



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Hansard Home Page: <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/hansard/>
 E-mail: hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au
 Phone: (07) 3406 7314 Fax: (07) 3210 0182

Subject **FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT** Page
Tuesday, 15 September 2009

ASSENT TO BILL	2189
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter from the Governor to the Speaker dated 7 September 2009 advising of assent to a bill.	
	2189
PRIVILEGE	2189
Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by the Former Premier	
	2189
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	2189
Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner	
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Notice of Appointment of Mitchell Kunde as Acting Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner until 5 October 2009.	
	2189
PETITIONS	2190
TABLED PAPERS	2190
NOTICE OF MOTION	2191
Far North Queensland Regional Plan	
	2191
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	2191
Toward Q2	
	2191
Traveston Dam	
	2193
Literacy and Numeracy	
	2194
Health System; Royal Flying Doctor Service	
	2195
Queensland Economy	
	2196
Road Safety	
	2196
QBuild, Asbestos Removal	
	2197
<i>Tabled paper:</i> QBuild Asbestos Policies and Procedures Review Report, dated 22 July 2009.	
	2197
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter to the Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology from the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations, undated, relating to a recent review conducted by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) of QBuild's asbestos removal policies and procedures.	
	2197
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Workplace Health and Safety Queensland Investigation Report regarding an incident which occurred on 3 June 2009.	
	2197
Dutney, Justice P	
	2198
Bruce Highway, Cooroy-Curra Upgrade	
	2198
Teague, Mr N; Nattrass, Mr R	
	2199
Freshwater Stocked Dams, Fishing Permits	
	2199
Traveston Dam	
	2200

Table of Contents — Tuesday, 15 September 2009

Baby Change Table Recall	2200
South-West Queensland	2201
MOTION	2201
Citizen's Right of Reply	2201
ABSENCE OF MINISTER	2202
SCRUTINY OF LEGISLATION COMMITTEE	2202
Report	2202
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Scrutiny of Legislation Committee Legislation Alert No. 8 of 2009.	2202
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	2202
Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption	2202
Speaker's Ruling, Sub Judice	2202
Public Service Appointment	2202
Speaker's Ruling, Sub Judice	2203
Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption	2203
<i>Integrity and Accountability in Queensland Green Paper</i>	<i>2203</i>
Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption	2204
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 21 August 2009, to the Premier by the member for Noosa advising that he will not be making a submission to the Integrity and Accountability in Queensland green paper.	2204
Queensland Economy	2204
Appointment to Judiciary	2205
Gold Coast University Hospital	2206
Zackeresen, Mr S	2206
Payroll Tax	2207
A1GP	2208
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Company Details—A1 Grand Prix Operations Ltd.	2208
Education	2209
Kindergartens	2209
Road Infrastructure	2210
Hendra Virus	2210
Climate Change Policy	2211
Blue Cards	2211
Gold Coast, Public Transport	2212
MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST	2212
Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption	2212
Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Associations; Literacy and Numeracy	2214
Child Safety; Sport	2215
Queensland Children's Hospital	2216
Bulimba State School, Green Army	2217
Land Tax	2218
Innisfail State College	2219
Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption	2220
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract from the Record of Proceedings dated 9 December 2005, pages 4723-4725.	2220
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract from the Record of Proceedings dated 9 December 2005, pages 4743-4746.	2220
Prostate Cancer	2221
Visit to Cambodia, Human Slavery	2221
Surveyors	2222
TRADE MEASUREMENT LEGISLATION REPEAL BILL	2223
First Reading	2223
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Trade Measurement Legislation Repeal Bill.	2223
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Trade Measurement Legislation Repeal Bill, explanatory notes.	2223
Second Reading	2223
SUSTAINABLE PLANNING BILL	2225
Second Reading	2225
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Integrity and Accountability in Queensland—Issues Paper No. 2.	2230
Deputy Speaker's Ruling, Tabling of Document Out of Order	2234
<i>Tabled paper:</i> IDAS Assessment Checklist, version 21.3, 9 May 2008.	2258
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Report on Koala Coast koala surveys 2005-2006, Environmental Protection Agency, August 2007.	2260
ADJOURNMENT	2287
Fraser Island, Tag-along Tours	2287
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Copy of article from the Fraser Coast Chronicle, dated 3 September 2009, titled Fraser Island 4WD tours cause government grief.	2287
Kendall, Ms J	2287
Under-age Drinking	2288
Social Housing	2288
Defence Housing	2289
Thomas, Sgt L	2289
Southern Moreton Bay Islands, Parking	2290
Child Protection	2290
Underground Coal Gasification	2291
Narangba Valley State High School; Morayfield State High School	2292
ATTENDANCE	2292

TUESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2009

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. John Mickel, Logan) read prayers and took the chair.

For the sitting week, Mr Speaker acknowledged the traditional owners of the land upon which this parliament is assembled and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

ASSENT TO BILL

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to a certain bill, the contents of which will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter for the information of members.

The Honourable R.J. Mickel, MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bill, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, was assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of Assent: 5 September 2009

"A Bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Code to ensure the lawfulness of particular medical matters"

This Bill is hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

7 September 2009

Tabled paper: Letter from the Governor to the Speaker dated 7 September 2009 advising of assent to a bill [861].

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by the Former Premier

Mr GIBSON (Gympie—LNP) (9.31 am): On 9 June 2006 the then Premier, Peter Beattie, told this House in a statement regarding the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam—

We can also guarantee that a fishway will be part of any dam development. We have already successfully incorporated one of the world's most advanced fishways into the Paradise Dam in the Burnett. It has been in operation for several months now and has successfully been transporting fish, including Queensland lungfish, across the dam wall.

Subsequent FOI documents have revealed that at the time of making this statement there was no advice given to the then Premier that the fishway at the Paradise Dam was functioning. It appears that not only was the statement misleading but the then Premier made no effort to determine its accuracy before making the statement to the House. Mr Speaker, this type of deception should be of great concern to all members. I will be writing to you to ask you to investigate the matter further with a view to referring the matter to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I report that, pursuant to the relevant provisions of the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001, I have today appointed Mr Mitchell Kunde as the Acting Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner until 5 October 2009 during the absence of Mr MacSporran SC. This acting appointment has the bipartisan support of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee. I have today administered the requisite oath to Mr Kunde and I table the relevant notice of appointment as required under the act.

Tabled paper: Notice of Appointment of Mitchell Kunde as Acting Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner until 5 October 2009 [894].

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

South Stradbroke Island

Ms Croft, from 224 petitioners, requesting the House to reject the 63 hectare site on South Stradbroke Island from future consideration as a desalination plant and to extend the South Stradbroke Island Conservation Park to include the Lots to protect the conservation values on the island [\[862\]](#).

Fishermans Beach, Boat Ramp

Mr Hoolihan, from 2,222 petitioners, requesting the House to fund the construction of a new all tide boat ramp at the southern end of Fishermans Beach at Emu Park [\[863\]](#).

Gympie, Department of Transport and Main Roads Office

Mr Gibson, from 2,306 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that the regional office of the Department of Transport and Main Roads North Coast remains in Gympie and is not relocated to Maroochydore; the existing level of staffing remains; and the office be maintained as a service centre for both the North Coast Region and the Wide Bay/Burnett Region [\[864\]](#).

Tin Can Bay, Medical Practice

Mr Gibson, from 58 petitioners, requesting the House to retain a doctor at the Tin Can Bay medical practice [\[865\]](#).

Abortion Law

Mr Moorhead, a paper and an e-petition from 2,515 petitioners in total, requesting the House to repeal sections 224, 225 and 226 of the Criminal Code to ensure that termination of pregnancy is no longer subject to criminal law [\[866, 867\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petitions, sponsored by the honourable members indicated—

Loganlea-Jimboomba Power Network

Mr Mickel, from 262 petitioners, requesting the House to not proceed with the construction of Energex power line for the Loganlea to Jimboomba network upgrade but to choose a better and safer route (preferably underground) from the numerous viable alternatives that are available [\[868\]](#).

Water Restrictions

Mr Bleijie, from 49 petitioners, requesting the House to implement the odd/even numbering water restriction system to individual units, as is the case for residential dwellings, and not en bloc by reference to their street numbers [\[869\]](#).

Yeppoon-Rockhampton, Trail

Mr Hoolihan, from 1,122 petitioners, requesting the House to convert the disused rail corridor from Yeppoon to Rockhampton to a shared walking and cycling trail with an adjacent bridle path for horses [\[870\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

The Clerk informed the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

8 September 2009—

[852](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads (Mr Wallace) to a paper petition (1274-09) presented by Mr Hinchliffe from 3597 petitioners regarding objection to the restrictive access and egress to homes planned by BrisConnections (builders of Airport Link)

9 September 2009—

[853](#) Trust Company Limited—Consolidated Financial Report for the financial year ended 28 February 2009

10 September 2009—

[854](#) Gambling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2009: Erratum to Explanatory Notes

11 September 2009—

[855](#) Response from the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport (Mr Reeves) to an ePetition (1210-09) sponsored by Mr Wendt from 1977 petitioners regarding safe and legal areas for dirt bike riders to enjoy their sport

[856](#) Report by the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Hinchliffe), pursuant to s3.6.9 of the Integrated Planning Act 1997, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application by Galawall Pty Ltd—795 Burnett Heads Road, Rubyanna

[857](#) Report by the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Hinchliffe), pursuant to s3.6.9 of the Integrated Planning Act 1997, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application by Galawall Pty Ltd—795 Burnett Heads Road, Rubyanna—Annexures A-G

14 September 2009—

[858](#) Mt Gravatt Showgrounds Trust—Annual Report 2008-09

[859](#) Department of Main Roads—Final Report: July 2008—March 2009: Volume 1 of 2

[860](#) Department of Main Roads—Final Report: July 2008—March 2009: Volume 2 of 2—Financial Statements

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Mines and Energy Legislation Amendment Act 2009—

[871](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 185

Mineral Resources Act 1989, Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004—

[872](#) Mines and Energy Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2009, No. 186

Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001—

[873](#) Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Amendment Regulation 2009, No. 187

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, Education (Overseas Students) Act 1996, Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005, Education (Queensland Studies Authority) Act 2002, Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2008, Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000—

[874](#) Education and Training Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2009, No. 188

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[875](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2009, No. 189

Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995—

[876](#) Workplace Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice (No. 2) 2009, No. 190

Building Act 1975—

[877](#) Building Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2009, No. 191

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002—

[878](#) Plumbing and Drainage Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2009, No. 192

State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971—

[879](#) State Development and Public Works Organisation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2009, No. 193

Nature Conservation Act 1992, Recreation Areas Management Act 2006, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[880](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management-Road Rules) Regulation 2009, No. 194

Transport Legislation Amendment Act 2007—

[881](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 195

Public Trustee Act 1978—

[882](#) Public Trustee (Fees and Charges) Notice (No. 2) 2009

MEMBER'S PAPER

The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Gympie (Mr Gibson)—

[883](#) Non-conforming petition regarding concerns of residents of Tin Can Bay following the move of the medical centre to Cooloolool Cove

NOTICE OF MOTION**Far North Queensland Regional Plan**

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (9.35 am): I give notice that I will move—

That the House—

1. notes the Regulatory Provisions of the Far North Queensland Regional Plan (the Plan) that was tabled in the Legislative Assembly as part of the Plan on 19 June 2009; and
2. ratifies the Regulatory Provisions of the Plan under section 2.5A.17 of the Integrated Planning Act 1997.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Toward Q2**

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): It is just a little over one year since I announced my government's Q2 vision for tomorrow's Queensland. It is a vision that outlines definitive, long-term, measurable ambitions and targets for shaping our state for future generations and addressing the challenges of the 21st century.

