – STATE MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT

7th June 2012

AJ WYLLIE BRIDGE

I rise this afternoon to update the House on the progress of the AJ Wyllie Bridge reconstruction on Gympie Road at Lawnton. The northbound AJ Wyllie Bridge was damaged beyond repair in the floods of January 2011. It is being rebuilt under Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, a joint federal-state initiative.

The temporary pedestrian bridge over the North Pine River was installed in May and demolition work has now commenced on the old bridge. The boat ramp just upstream from the bridge has now been temporarily closed and the waterway under the project area is off limits to all water traffic for the duration of the project. The bridge demolition work is expected to be completed by July and the construction of the new bridge will then commence.

I can assure local residents, commuters and business owners that the member for Kallangur and I are doing everything we can to ensure there is regular communication about temporary road closures, project progress and traffic congestion around the bridge, and we will continue to do so.

We are also meeting regularly with project and departmental staff to ensure we have the latest project information to pass on to our electorates. If residents want to keep up to date with project progress they can subscribe to the department's free SMS service at www.northpinebridgesms.com.au.

The AJ Wyllie Bridge project is a case study in what was wrong with the Bligh Labor government and why the people of Pine Rivers rightly showed them the door after years of neglect. The lack of communication, consideration and assistance from the previous government for our community throughout 2011 was appalling.

We saw many local businesses shedding staff, closing their doors and relocating to other regions because of the hit that they took to their income after the bridge was damaged. But the former Labor government was nowhere to be seen. This same Labor Party that stands up in this place and claims to be the champion of the working class deserted Pine Rivers businesses in their hour of need and left them to struggle on their own.

The member for Kallangur and I were pleased to be able to provide practical support to local businesses throughout 2011. Through doorknocking, running 'buy local' campaigns and referring businesses to appropriate government departments for assistance, we did what the Labor government would not. We will continue to support our local businesses in practical ways and we will be available to them when they need support from their government.

I am proud to be a part of a government that is getting on with the job and standing up for local small businesses. I renew my commitment to my community that I will work with them to minimise the impacts of the AJ Wyllie Bridge project between now and its completion.