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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**For immediate release**

### **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPORTANT IN HIGHWAY UPGRADE**

Member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, has used the announcement that the upgrade of the Bruce Highway between Ingham and the Cardwell Range to renew his call for community infrastructure to be a focus of the planning process, and for the economic impact study on Ingham to be released as part of the coming community consultation.

Mr Cripps said the road upgrade between Ingham and the Cardwell Range was an important strategic project for North Queensland, designed to reduce the impact of flooding on local residents, visitors and businesses when roads are cut and communities become isolated during the wet season, but insisted there were other issues to be addressed.

“The Gairloch wash away, the Seymour River and Arnott Creek in particular become trouble spots for flooding during the wet season, holding up traffic and road freight for the whole of North Queensland. These hold ups are both inconvenient and costly to business and the community, so this project is really important for the whole region” said Mr Cripps.

“This project will inevitably affect many property owners in the Herbert River district. The release today of the draft alignment options, as opposed to the previous zones of interest, will reduce the number of potentially affected property owners. This will focus the planning process on a much narrower area, which will take the project to the next stage” he said.

“However, I am also concerned about the impact on community infrastructure, such as the Ingham airport, Tyto Wetlands and a number of local sporting clubs, which may be affected by the alignment options. I communicated these concerns to Main Roads when the zones of interest were released and I want to repeat those concerns today” said Mr Cripps.

“It will be important for the State and Federal Governments to ensure the Herbert River district is not disadvantaged as far as its community infrastructure is concerned. They must provide options and alternatives, because over the years, a lot of time and money has been invested into community infrastructure by residents, clubs and the local council” he said.

“Main Roads is completing, or has completed, an economic impact study in relation to this project on businesses in Ingham. Stakeholders and the community need to see the results of this economic impact study. I certainly encourage these stakeholders, property owners and the community to participate in the coming consultation process” said Mr Cripps.

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