Q2 charts the course for a strong Queensland, a greener Queensland, a Queensland that is smarter, healthier and fairer. These are bold ambitions and they are designed to challenge us to create tomorrow's Queensland for our children and our grandchildren. While government plays a lead role, the ambitions and targets cannot be achieved by government alone; they require a combined effort by industry, communities, families and individuals. I am pleased to provide a preliminary update to members on some of the achievements in the Q2 ambitions since we launched them last year.

We are determined to create a strong economy in Queensland, and we are doing that by continuing our investment in our record building program, with \$18.2 billion this financial year. As members know, this is supporting 127,000 jobs in some of the toughest of economic times. We have started construction on Australia's first ecosciences precinct at Boggo Road that will bring together more than 100 scientists to work on major environmental issues including climate change, water and sustainable growth. We are actively supporting the development of a new \$40 billion LNG industry which has the potential to bring 18,000 new jobs to Queensland.

It is clear that our economic strategy is working. During the fallout from the global financial crisis, Queensland is holding its head above water and continuing to outperform the national economy. If we had not steered Queensland on a clear path through global economic turmoil, we would have slumped into recession and our unemployment rate would not have remained where it is—among the lowest in the country.

We are supporting the development of new renewable energy industries to create a greener Queensland. Our Queensland Renewable Energy Plan has the potential to attract \$3.5 billion worth of investment and create up to 3,500 new jobs in these industries in the next decade.

New job creation programs also include \$57 million to create up to 3,000 placements in our Green Army, which is delivering improvements in our national parks and recreation areas. We are also meeting the challenge of climate change, with the new \$196 million *ClimateQ: toward a greener Queensland*. We have committed \$39.3 million for computer based transport systems to reduce emissions and ease congestion in South-East Queensland and \$5.2 million to reduce car emissions by promoting walking, cycling, car pooling and public transport. We have been part of the biggest green giveaway ever in Australia, with one million free energy-saving light bulbs successfully given out to Queenslanders. We have committed to increasing the area of our national parks by 50 per cent by 2020, and in the past year we have made great steps forward with the acquisition of 380,000 hectares added to the state's national park estate.

We have also moved to give better protection to the Great Barrier Reef, with the introduction of new regulations. We have actively reduced the carbon footprint of Queensland homes, with more than 100,000 Queensland homes taking advantage of the ClimateSmart Home Service in less than 12 months. The \$60 million Solar and Energy Efficiency Program is supporting solar energy in our schools and delivering new initiatives so that each school can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 3.2 tonnes a year.

When it comes to a smarter Queensland, we are keeping Queensland smart and making it smarter, delivering world-class education and training with an additional 1,000 teachers committed over the next three years. We are continuing to deliver the \$850 million State Schools of Tomorrow program, and in the past 12 months work has started on the first 44 projects including new libraries, new computer rooms and new classrooms. They have started and many are now nearing completion, and we will see more in the next financial year. Our 240 new and expanded kindergarten program will see the first six new kindergartens begin construction within weeks. This was a program opposed by those opposite. We have committed \$90 million to delivering a literacy strategy to provide best practice teacher training and intensive literacy support for upper primary students needing assistance. Just last week we saw the significant improvement in national tests being made by primary and high school students across Queensland.

We are committed to transforming Queenslanders into Australia's healthiest people, delivering the nation's largest hospital-building program, with \$6 billion invested in 46 new, renovated or upgraded hospitals to provide high-quality health care for all. In the last 12 months construction has started on the Cairns Base Hospital redevelopment, the Mackay Base Hospital redevelopment and the Mount Isa Hospital redevelopment. The Gold Coast University Hospital is starting to take form. We are also protecting Queenslanders' oral health by fluoridating our drinking water. More than 90 per cent of Queenslanders will have access to fluoridated water by 2012.

Over the past year we have employed 563 more doctors and 2,359 more nurses to meet the health needs of Queensland's growing population. Free whooping cough vaccines are now being provided for all new Queensland parents to help fight the rapid spread of this disease. We are delivering new and expanded cancer services closer to where people live, including a new cancer oncology centre at Rockhampton Hospital, better radiation therapy services at the PA Hospital and a linear accelerator in Cairns, which will allow Far North Queenslanders to access radiation therapy in Cairns for the first time.

We are investing \$144 million to expand our busiest emergency departments in Brisbane, Logan, Redlands, Ipswich, Caboolture, Bundaberg and Toowoomba. We are providing world-class health care for Queensland children, with the beginnings of the new Queensland Children's Hospital and new dedicated paediatric services across the state. Emergency department waiting times have now been ranked third in the country after ranking sixth just a year ago. In Q2 we committed to lifting our elective and emergency wait times to the best in the country, and in one year we have moved our emergency wait times from sixth in Australia to third. That is a great credit to our hospital system and our staff. Our elective surgery waiting times are now the best in Australia.

Finally, we are creating a fairer Queensland, with safer and more caring communities, with more than 770 extra police on the beat since September 2007. We are making our pubs and clubs safer, with new reforms announced to ban glass in high-risk venues by the end of this year. We have made a commitment to decriminalise altruistic surrogacy to ensure all Queenslanders have the opportunity to start a family. We have introduced a world-first welfare reform trial to provide intensive support to disadvantaged Indigenous communities including a Family Responsibilities Commission that is helping these communities get back on their feet.

We have introduced landmark reforms in relation to political lobbyists and political donations, with new regulations that are not only the first in the country but also the toughest. Although the financial landscape has changed significantly since I announced our Q2 vision, my government's determination to keep our eyes focused on the next horizon has not wavered. These targets are even more important in tough times. When I released this vision, I gave a commitment that we would report annually on progress against the designated targets, and that will happen by the end of this year.

Traveston Dam

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.45 am): Queensland's Coordinator-General has given the green light to the Traveston Crossing Dam and the final decision for this vital project now rests with the federal environment minister. The Coordinator-General has advised the federal government that he believes the dam can proceed with conditions. This decision comes after the most extensive environmental work on probably any project in our history. It has taken two years to get to this point. The conditions, which will make this the greenest dam in Australia's history, include a massive increase in suitable habitat for endangered species such as the lungfish and the Mary River cod and turtle.

The proposed environmental conditions include measures such as increasing vegetated areas around the river and its tributaries from 260 hectares to more than 2,000 hectares over a 20-year period—that is almost a tenfold increase in the vegetated areas in this river system and its tributaries; rehabilitation work for one kilometre downstream from the dam wall to encourage movement of species through the dam system; establishing islands and sand refuges for Mary River turtles in the main water storage area; and secure fencing in habitat areas to restrict the current destructive grazing practices on these habitats of these species.

If the federal minister gives his approval, work on the Traveston Crossing Dam can start as early as the new year in 2010. That means that work to expand and improve the habitat would be followed by a ramp-up of the necessary roadworks on the Bruce Highway before construction on the dam wall proceeds. That will support thousands of jobs in the South-East Queensland area and provide lasting water security for the region. It will also mean an immediate improvement in environmental conditions in the habitat of these species. I have always said that South-East Queensland needs this project, and I have not changed my mind.

Mr Gibson: So much for listening to the experts!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Gympie.

Ms BLIGH: The alternative to this dam is at least two more desalination plants on top of the two extra ones that will be necessary to cope with growth, and each of them would need to be as large or larger than the current Tugun plant. That would mean a significantly higher economic, environmental and social cost. This is not an easy issue, but these are the sorts of decisions that leaders need to face. This dam is the foundation stone on which we will build our region's future. Water security cannot be optional. It is critical to our continued prosperity.

South-East Queensland is the fastest growing region in Australia and, as Premier, I am committed to looking over the horizon to the fact that people moving here will need water to drink and the industries that will employ them need secure water supplies. The new environmental conditions that the Coordinator-General is proposing mean, as I said, that this will be the greenest dam building proposal in Australia's history. Without this project proceeding, the sad fact is that these species could become extinct. Farming practices in the region over the last 150 years have degraded the habitat and resulted in their endangered status.

How did these species become endangered? From the practices that are happening right now in the Mary Valley. I simply make the point that there is no dam in the Mary Valley as we speak and yet these species are endangered. We can only reasonably reach the conclusion that it is from current and

prior practices. The environmental research conducted as part of the project has confirmed the true status of these species and has presented us with a stark reality. If the current land use practices are allowed to continue, these species are likely to die out.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms BLIGH: You cannot accept that they are endangered without accepting that they are at risk. It is also a stark reality that we cannot afford to be complacent because it has rained. As sure as night follows day, in South-East Queensland we will endure droughts again. The Traveston Crossing Dam will deliver approximately 70,000 megalitres of water per year—enough water for around 800,000 people a day. Since the project was announced in 2006, rain events in the catchment area have meant it would have filled 10 times if it had already been built. That means—

Mr Dickson: Integrity out the window again.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Buderim.

Ms BLIGH: Let us be clear—

Mr Johnson: Did you forge Colin Jensen's signature or did he sign himself?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Gregory, I think that is close to the bone.

Ms BLIGH: I find the remarks from the member for Gregory untrue and offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr JOHNSON: If the Premier finds them offensive, I do withdraw and I do apologise.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I call the Premier.

Ms BLIGH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think it is important to understand that if the Traveston Crossing Dam were a reality already, even during the worst drought in living memory and recorded history there would have been no danger of SEQ running out of water because it would have filled 10 times since 2006. Today, with our dams nearly three-quarters full, it would be very easy for me to put this issue on the backburner, but Queensland cannot afford to be short-sighted on water supply.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms BLIGH: I take note of the fact that those opposite want the easy way out on everything. I will not take my eye off the ball when it comes to water security just because there is water in the dams. I will take the hard decisions that need to be made to ensure that Queensland and the south-east corner of our state, the fastest growing region in Australia, will have water security.

Literacy and Numeracy

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.52 am): The results of this year's national literacy and numeracy tests have shown tremendous improvements among students in Queensland. Today I want to congratulate those students, their parents and, in particular, our teachers on achieving such encouraging results.

Right across Queensland teachers in all schools, but particularly those in our state schools, have been putting in a huge effort to deliver these improvements. They have been working incredibly hard to help put a sharper focus on the foundations of education in our schools and the results show that their efforts have worked.

Our teachers had just 3½ months after the interim recommendations of the Masters review to help prepare students for the test. Yet, as a result of their efforts, our students this year improved in 17 out of the 20 testing areas. Queensland's rank among the states lifted from seventh to sixth compared to last year. We now have nine out of 10 of our students at or above the national benchmark compared to eight out of 10 some 12 months ago. Nine out of 10 students reached or were better than the national benchmark.

We know that there is still some way to go to lift Queensland's overall performance to that of the leading states. But we have made a very positive start and we have a plan to keep moving forward. In the face of these improvements our teachers deserve a pat on the back. It is very pleasing to see a number of state schools in particular performing at higher levels.

Some schools have done exceptionally well. One of the most impressive improvements we have seen is in the small community of Yarrabah in Far North Queensland. Yarrabah State School has gone from 17½ per cent of students performing at or above year 3 writing national benchmarks last year to an amazing 61.3 per cent this year. That is a lift of 43 per cent. Congratulations to the teachers at Yarrabah.

In the state's central west, Miles State High School now has 97 per cent of students performing at or above national benchmarks for grammar and punctuation compared to 67 per cent last year—another huge improvement that teachers, parents and students can be very proud of. It is those big leaps forward that will drive up the entire state's results.

My government will continue to work with teachers at schools all over Queensland in an effort to continue to drive results upwards and give our kids the best start in their lives. We are hoping to see more improvements next year as our raft of new measures to boost the literacy and numeracy standard take effect. We have a package of reforms, including summer schools—the first of those will start in the September school holidays—turnaround teams, school audits, extra professional development for teachers, curriculum advisors and mandated teaching times all rolling out towards the end of this year and the start of next year. We are tackling this issue from all possible angles—improving teaching, supporting students, setting high expectations, providing transparency in results and performance and reforming the system as a whole.

We set ourselves the ambition to be among the leading states of Australia. We know we have some way to go but this year's results are a terrific start. I again congratulate the teachers of Queensland for the efforts that they have made. They deserve our congratulations and full credit to them.

Health System; Royal Flying Doctor Service

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (9.56 am): Today I rise to speak about the important developments in Queensland's health reform, especially following the health ministers' meeting in Canberra since our last sitting week. It is no secret that Queensland, indeed Australia, faces serious and growing challenges to provide quality health care and services for our community. But I believe we are entering a period of great opportunity—a time to acknowledge the difficulties and work together with state, territory and federal governments. I do not want to see this chance slip through our hands.

Reforming the health system will be a mammoth task, but it is at the core of what we stand for as a government and I am not one to back away from the challenge. We need a comprehensive, holistic approach to healthcare reform. To achieve this Australia needs a mature, informed and sophisticated public debate. We need to move beyond the old blame game and rhetoric of political battles bygone.

The fact is that providing the quality health care and service that every Australian deserves is, quite simply, a difficult, dynamic and expensive task. Notwithstanding that, the hospital and health reform report shows that Australians have the third longest life expectancy on earth.

With recent developments, I am confident that around the country there is the growing political will to take on this challenge. Ministers met in Canberra to develop coordinated approaches to the emerging health issues of our time. This includes swine flu and, of course, the national healthcare reform agenda. I am sure we will continue to have debates between jurisdictions as we tackle this significant issue.

We will not always agree, but I can give this strong and clear commitment that Queensland will play its part in the national reform to improve health care for our community. We are serious about improving the health of Australians. We will play a constructive and active role in this reform process. I intend Queensland to have a loud and prominent voice in these important national debates.

There are particular opportunities for Queensland in this reform agenda, including greater efficiencies, reducing the cost of bureaucracies and our ability to build a more sustainable health system that can adapt to future challenges. Part of the national reform debate will obviously centre on the division of responsibilities between the states and the Commonwealth. There are areas of opportunity where this line can be better defined, where inefficiencies can be eliminated and, ultimately, services can be improved for Queensland patients.

I need to make an important point in this regard. Any serious discussion of changes to responsibilities must include a commitment from the Commonwealth to step up to the plate in the areas where it already has significant responsibilities such as in aged care, dental services—where I note that the opposition federally is blocking a massive dental fund injection—community care, and outpatient services.

As some of my COAG colleagues like to remind me, Queensland is different. When it comes to analysis of health services, especially in relation to average costs, there is no avoiding the fact that Queensland is far and away the most decentralised state in the nation. For example, we have the population of Tasmania sitting in the Gold Coast alone. Compare Queensland's situation to regional centres in Victoria. We have cities larger than Ballarat outside of Brisbane, but instead of being a three-hour drive from the capital city they are a two-day drive from Brisbane. What does this mean for Queensland and health reform? We will play an active role in the reform process but we do not intend for Queensland Health to simply become a post box.

Operating public hospitals is a difficult task and simply transferring the entire operation of health and hospitals to Canberra is not a magic bullet. There are definite improvements to be made and reforms to be undertaken, but to better serve the public interest there are also core tasks that should remain the role of state government.

On another matter, I am pleased to inform the House that the tender for the provision of additional hours of fixed-wing aeromedical services has been awarded to the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The contract will be for an initial five-year term, with the option of Queensland Health extending the supply arrangement for a further period of 12 months. The arrangement will commence at approximately 3,700 hours per annum of additional medical retrieval time. This is over and above the existing contract of 6,400 hours the RFDS currently provides. There has been much criticism in other states of hours being stripped from the RFDS, but in Queensland through an open and transparent tendering process the RFDS has won the tender for extra hours. This new contract is over and above the existing contract and will retain existing hours for one of the state's great icons. Moreover, it will provide high-quality medical services for medical retrievals for Queensland patients across our large state. I congratulate the RFDS on its successful tender.

Queensland Economy

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (10.00 am): Today marks a significant anniversary, one not to be celebrated but nevertheless worth remarking upon. One year ago today Lehman Brothers—an institution of more than 150 years standing, one that survived the Great Depression—fell over and with it the world's financial and banking system teetered on the brink. It remains a great tribute to governments across the political divide and around the globe that we have avoided catastrophe, that action was taken early and decisively. While we have avoided catastrophe, the task of the rebuild is far from complete. One year on from that seminal day, when the global financial crisis threatened to cascade, we see positive signs here in Queensland.

Yesterday lending finance statistics were released which heralded the return of the all-important investor in the Queensland housing market. July's figures saw the second consecutive monthly increase in the value of finance for the purchase of homes for rent or resale. This indicator has now increased by 43 per cent since it troughed in November 2008. Finance for owner-occupied homes rose 0.8 per cent in July to be more than 37 per cent higher over the year as Queenslanders enter the housing market, many for the first time. One year on from the introduction of our nation-leading reforms in stamp duty—abolishing all mortgage duty and stamp duty for first home buyers up to \$500,000—we see a housing market that has been sustained by policy intervention. Our stamp duty cuts were timed for 1 September last year and immediately saw a 26 per cent rise in first home owner activity in the quarter following its introduction.

Since then, the federal government has added the First Home Owner Boost to the state's First Home Owner Grant, and this has driven activity. Twelve months on, the number of First Home Owner Grants has increased from 1,656 to 2,710—a 63 per cent increase that has provided a much needed boost to the housing sector. Dwelling approvals have been rising steadily and moved up a further 0.4 per cent in July this year. Retail spending in Queensland ticked up in the June quarter to be 2.8 per cent higher over the year. Our record \$18 billion building program is providing support and activity in the Queensland economy. It is generating jobs and sustaining jobs—127,000 of them. Last week's jobs data saw us continue to maintain a level of unemployment below the nation's. We are below New South Wales and below Victoria. There are signs of activity, with some elements of the data released last week showing increased job generation—early signs but clear evidence of hope.

The ANZ job advertisement series, a leading indicator of jobs activity, showed a 2.3 per cent rise in August. This was the first rise since September 2007. The NAB business confidence survey is also showing signs of improvement for Queensland business, as has the Sensis Business Index. The Westpac consumer sentiment survey has moved above the key 100 barrier, indicating positive sentiment. One year on, we are a long way from declaring victory. In the face of potential catastrophe, up against the first decline in global output since the Second World War and up against a global recession, we have thus far avoided negative growth. While conditions are tougher, there is clear evidence that a rebuild of confidence is underway. There is a long way to go, but we remain committed to the task—committed to the building program, committed to jobs, committed to making the tough decisions to sustain our future prosperity. Our plan is clear and our resolve remains unchanged.

Road Safety

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (10.03 am): Next week Queensland schools will start their two-week spring holidays. Tragically, 11 people were killed in road crashes during the spring break last year and another six people died in the week leading up to the holidays. In an effort to avoid a repeat, the Queensland Police Service has developed a new road safety operation code named Operation Blitz 'Em. I am pleased to be launching this operation later today with the Police Commissioner. This operation is a state-wide initiative promoting road safety and targeting illegal driving behaviour. To put it simply, this road safety operation is about saving lives and preventing crashes by discouraging people from breaking the road rules.

This Queensland-first operation will focus on high-visibility policing of the state's major highways from tomorrow until Saturday. The blitz will target the major coastal highways between Cairns and Gympie and the major highways and roads in the southern corner of the state within the Gympie, Kingaroy, Miles, Goondiwindi, Warwick and Coolangatta geographic areas. Police will employ a multifaceted strategy including speed camera and mobile and hand-held radar deployments, random breath and drug testing, general traffic enforcement activities and increased police presence using marked and unmarked vehicles. Following the completion of Operation Blitz 'Em on Saturday, police will begin the two-week Operation Spring Break aimed at reducing road trauma during the school holidays.

It is a sad fact that preventable factors such as speeding, drink driving, fatigue and not wearing a seatbelt contributed to 93 per cent of the fatalities on Queensland roads last year. Police know from experience that high-visibility policing is key to deterring and catching dangerous drivers. Queensland drivers need to change their driving behaviours and attitudes. By speeding, driving tired, not wearing a seatbelt or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, motorists are putting their lives and the lives of other motorists at risk. Already this year 255 Queenslanders have lost their lives on our roads. It is my hope that Operation Blitz 'Em will contribute to a safer spring holiday season.

QBuild, Asbestos Removal

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (10.05 am): The recent handling of asbestos removal at Caningeraba State School immediately sounded alarm bells with myself and the Department of Public Works. As I have told this House before, my father died from an asbestos related illness, so I need no convincing of the inherent dangers in handling this material. I responded by requesting an independent investigation to be carried out by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland into the incident and a total review of QBuild's asbestos removal policies and procedures. I have received the reports from the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations which I now table.

Tabled paper: QBuild Asbestos Policies and Procedures Review Report, dated 22 July 2009 [884].

Tabled paper: Letter to the Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology from the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations, undated, relating to a recent review conducted by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) of QBuild's asbestos removal policies and procedures [885].

Tabled paper: Workplace Health and Safety Queensland Investigation Report regarding an incident which occurred on 3 June 2009 [886].

QBuild will implement all recommendations in the report. Incorrect procedures were followed at Caningeraba and this must never happen again.

The Workplace Health and Safety Division issued an improvement notice on QBuild. This notice points out that employees removing asbestos-containing material did not fully comply with the asbestos management code or the asbestos removal code, did not obtain an access permit and did not check the Built Environment Materials Information Register. The report indicates the incidents were of a technical nature and that 'there was no significant exposure to asbestos-containing material'. As this was the first offence, the senior QBuild employee on site has been disciplined and been issued with a formal written warning. Workplace Health and Safety Queensland has informed QBuild that the matter is finalised and the improvement notice is released. This release was signed off on 15 July 2009.

Asbestos removal is a high priority for this government and QBuild strives for the highest possible standards in every instance where it is requested to remove this deadly substance. The overall conclusion contained in the Workplace Health and Safety report on policies and procedures—

... is that in some areas QBuild's policies and procedures set a higher standard for asbestos management than that required by legislation.

In other words, QBuild has set itself a higher bar. However, QBuild will continue to rigorously review and revise its practical asbestos training program for field staff and will aim to continue to improve its policies and apply these throughout Queensland. To further enhance this process, QBuild will also be subjected to spot audits throughout the state, not just internally by QBuild but also by Workplace Health and Safety officials. Also, by the end of the year around 900 of QBuild's field staff will have received practical asbestos training. All new field staff will receive the training, and refresher courses will be made available to existing staff every two years or as required. An asbestos awareness course is also being developed as continued professional development for supervisors and foremen. All employees have access to the QBuild *Workplace health and safety standards* which contains the correct and up-to-date information for working with asbestos.

I thank the division of Workplace Health and Safety for its thorough investigation and the cooperation of my colleague the minister, Cameron Dick. I assure them and members of this House that every recommendation in this report will be implemented.

Mrs Stuckey: Will you say sorry to Mr Smith now?

Mr SCHWARTEN: I beg your pardon?

Mrs Stuckey: Will you say sorry to Mr Smith?

Mr SCHWARTEN: Mr Speaker, there is a person interjecting on me there.

Ms Spence interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I take the advice of the Leader of the House. I will not respond to the interjection. I may be seen as a threat.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think it will help both sides of the House and the decorum if a quarrel I thought we had settled some weeks ago remained settled and we get on with the business of the House.

Dutney, Justice P

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.10 am): I am certain all members of the House will wish to join me in extending the parliament's deep condolences to the family and friends of Supreme Court Justice Peter Dutney, who passed away unexpectedly on 4 September 2009. It is fitting to reflect on Peter Dutney's impressive personal qualities, professional achievements and significant contribution to the law, the judiciary community and to our state.

Justice Dutney began his legal career in 1975 as an articled law clerk at Brisbane law firm Morris Fletcher and Cross. He completed his law degree at the University of Queensland in 1978 and was admitted to the bar in 1979. Justice Dutney was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1990 and was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2000. Justice Dutney served as the Central Judge in Rockhampton for almost eight years—from May 2000 to March 2008. He returned to Brisbane last year to assist with the Supreme Court commercial list. In July, Justice Dutney was named the inaugural President of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, which commences operation on 1 December this year.

Justice Dutney was passionate about alternative dispute resolution and the enormous potential that he was to bring to the implementation of QCAT will sadly now not be realised. The Chief Justice of Queensland, the Honourable Paul de Jersey, has paid tribute to Justice Dutney's contribution to the law in Queensland, describing him as a fine judge of brilliant judicial accomplishment and tireless in the discharge of his judicial duties. Justice Dutney had a deep understanding of the Queensland justice system and was held in high regard across the profession. While an acknowledged master in the field of commercial law, Justice Dutney also presided over several notable criminal cases, including the Childers backpacker hostel fire and the Palm Island trials.

Justice Dutney's social life was equally rich and diverse. In earlier years, Justice Dutney was an enthusiastic triathlete and competed in the Noosa Triathlon over 10 successive years. His passion for cycling never waned. In Rockhampton, he became a trustee of the Rockhampton Art Gallery and was a strong supporter of the local law association. Justice Dutney's colleagues also found him the most engaging of companions and say that the breadth of his knowledge and experience were such that there were few subjects on which he could not speak with some authority.

Yesterday, I represented the Queensland government at Justice Dutney's funeral, along with the Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology and member for Rockhampton, and the member for Keppel. Justice Dutney's untimely passing is a great loss to the legal profession and to Queensland but, more importantly, today our thoughts are with those whom he held most dear—his family. Justice Dutney is survived by his wife, Bronwyn, their two sons, a daughter-in-law and a very young grandson who, most sadly, Justice Dutney never had the opportunity to meet or embrace. I hope it is of some comfort for them at this very difficult time to know the high esteem in which Justice Dutney was held by all who had the privilege of being touched by his remarkable life. On behalf of the Queensland government and all the members of the Queensland parliament, I offer my sincere condolences to Justice Dutney's family at this sad time.

Bruce Highway, Cooroy-Curra Upgrade

Hon. CA WALLACE (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads) (10.13 am): The upgrade of the Bruce Highway between Cooroy and Curra has begun—an upgrade that is long overdue and one that I know is welcomed by all sides of politics.

Mr Gibson: Hear, hear!

Mr WALLACE: I take that interjection from the member for Gympie who has joined in the fight for this upgrade. We are determined to work with the Rudd Labor government to improve safety on the Bruce Highway, which has the unfortunate reputation of having crash rates 40 per cent higher than other major roads on the national network.

The Rudd government has come forward with \$488 million for the section B upgrade and \$125 million is from the Bligh government. In addition, the Rudd government has provided \$200 million for further planning of upgrades. Abigroup has been awarded the contract for the first stage of bulk

earthworks for section B, less than four months since the Rudd Labor government announced funding for this upgrade. The project will generate 1,600 direct and indirect jobs over the three-year life of the project.

I would like to clear up for the House that the decision to begin construction on section B has nothing to do with the Traveston Dam. Section B has been given priority based on safety and traffic needs. This section has the highest crash statistics of the entire length of the proposed upgrade, which makes it the most urgent priority. Tragically, since 2002, 13 people have lost their lives on this particular section of the highway. Some members have previously made assertions that this section is being constructed before section A to keep the site for the proposed dam available. That is simply untrue. We are concentrating our efforts here first because it is the most dangerous section of the highway.

From a traffic management perspective, building to the east of the Bruce Highway will also separate the major construction site from vehicles travelling on the current highway. This will drastically reduce the impact of section B roadworks and reduce travel time for road users and the local community. Also, moving the highway alignment to the east of the Bruce Highway and above the Mary River flood plain will result in less disruption to residents and property owners who are not affected by the proposed dam.

I will continue to press for funding from the federal government so that further stages of this upgrade can be progressed. It is hoped that, as this stage ends, we will be able to begin the next stage and so on so that eventually this entire section is upgraded and made safer for motorists.

Teague, Mr N; Nattrass, Mr R

Hon. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability) (10.16 am): It is with great sadness that I address the House regarding the loss of one of our Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers and to express my sincere condolences to his family. Ranger Neil Teague tragically died on duty in Coominglah State Forest, near Monto, earlier this month in an area that was one of his favourite places, the Hurdle Gully scrub. Neil was ranger in charge of the Moonford management unit and was a ranger with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service for 13 years. Although he managed a number of parks and forests, Neil particularly had a great love for Coominglah. Neil was held in high regard by many in the community—and I know that the member for Callide also knew him well—and he was also admired and respected by his colleagues. I am told that most people who met Neil took an immediate liking to him as he was a true character.

Neil's reputation as a keen fisherman is legendary, but his love for the bush and his passion for the job of looking after the country that he managed will also be fondly remembered. Neil was greatly respected within the service not only for the depth and breadth of his knowledge but also for being a good ranger and a good person. His tragic death has been very strongly felt within the service and he will be greatly missed.

The loss of one of our rangers on duty brings home to us all what a challenging job our rangers have. Rangers help make Queensland the best place to live in, keeping our parks and forests enjoyable places for all of us to visit. I want to pay my respects to Neil, a true ambassador of what a Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service ranger is—a person committed to looking after our country, a caretaker of our natural environment, a respected member of his local community and a person extremely well regarded by his work mates. Like so many of our rangers, Neil was proud to wear the 'Herbie' badge on his shoulder, quietly confident that he was doing his bit and making a difference in protecting Queensland's unique environment.

I would also like to pay my respects to former ranger Ric Nattrass, who passed away this month. Ric was with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service for more than 20 years up to 2004 and was a great conservationist and well known for his media work. His contribution to conservation was duly recognised by the Ipswich City Council through its declaration of the Ric Nattrass Environmental Park at Bellbird Park in 2006. Ric's passing is also a sad loss for the Queensland conservation movement. I would like to express my condolences to his family.

Freshwater Stocked Dams, Fishing Permits

Hon. TS MULHERIN (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland) (10.18 am): Fishing in Queensland's freshwater stocked dams is on the rise, with fishing permit sales up by nearly 20 per cent. This is a win-win situation. Money from permits goes into buying fingerlings to restock the 33 dams across the state. People who do the right thing and purchase a permit are ensuring that there are some fish there the next time they drop a line.

In the 2008-09 financial year, 50,000 permits were sold under the Stocked Impoundment Permit Scheme, generating \$618,000 spent on fingerlings. This compares to 43,000 permits sold in 2007-08, generating \$513,000 spent on fingerlings.

Most stocked species do not reproduce in dams so without the regular release of fingerlings fish levels would rapidly decline. The money generated goes to the local stocking groups who restock the dams. The funding from permits last financial year equates to about three million Australian bass fingerlings or one million barramundi fingerlings. As well as permits being on the rise, the number of permits purchased online has also increased by 35 per cent in the past 12 months. This shows how convenient the online system is to use. At \$7 for a one-week permit, \$35 for a yearly permit for adults or \$31.50 for concession cardholders, the price is very reasonable. We have found people are happy to pay when they know the money is going back into stocking activities.

The increasing popularity of freshwater fishing is a boost to rural Queensland as it supports a growing regional tourist industry and helps to provide local jobs. Not only do anglers fish in these areas but they also buy bait, food and fuel and sometimes stay overnight or for a few days, contributing valuable dollars to local economies.

It is important to keep these dams well stocked and I congratulate the staff who work on the scheme, the groups who release fingerlings and the anglers who do the right thing and buy a permit.

Traveston Dam

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.20 am): I wish to inform the House of progress on the assessment of the Traveston Crossing Dam. In accordance with the requirements of the state-Commonwealth bilateral agreement for environmental assessment, the Queensland Coordinator-General has provided his draft evaluation report and draft conditions to the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts for its review and comment. Once the Coordinator-General has considered any comments from the Commonwealth he will finalise his assessment. Following the Coordinator-General's assessment, the evaluation report and all relevant material for the project will be formally provided to the federal minister for his assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. All reports will be released when the environment minister has received the final report.

This project will not only provide much needed water to secure South-East Queensland's future water supply but also presents a unique opportunity to deliver a substantial and enduring conservation project that will not only provide benefits for the iconic species of the Mary River but for the entire Mary River catchment.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the good work of the Community Futures Task Force. The task force has played a central role in providing access to information, services and support in those communities impacted by the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam. Through its network of services and agencies the Community Futures Task Force ensured that Mary Valley residents were able to access support following the announcement that the draft Coordinator-General's report on the Traveston Crossing Dam had been forwarded to the federal minister for the environment. This support included 24-hour Lifeline services and the Community Futures Task Force free call number 1800 133 258. In addition, on Sunday, 13 September 2009, the Community Futures Task Force unit ensured a community support plan was in place that involved Lifeline counsellors, local support from Imbil police and the Department of Communities. The state government knows that this process has been very difficult for those affected, but it is the state government's responsibility to provide water security for South-East Queensland both now and well into the future.

Baby Change Table Recall

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (10.23 am): I bring to the attention of the parliament today a very important product recall. I have been advised today that a baby change table has been recalled nationally by manufacturer IGC Dorel. This follows an investigation by the Office of Fair Trading and the Brisbane Coroner's office into the tragic death of a nine-month-old boy late last year.

The change table, which is clipped onto the top of a cot for use, is fitted with straps that can secure the baby. With this particular change table the straps are of a length that allows the restraint to be fastened underneath, creating a loop of more than 95 centimetres inside the cot. This creates a serious risk of strangulation for a baby. That means that some parents or carers may place their baby in the cot while the change table is still attached without realising the danger this could cause.

It is understood that up to 50,000 products may be affected across Australia. The change table fits various brands of cots including Go Safe, Mother's Choice, Holden, ZuZu, Berini, Disney Pooh, Baby Club and Ball of Fun. My advice is that the change table has been a popular item in Australia and New Zealand since 2004 and has been sold by nursery retailers and major department stores. It is vital that consumers who have purchased one of these portable cots that includes the change table contact the company urgently so that a modification can be arranged at no charge to the consumer. Consumers may arrange for their change table to be modified by contacting IGC Dorel on free call 1300 809 526 between normal business hours.

While this incident has prompted a change in the new draft Australian Standards to eliminate this hazard for portable cots, my advice is that the Office of Fair Trading is concerned about the number of potential problem products. I urge all consumers to check their change tables for this type of strangulation hazard and contact the Office of Fair Trading on 13 13 04 if they have any questions or concerns about a similar product that may not be included in the above recalled products list.

The Office of Fair Trading has put together seven safety steps for portable cot safety that parents and carers can follow: only use the mattress that was supplied with the portable cot or recommended by the manufacturer; make sure the sides and ends are fully locked in whenever it is used; stop using the cot if the mesh is torn; if it has a bassinette or change table attachment make sure it is removed if the child is in the cot; make sure the change table and bassinette are fitted correctly with no straps hanging within the cot; use only for temporary sleeping arrangements; and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

South-West Queensland

Hon. D BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.26 am): The Bligh government's \$18 billion infrastructure program is building Tomorrow's Queensland and protecting the jobs of 127,000 Queenslanders. It is helping our state avoid recession and ensuring Queensland has the infrastructure to meet the needs of our growing population. For the Darling Downs and South-West Queensland, this means assistance to build essential infrastructure related to things like water and waste management, as well as the kinds of living infrastructure that enhances the communities that are the lifeblood of our state.

We are providing more than \$30 million in local government funding to the Toowoomba Regional Council over the next three years. This will support a new overall regional strategy for water and sewage infrastructure. Included is \$15.18 million for construction of the Kingsthorpe-Gowrie Junction sewerage scheme and \$3.08 million for the Goombungee sewerage scheme. This translates importantly to more than 240 local jobs.

Similarly, we are supporting Western Downs Regional Council with \$8.84 million over the next three years. \$7.7 million of this funding will boost the water infrastructure throughout the region and help position the council to capitalise on massive forecasted growth from the burgeoning coal seam gas and LNG gas industries.

We are supporting Southern Downs Regional Council with \$4.38 million, Murweh Shire Council with \$1.88 million, \$1 million for Paroo Shire Council, \$1.2 million for Balonne Shire Council and \$2.4 million for Maranoa Regional Council. Here the Bligh government is supporting more than 150 local jobs.

The Bligh government recognises that our modern, strategic councils do far more than just rates, roads and rubbish. That is why we are supporting the refurbishment of main streets in Chinchilla, Miles and Stanthorpe. We are installing solar water heating at the Warwick Indoor Recreation and Aquatic Centre so that the council can stay green and save money. There are also new facilities in a range of popular parks throughout Southern Downs and new green space in Augathella.

The members for Warrego, Toowoomba North, Toowoomba South and Southern Downs all recognise how important this spending is to these local communities, for the jobs and the infrastructure created. The Bligh government is demonstrating its commitment to these communities.

MOTION

Citizen's Right of Reply

Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.28 am), by leave: I move—

- (1) That this House notes Report No. 99 of the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee and the recommendation of the committee that a right of reply be incorporated into the recording of *Hansard*; and
- (2) That the House adopt the committee's recommendation and incorporate the right of reply into the Record of Proceedings.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Response by Mr Peter Lindsay MP to statements made by the Member for Mundingburra on 2 June 2009

The Member for Mundingburra said on 2 June 2009 in the Queensland Parliament "it makes me sick at heart to think that not only residents of Townsville but the Townsville City Council and Peter Lindsay, our elected leaders, can trot out the race card and inflame prejudice which, at best, is only ever ugly."

I deny that I 'played the race card' over a housing commission and a health development in Townsville.

A Townsville Bulletin article on 30 May 2009, correctly reported my support for the Upper Ross dialysis hostel. There was no reference to racist issues from me in this article.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.29 am): I wish to advise the House that the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade will be absent from parliament this week. Minister Robertson is travelling to China and Japan on an overseas trade mission and is representing the Queensland government at the Asia Pacific Cities Summit in Korea. The Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women is the acting minister for this portfolio.

SCRUTINY OF LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Report

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (10.29 am): I table the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee's *Legislation Alert No. 8 of 2009*.

Tabled paper: Scrutiny of Legislation Committee Legislation Alert No. 8 of 2009 [887].

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call question time, today in the gallery we will be visited by the Christian Outreach College Brisbane in the electorate of Mansfield and later in the day by the Childers State School in the electorate of Burnett.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption

Mr LANGBROEK (10.30 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. Given that in 2002, when Jacqueline King and Scott Zackeresen blew the whistle on Gordon Nuttall, the Premier was the leader of government parliamentary business, was the Premier aware that the corruption whistle had been blown and silenced by former Premier Beattie?

Speaker's Ruling, Sub Judice

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will seek advice from the Clerk on that. I will take the House through a ruling I made at the last sitting. I advised members that a matter involving a former member currently pending criminal proceedings was sub judice. In the intervening week since parliament last sat, there have been further matters raised in the media. Those are clearly related to the criminal proceedings. It is a matter for the courts to regulate debate in the community that may amount to contempt of those proceedings. However, I do not want the matter delayed or affected in any way by statements made in this House. Standing order 233 lays down clear principles and rules in respect of matters pending in courts and exercising a criminal jurisdiction. I do ask that all members respect that standing order.

To the Leader of the Opposition I would say that my ruling would be that that question comes within the sub judice ruling. Therefore, I ask you to reframe your question so that it does not offend sub judice.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I refer to recent reports about Jacqueline King and Scott Zackeresen, who have made references to issues of corruption. I ask: was the Premier aware of the matters referred to by Jacqueline King and Scott Zackeresen, referred to in 2002, and that they had been silenced by former Premier Peter Beattie?

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I am advised that clearly that matter is to be dealt with in the criminal law proceedings. Essentially, I am advised that even though you have reworked the question it is still captured by that sub judice ruling. I will call you again and I will treat this as your first question.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Public Service Appointment

Mr LANGBROEK: My first question without notice is: will the Premier confirm that her husband has been promoted from executive director to assistant director-general in the newly created Department of Environment and Resource Management?

Ms BLIGH: I can confirm that as part of the departmental restructure my husband has had a title change, but he has received no promotion, no increase in salary, no movement up any salary scale. I do not think anyone would regard it as a promotion. He has had a title change.

Mr Lucas: Sort of like Lawrence Springborg.

Ms BLIGH: Yes, a little bit like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is a title change and nothing more. He has not taken on—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms BLIGH: While I am on my feet, and I am mindful of the ruling that you have made, Mr Speaker, I am happy to take the opportunity to address just one part of the question that was sought to be put by the Leader of the Opposition in regard to matters in the public arena. The Leader of the Opposition's question put it to me that a person had been silenced. I would seek your ruling on whether I can address just that part of it.

Speaker's Ruling, Sub Judice

Mr SPEAKER: I will seek advice, Premier. Please stop the clock while we do that. Premier, I am going to rule you out of order and I will tell you why. In making a ruling on sub judice I do not want to allow a little bit in and a whole lot out. I will be very consistent on this. I know this is frustrating for both sides of the House, particularly when these matters have been aired in the media. However, the media is subject to different standards in reporting on community issues than we are inside this House. Therefore, I call the Leader of the Opposition for his second question.

Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption

Mr LANGBROEK: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. Given former Premier Beattie's propensity for making media reports about any matters in which he is implicated, will the Premier immediately recall Mr Beattie and refer him and Mr Whiddon to the CMC?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the member for the question. If the Leader of the Opposition or, indeed, any other members of the opposition or any member of the public has any matters that they believe the CMC should be looking into, I encourage them to take those matters there and to provide whatever material they have in their possession that could assist the CMC in its deliberations. I think it is important to recognise that the former Premier has made himself fully available in relation to recent matters heard before the courts that were the result of CMC investigations. I have every confidence that if the CMC sought any interviews or assistance from Mr Beattie he would provide it, as he has always done.

Integrity and Accountability in Queensland Green Paper

Ms DARLING: My question without notice is to the Premier. Tomorrow is the final day for submissions to the government's integrity and accountability green paper. Can the Premier outline the feedback and suggestions received during this process on how we can build a more transparent and open political system in Queensland?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the member for her question and for her interest in this important area of government activity. Some five weeks ago I released my government's *Integrity and Accountability in Queensland* green paper, triggering a dialogue and a conversation with the people of Queensland on the way forward for our state. I am pleased to advise that we still have 48 hours to go but we have received 80 written submissions and literally hundreds of people have participated in our two online forums and the eight community sessions that have been held in regional centres from the Gold Coast in the south to Cairns in the north and Toowoomba in the west. I thank the Attorney-General for his work in leading those forums and the other ministers who have assisted. I note that many people who came along worked very hard and brought along good ideas, and I thank them for their participation.

Ideas have been put forward from business, community, academics and general members of the public. Those ideas cover everything from a complete ban on political donations, the reintroduction of an upper house and fixed four-year terms. Interested Queenslanders have been eager to have their say. In addition, I have announced other ideas that have been put forward. My government will be listening to those voices and I look forward to seeing the final submissions later this week.

Over the past five weeks what have we heard from those opposite? A deathly silence! We have heard silence on political donations, for some six months we have heard silence on four-year terms, silence on political business functions, silence on campaign advertising, silence on lobbyists working on boards, silence on who came to dinner. In fact, later today we will hear—

Honourable members interjected.

Ms BLIGH: They are not interested, Mr Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition tells us that later today he will be outlining the blueprint from those opposite on integrity and accountability. Hold the presses: the Leader of the Opposition will be calling for a royal commission, which is all he has said for five weeks despite having no evidence. This morning he wanted to know whether I will be in the chamber. I would not miss it, because today he has a chance to list the people who came to the \$20,000-a-head dinner. If we do not hear those names, nothing he says has credibility. I am looking forward to it. We are going to hear the names for the first time. We are going to hear the list of dinner guests. Without a list of dinner guests, nothing that the Leader of the Opposition says today will have one shred of credibility. I encourage everyone to listen today. I would not miss it for quids because the mystery guests will be revealed.

Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. Given the growing corruption cloud and accountability questions surrounding former Premier Peter Beattie, can the Attorney-General assure the House that the CMC has sufficient funding for investigators to fly to Los Angeles to interview Peter Beattie?

Mr Fraser: It still hurts, doesn't it? It hurt in 2004, it hurt in 2006 and it hurts in 2009.

Mr Springborg: I can live with myself because I didn't lie like you did.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you will withdraw the unparliamentary language.

Mr Springborg: Mr Speaker, I withdraw.

Mr DICK: I thought finally I might get a chance to answer a question and finally I did get a chance, after six months. I thank the member for his question. It reminds me of the estimates committee hearing recently held about my budget—the funds the government intends to allocate to my portfolio, including the Crime and Misconduct Commission. What questions did we get during the estimates committee debate from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition about the Crime and Misconduct Commission and the allocation of funds to it? None. What questions did we get about the \$43 million that this government will appropriate on behalf of the Crime and Misconduct Commission? None.

There has been a lot of debate about the funding of the Crime and Misconduct Commission. Let me make it clear to all members of the parliament and all members of the Queensland community listening. This Labor government and previous Labor governments since the creation of the Criminal Justice Commission and its subsequent body, the Crime and Misconduct Commission, have allocated \$500 million to those bodies. We stand up and represent the Crime and Misconduct Commission. We ensure that body is properly funded, and we will continue to do so.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is disingenuous—disingenuous in the highest possible way—to suggest that the Crime and Misconduct Commission does not have the money it needs to do its job. But I will not hold my breath. This is the same person who asked me at the estimates committee hearing whether I would publicly name someone in the witness protection program. That is his interest in the Crime and Misconduct Commission—trawling for low-level, low-rent, cheap political lines. That is what they stand for. That is all his question was about. It was not a question of substance or a question about the policies of this government or this state. It was a cheap shot to try to get a grab on television.

Let me take up where the Premier left off and talk about the *Integrity and Accountability in Queensland* green paper. I look forward to the submission by the Leader of the Opposition because we know they are split over there. What has the member for Noosa said? What have some of those members opposite said? What did the member for Noosa say in a letter to the Premier on 21 August? He said—

I would like to advise that I will not be making a submission to the green paper.

So the member for Noosa is not making a submission. He does not think they want to come on board. He does not want to make a submission. He also said—

It concerns me, however, that some of the bodies are underfunded and understaffed and without sufficient power.

The member for Noosa was on my estimates committee also. What questions did he ask me about the CMC? None. What questions did he ask me about the funding for the CMC? None. Did he ask me any questions relevant to my portfolio during the three hours of my examination? No. That is what they stand for—nothing.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable the Attorney's time has expired.

Mr DICK: I table the letter, Mr Speaker.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 21 August 2009, to the Premier by the member for Noosa advising that he will not be making a submission to the *Integrity and Accountability in Queensland* green paper [888].

Queensland Economy

Mr WETTENHALL: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier explain what action the government has taken to protect Queensland's economy during the global downturn?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for the question. I thank him for understanding the importance of our economic strategies at a time of global economic downturn. Today is 12 months since Lehman Brothers was the trigger for the global financial crisis. With the collapse of Lehman Brothers, we saw over a period of some weeks global markets battered and we saw leaders across the world forced to act.

What this government did in the face of the global financial crisis was take decisive action. Our first decision was that we would take the Queensland budget into deficit in order to protect our building program. That was a strategy taken on board by every major economy in the world. We were endorsed in our actions by those taken in other major economies. It was the right thing to do.

What did those opposite say when we took that action? 'Don't go down that path. We won't have a deficit. We'll front-end people and make them de-necessary. Don't you worry about that.' As we swung into action to ensure activity continued in our economy, those opposite swung their heads into the sand. As we moved to put dollars into the economy, those opposite said that we should be cutting government spending.

Today, 12 months after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, what is the result of our economic strategy? We have unemployment that is lower than New South Wales, unemployment that is lower than Victoria and unemployment that is lower than the national rate. What do we have in terms of growth? Even in the worst of world conditions, Queensland's economy grew by 0.6 per cent. What did the national economy grow by? 0.2 per cent. So our rate of growth, even in the worst of times, was up there for the 14th year in a row above the national rate.

Our payroll tax plan is working. I am pleased to advise the House that our 125 per cent rebate has now been claimed by 1,300 businesses and it has been applied to 16,000 apprentices and trainees. Those opposite opposed that rebate plan, but what it has done is put a blanket of protection around those apprentices and trainees who might have otherwise lost their jobs and their opportunity to end up as skilled workers.

Every step along the path has been opposed by the recession deniers, the GFC deniers, but the results are speaking for themselves. Our economy is keeping its head above water. We are keeping people in jobs. We are keeping the economy moving right across regional Queensland. Those opposite voted against every single measure. They have had nothing to put forward as an alternative.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The level of crossfire is getting too personal and is interfering, I think, with the dignity of the House.

Appointment to Judiciary

Mr SEENEY: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. I refer to reports today of the appointment by the former Attorney-General of his friend and close supporter to the Queensland judiciary. I ask: does the current Attorney-General agree that the credibility of the Queensland judiciary is now under question as a result of the government culture of looking after their Labor mates?

Mr DICK: They will stop at nothing. There is nothing that they will not stoop to to undermine the institutions of government in this state. We know that they have no respect for the CMC.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat. I put up with the noise before. It is too hard for the chair to hear. I could understand if a member was being personally maligned that they would take action, however disorderly that is. But at the moment it is just noise. I call the honourable the Attorney-General.

Mr DICK: You are right, Mr Speaker. That is all it is—it is noise. It is without any substance whatsoever. We know that they have no respect for the CMC. We know that it is in their DNA to undermine the Fitzgerald architecture, to undermine it and destroy it. Let us look at the motion you put to the House three weeks ago to put pressure on the DPP, to put pressure on independent bodies, to undermine it. You voted against respecting the CMC.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! You will help the chair if you direct your comments through the chair.

Mr DICK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me go to the very point at the heart of the question. I am happy to address it, because these people—the members opposite—have form. We know what they did when they were in government. We just have to go back to the Fitzgerald report to see what they did when it came to judicial appointments. Let us see what Tony Fitzgerald said. They want a royal commission. They cannot even pay attention to the results of a royal commission held 20 years ago. What did Tony Fitzgerald say? The Fitzgerald inquiry report stated—

The Fitzgerald inquiry highlighted the action of the Bjelke-Petersen Government overturning the recommendation to appoint Mr Justice James Archibald Douglas as Chief Justice in the early 1980s.

The report further stated—

Bjelke-Petersen agreed before this inquiry that Mr Justice Douglas had the overwhelming support of his fellow judges, the bar and the Attorney-General and that he was a man of unquestionable ability and integrity. Bjelke-Petersen would not accept the recommendation of Mr Justice Douglas, whom it was rumoured had voted for the Australian Labor Party in a previous state election.

That is what they do in government. They sit around the cabinet table and they do the political vetting. They work out this person may have once seen someone who spoke to someone who looked at someone who voted Labor. They are off the list. One of the most distinguished judicial officers in this state was scrapped because of a rumour that he might have voted Labor. That is their form and they do not change. We know who the political mentor is for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. We know Bjelke-Petersen is his political mentor.

What about the member for Kawana? Who are his political mentors? When asked in a recent edition of *Proctor* his choice of historical figures to dine with, he said Sir Robert Menzies and Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. He is a new member of this House elected at the last election. They remember nothing; they learn nothing; they seek to traduce and undermine political and judicial officers in this state. I have full confidence—absolute confidence—in those officers appointed by this government and by the previous Attorney-General. They are fine, outstanding members of the judiciary, and they have my full support and that of the government.

Mr Seeney: You're only here because you're a Labor mate.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Lucas: New revelation: we endorse Labor Party members for Labor seats. We know you have no mates on your side.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Messenger: Who do you think is a good man, Paul?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Burnett, I called order twice. I now warn you under standing order 253.

Gold Coast University Hospital

Mrs KEECH: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health. Can the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health advise the House of the progress of the new Gold Coast University Hospital and how this project is planning for the future of the Gold Coast?

Mr LUCAS: I am delighted to.

Mr Johnson: It's a dorothy dixer so I hope you can answer it properly.

Mr LUCAS: Mate, you've gone 20 years and you have made no contribution in this House.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr LUCAS: I am sorry, Mr Speaker: they can dish it out but they cannot take it.

The Bligh government is delivering \$155 million this financial year to construct the new \$1.76 billion, 750-bed Gold Coast University Hospital due to open in 2012. I was at Griffith University last week and saw the wonderful work being done there. This means world-class health services for the Gold Coast and also jobs for the local economy. In fact, the government's investment will see 9,847 full-time equivalent jobs created during the construction of the project. As we speak, an average of 100 workers are on site right now. These jobs will have an important flow-on effect for the local community. Moreover, the Gold Coast will benefit from an additional six neonatal intensive care beds when the new hospital opens in 2012—a move that has strong support from the medical community.

The Gold Coast University Hospital is good news for workers and their families, it is good news for the local economy and it is good news for the future of health services on the coast. One would think that the opposition would support the government in job creation and important health infrastructure, but it is hardly surprising that it does not. In fact, the only infrastructure that it is doing is getting on the grinding stone to sharpen the knives for the member for Surfers Paradise.

We all know that the LNP has never let the truth get in the way of a good yarn, so it was no surprise to see the LNP members for Currumbin, Mudgeeraba and Gaven throwing their weight behind the so-called community Southport hospital action group. They were also telling the local media on the Gold Coast that this group has the backing of local doctors, and my word it does. The group's membership includes such impartial individuals as Dr Richard Stuckey, husband—we have spoken about husbands today—of the member for Currumbin, Jann Stuckey; and Dr John Kearney, thanked by none other than the member for Mudgeeraba—you know, the lobbyist—in her maiden speech to parliament on 22 April 2009 for staffing one of her election booths as booth captain. This group has more links to the LNP than Clive Palmer does.

(Time expired)

Zackeresen, Mr S

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport. It is reported that the minister's campaign manager for the 1998 and 2001 elections was Mr Scott Zackeresen. Does the minister regard Mr Zackeresen as someone truthful and to be relied upon when he provides information and evidence about the awarding of government contracts?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Let me check to make sure that that question comes within the minister's portfolio responsibilities. Member for Clayfield, could we see a copy of the question? I call the honourable Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport.

Mr REEVES: I thank the honourable member for the question. It is no secret that Scott Zackeresen—that is how you pronounce his name—was my campaign director in 1998 and 2001, and he did a great job because as a result I am still here. If I remember rightly, in 1998 I won by 83 votes and those opposite said that I was not going to be here long. Eleven years later I am still here.

Considering that in the six months that I have had the great pleasure of being the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport those opposite have refused to ask a question on child safety and seeing that last week we celebrated Child Protection Week, I thought it appropriate to talk about this year's theme: 'Take action for child protection'. Communities across the state marked this commitment to child protection—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr REEVES: They do not care about child protection. They like throwing out press releases but they do not talk about it when it really counts. One of the key events of Child Protection Week was the awards ceremony at parliament. The worthy recipients include Kerry Sullivan, a Gold Coast doctor who helped establish the SCAN system in Queensland; Joanne Ross, principal of Cherbourg State School, who is doing a great job there—

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I am conscious of your rulings about how ministers may go about answering questions but I ask for your ruling on this particular issue as nothing in the question related to that part of the minister's portfolio. He has gone completely off the track and is refusing to answer the question about whether or not he regards his former campaign director as truthful.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I took it from the minister's response that he answered that part of the question in the manner that he wanted to answer the question. I call the minister.

Mr REEVES: That point of order says it all. That shows how much those opposite care about child protection and child safety. Those opposite do not want to hear about child protection and child safety. I rest my case!

Other winners of awards were: Pam Fisher, a great southside Indigenous child protection leader whom those opposite do not want to know about; Lee Stuart, a former child in care who now works with other young people in care whom those opposite do not care about; Rachel Kayrooz, a Brisbane educator and author; the Gold Coast's 'Mower man' Claude Harvey, who pushes his mower to raise money for child protection; and a former ward of the state and advocate, Allan Allaway. They do not want to hear about a great person like him.

Last week I travelled from Brisbane to Cairns and out to Cherbourg to recognise the child protection efforts of as many people and community groups as possible. In Cairns, Kingaroy and various locations around Brisbane I have met an array of people who have made it possible for abused and neglected children to build a brighter future. But those opposite do not care about those children. Foster and kinship carers, non-government community workers, Child Safety Services staff members—many dedicated people are working across the state to turn around the lives of children and young people in care.

I was particularly pleased to have the opportunity to meet Indigenous leaders in Cherbourg and Cairns. I spoke to members of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council about our shared concerns about the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in child protection. I look forward to continuing to work with Indigenous leaders on this issue.

I would like to acknowledge those in NAPCAN for coordinating the Child Protection Week activities. It received \$90,000 from this government. A big thankyou to Steve Renouf who was the child protection ambassador and travelled with me throughout Queensland to promote the important message that child protection is everyone's responsibility. Obviously those opposite do not want to take responsibility.

Payroll Tax

Mrs ATTWOOD: My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development. Can the Treasurer advise the House of the competitiveness of Queensland's payroll tax regime? Is he aware of any alternative policies?

Mr FRASER: I thank the honourable member for her question. She is a well-known advocate for small businesses in her electorate and a keen participant in local chambers of commerce in the south-west of the city, which is the area she represents.

I can advise the House about the competitiveness of Queensland's payroll tax regime because we in this state continue to have the lowest payroll tax rate in the nation. We continue to have the highest threshold on mainland Australia. We continue to have business settings in this state which continue to attract business to this state, as that well-known Labor Party cheer squad the Institute of Public Affairs recent attested.

It said that, with Western Australia, we were out in front in terms of our competitiveness for attracting business to this state. They said that Queensland was at the front of the pack when it came to a whole range of areas like professional services, like financial services, like retail. It pointed to our low payroll tax regime. It pointed to our low settings of stamp duty. Those payroll tax settings are attracting business and employment to this state, along with our 125 per cent rebate that 1,324 businesses have now accessed to help the army of future skilled workers that we will need for the upswing that is ahead.

When it comes to alternative views, I am aware of one in the past. That is from the member for Beaudesert, who, to this point, is the only member of the LNP who has put any policy prescription to this parliament. So far we have a couple of musings from the Leader of the Opposition but not a policy. It is started off with a call upon us to match the achievement of Western Australia a couple of months ago. To match the achievement would require us to increase the payroll tax rate and lower the threshold to catch more businesses.

Then last week we were implored to match the achievement of Victoria. Once again, that would require us to lift the payroll tax rate in Queensland and lower the threshold to catch more businesses. Finally, someone asked the Leader of the Opposition at a breakfast last week what his opinion was on the payroll taxes, what he has railed against in this parliament, what he has tried to tell people he stands for. Quick as a flash, what did he do? Nothing. What was his policy prescription? He said—

But practically speaking it's just too big a component to be able to responsibly say that we are going to do anything about it.

Six months into this we have heard naught from the Leader of the Opposition. Is it any wonder? If we look at his Twitter account we see what he has been up to. On 24 August the Premier and I were announcing a new apprenticeship regime. The Leader of the Opposition was 'enjoying the beautiful weather on the Gold Coast'. While on 19 August the Premier was releasing a new climate change strategy, at 1.14 pm the Leader of the Opposition was 'reading the morning papers'. On 26 August the Premier and I were inspecting the Jilalan upgrade and the Leader of the Opposition was 'chillin''. He is frozen on policy. He has been frozen out by those people who stood beside him. It is time for the policy thaw to commence. The Leader of the Opposition has got 10 minutes to stand for something.

(Time expired)

A1GP

Mr DEMPSEY: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport. Given that A1 Grand Prix Operations Ltd, the UK operational company responsible for the management of the A1GP, was put into liquidation by creditors in July—and I table a copy of the company's details for the minister's reference if he does not already have them—will the minister now table the due diligence report undertaken before contracting with A1GP?

Tabled paper: Company Details—A1 Grand Prix Operations Ltd [889].

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Order on both sides of the House! I call the honourable Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport.

Mr REEVES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I note again it is a Sport question. I do not have any hesitation in answering that question. The constant undermining of the Nikon SuperGP by the opposition is very concerning. Week after week the opposition tries to spread rumours that the event is in trouble. By doing so it jeopardises the jobs and economic benefits that the SuperGP will bring to Queensland and particularly the Gold Coast.

All the advice I am receiving from the partnership management committee of the Nikon SuperGP is that the event is going ahead as planned. It is well planned and it is going to be a great event. Because of the repetitive rumour mongering the opposition engages in, I sought a briefing with the partnership committee about the actions it has undertaken to ensure the contractual obligations of the A1GP will be met for 2009. I have received the briefing and have had personal discussions with the chairman of the A1GP as late as yesterday to satisfy myself that everything that needs to be done is done to ensure this iconic event, which takes place in the electorate of the Leader of the Opposition, remains on track.

However, I am stunned that the member for Bundaberg would consistently try to undermine an iconic event that is taking place in his own leader's electorate. Obviously not satisfied with causing trouble for a major tourism drawcard in the electorate of Gregory last sitting week, now the opposition is trying to chase away the biggest motor-racing event in Queensland which is in the electorate of Surfers Paradise.

I ask the member for Bundaberg: does his leader know that Peter Coulson from the opposition office has been ringing people connected with SuperGP digging dirt? If the leader did authorise Peter Coulson to ring A1 Team Australia asking if it would be competing in the race at Surfers Paradise if there are financial difficulties facing the A1GP, I think the Leader of the Opposition will have quite a bit of explaining to do to his constituents, not to mention the tourism industry and businesses on the Gold Coast.

It would be interesting to know whether the people of the Gold Coast would support the opposition trying to dig dirt and scare people away from an event that creates 550 full-time equivalent jobs and an economic benefit of \$60 million to Queensland. Is this another occasion that those opposite, as part of the leadership spill—

Mr DEMPSEY: I rise to a point of order. This is the second time I have asked the minister to table that report and I still have not received it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr DEMPSEY: The first time he said that he was going to table it, so I ask him a second time to do it.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. It is not disrupting the current proceedings.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Toowoomba South. I call the honourable the minister.

Mr REEVES: What we continue to see among those opposite is a leadership battle. They were prepared to bag the member for Gregory's greatest tourism attraction. Now they are prepared to bag an event in the opposition leader's electorate. The tourism operators on the Gold Coast will not put up with it. It is just like the reason they did not want to build Carrara Stadium.

Education

Mr O'BRIEN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education and Training. Could the minister outline for the House the Bligh government's plan for the future of education in Queensland?

Mr WILSON: It is a great pleasure to speak on this very important topic. Despite the fact that the world has faced the greatest financial crisis and greatest economic crisis for the last 70 years, the Bligh government has not been standing still when it comes to education, because we have a plan to boost the facilities and the education services for Queensland students. That comes with good leadership, and it comes with good leadership at a school level, in the department of education and at a government level. We are building and rebuilding infrastructure in Queensland starting from bricks and mortar. There is the \$850 million State Schools of Tomorrow program that is building new modern facilities, and I have had the pleasure of opening a number of them on the Gold Coast. That investment in new modern facilities will generate around about 6,000 jobs.

There is also the Flying Start initiative in the kindergarten sector where we are rolling out 240 extra kindergarten services over the next four years or so, and that is \$320 million of infrastructure investment alone which will generate 2,500 construction jobs and up to 900 additional early childhood teaching jobs. That is on top of the \$60 million solar energy program that we are rolling out for solar panels on school roofs. That is on top of the \$140 million this financial year for extra maintenance for government schools, TAFE facilities and teachers' facilities. That is on top of the \$90 million we are putting into literacy and numeracy teaching across our state education schools that has produced the very good start results that have come from the national testing. Queensland students have performed better in 17 out of 20 of the testing areas this year compared to last year. Nine out of 10 students are achieving at the national benchmark level. We are reducing the gap between Queensland and the leading states. We are really making a difference in this area and we are now sixth rather than seventh, and that is a commendable improvement.

What have members of the opposition been saying? They have been saying that schools have not achieved anything. I want to pat teachers on the back for the fantastic work that they have done in the last few months in producing these outstanding first start results for our literacy and numeracy achievements in Queensland. Those opposite are opposed to anything that we say in the education sector. It has been 179 days since the election and the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow spokesman have not uttered one word of new policy or new idea for education and training in Queensland. Standing still, they stand for nothing—no policies, no ideas.

Kindergartens

Dr FLEGG: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education and Training. In relation to the government rollout of kindergartens announced just prior to the state election, all eight to be built in the first year were announced for Labor-held or notionally Labor seats. Will the minister tell the parliament: is who holds the local seat the best criteria for choosing where to build a kindergarten?

Mr WILSON: I thank the member for the question. Do you know what? I could not care less who held what electorate. We want to make sure that we are sharply focused on delivering the Premier's undertaking that we will have universal access to kindergarten services for 95 per cent of Queensland children between the ages of 3½ and 4½ within the next four years. Why do we want to do that? Because that is one of the significant disparities in our education system compared to the education system in Victoria and the other leading states. Just as this Labor government introduced the prep year

to remove one of the then differences between us and the other states, we are now removing yet another one of the key institutional differences. We are going to lift the participation rate of 3½- to 4½-year-old students from what it is now—around about 29,000 students—in formal kindergarten services to be on a comparable level over the next several years with the leading states in Australia.

All of the best research tells us that the most effective area to target in education is in the early years. Indeed, we are already seeing evidence of the tremendous result of the Bound for Success strategy in Indigenous schools where, in the early years, this fantastic program—with all of the support of the teachers involved and the principals and the local communities—is making a very big positive difference. It is so good that it has been recognised by the Productivity Commission as one of the two programs in Queensland that has really made a difference in improving literacy and numeracy in schools in Queensland and has been highlighted in the national Productivity Commission report across Australia.

That is why we are going to stay focused on this program. We are coming at this challenge in the early childhood area from all angles. We are addressing, in conjunction with the other states and the national government, how we actually introduce ratios and new qualifications that improve standards and quality of teaching while bearing in mind that we want to make sure that that is done in an affordable way so that we actually encourage parents to have their children participating in formal kindergarten services over the next three to four years so that we can make the big leap forward that we know we need to make. That is going to be a hard task. I want to recognise that that is going to take some time and there will be some challenges, but I can tell members that we are relentlessly focused on achieving that objective of universal access for students between 3½ to 4½ to kindergarten services in Queensland.

(Time expired)

Road Infrastructure

Mrs SULLIVAN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Main Roads. Can the minister advise the House how the Bligh government's road building program is delivering jobs for Queenslanders and ensuring our economy can weather the fallout of the global financial crisis?

Mr WALLACE: I thank the honourable member for Pumicestone for her question. She certainly understands the importance of building better roads for Queenslanders. The Bligh government is committed to delivering its record \$18 billion infrastructure program, keeping Queenslanders employed in these tough economic times. This is no more evident than our \$3.53 billion road construction program that will protect the jobs of about 30,000 Queenslanders this year. One particular project that I want to draw the House's attention to is the successful completion of the Bundaberg Ring Road that opened to traffic on the weekend. This is the biggest single investment a state government has ever made in Bundaberg and it has been delivered to the community three months ahead of schedule. Not only has the road shortened the travel time for motorists by about eight to 10 minutes; it has provided heavy vehicle operators with a more efficient freight route, importantly taking them out of Bundaberg's central business district.

This is another example of the Bligh government getting on with the job of delivering infrastructure and jobs, all of which is helping us weather the storm of the financial crisis. Our road building program is providing the economic stimulus this state needs to keep people employed—30,000 people this year, and that is more people than attended the Broncos clash with the Titans at Skilled Park on Saturday night. That is 30,000 people putting bread and butter on the table for their families this year. This year we are working on projects that will deliver 630 kilometres of new and upgraded roads. That is greater than the distance between here and Rockhampton.

We are building 42 new bridges and making intersection improvements at 52 intersections. In addition, we are rehabilitating 550 kilometres of road to improve the road surface for motorists and we are resealing and resurfacing 4,500 kilometres of roads and lanes right across the state. That is the equivalent of resealing and resurfacing one and a half times the length of the Bruce Highway between here and Cairns.

While we are taking this action to keep Queensland moving, those opposite do nothing, because they stand for nothing. Their answer to the economic crisis is to cut jobs and cut spending. We have had to make some tough decisions to ensure that we continue our building program, but it is the moral, it is the right, thing to do. I make no apologies for those 30,000 Queenslanders who remain employed as a direct result of our road construction program.

Hendra Virus

Mr HOPPER: My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland. Can the minister inform the House how much extra funding the Bligh government and DPI have allocated to Hendra virus research in this year's budget?

Mr MULHERIN: I thank the honourable member for Condamine. I will talk about research first and then I will give the member the answer in relation to the money. Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries scientists have been involved in numerous important research projects since Hendra virus was first detected in 1994 and remain actively involved in cutting-edge research into the virus, its host and its behaviour. The first significant research project was undertaken by departmental officers from 1995 to 1996, which identified flying foxes as the natural host for the Hendra virus. From 1996 to 1999, Primary Industries and Fisheries undertook research to discern the frequency and distribution of Hendra virus in Australian flying foxes, to rule out other wildlife as reservoirs and to undertake comparative virological studies.

The Nipah virus outbreak in Malaysia in 1999 significantly increased the global relevance of the Hendra virus and related viruses. Biosecurity Queensland experts were successful in securing international funding in collaboration with an American consortium for a four-year research project. The project focused on the mechanism by which Hendra virus persisted and spread in flying fox populations. Since its commencement in 2003, the Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre for Emerging Infectious Disease has identified Hendra virus and related viruses as high-priority research.

Mr Hopper: How much money have you put in?

Mr MULHERIN: The ABCRC has supported research into the regional occurrence of the Hendra virus and related viruses and contact between Australian flying foxes and those in neighbouring countries. Again, Biosecurity Queensland experts have played a leading role in this important research.

Mr Hopper: Have you got the answer?

Mr MULHERIN: The ABCRC currently funds a joint research project with Biosecurity Queensland and the Australian Animal Health Laboratory to study the molecular and immunological interaction of the bat virus in an effort to better understand the virus and the diseases that it causes. Earlier this year, a joint research proposal by BQ and Queensland Health successfully gained funding from the Commonwealth government to identify Hendra virus diversity in Australian flying foxes. The work is focused on regional differences in the virus and addresses the theory that the virus may be mutating.

Overall, we have contributed \$1 million in research to Hendra virus—

Mr Hopper: How much money?

Mr MULHERIN: I want to take the opportunity to point out to the member for Condamine, who is very ignorant at times, the wonderful work of people like Dr Hume Field, who is a leading expert in this field. The member is a great knocker.

Climate Change Policy

Mrs KIERNAN: My question is to the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability. Minister, you recently released—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Rephrase your question before I sit you down.

Mrs KIERNAN: Minister, recently released was the \$196 million climate change policy. Are you aware—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member for Maryborough.

Blue Cards

Mr FOLEY: My question is to the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women. It has been brought to my attention by constituents that they were informed by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian that if they have an application requesting a blue card they are allowed to begin employment in any child-caring role or facility, which was confirmed by a phone call to the department. Will the minister continue to allow applicants who have not yet been approved for a blue card to work with children?

Ms STRUTHERS: I thank the member for the question. The safety of children is of the utmost importance to this government. I commend the work of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian in its criminal screening process. The blue card system is acknowledged world-wide as one of the best systems for criminal history screening and certainly is one that others are looking to model their own systems on.

The commission is an independent body. In relation to the detail of a specific matter, I have to suggest that the member write directly to the commission on that matter. I will make some inquiries about what role I can play in following up that individual matter, but I remind the member that it is an independent commission. The law is very clear. I cannot direct the commission.

While I am on my feet, I want to say that there has been a common theme this morning and that theme is questions asked about our portfolios. I thank the member for a question about my portfolio in the area of the children's commission, because I had one question about that in the estimates

committee hearing. I have had no question asked of me in parliament about this very important area of my portfolio responsibility. Guess what that question was? At the time I thought it was a very interesting one, so let me share it with the House. I was asked by the member for Burdekin in relation to the children's commission as to why they did not have a sign outside their building when they moved. So their crime was that they forgot to hang up their shingle when they moved. That is the only question that the opposition has asked about a \$42 million area of responsibility in my portfolio.

It takes an Independent member of this parliament to ask me a question about the children's commission. So let me give the member a rap. I know that he genuinely cares about children, as do the members of this government. As I said, we have one of the best criminal history screening processes world-wide. We are called on to share this model with other countries, and I thank the member for the question.

Gold Coast, Public Transport

Mrs SMITH: My question is to the Minister for Transport. With more and more people wanting to experience all that the Gold Coast has to offer, vehicular traffic is clogging our roads. Can the minister advise what the government is doing for transport on the Gold Coast?

Ms NOLAN: I thank the member for Burleigh for her important question. The transport future of the Gold Coast must be, in large part, a public transport future. At the moment on the Gold Coast only about four per cent of trips are taken by public transport. As the population and the tourist industry grow, if we stay at that low percentage of public transport usage then, as the member for Burleigh suggests, there will be very serious congestion on the Gold Coast.

Members will remember very well that when the National Party was in government it made no particular contribution, other than to rip up the railway line to the Gold Coast. The Labor government is doing two things: firstly, we are rebuilding that line with the Robina to Varsity Lakes project underway and we are building the \$949 million Gold Coast Rapid Transit project. Why are we doing that? The Gold Coast Rapid Transit will very clearly cut congestion. It is projected that it will take 75 million car trips off the road in its first 10 years of operation. So it cuts congestion. The project is green, taking out of the atmosphere 114,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and it is creating 6,300 jobs. So that is where the government stands on this project. We developed it. We found council, federal as well as, obviously, a large amount of state money to put into it and we are building it.

In contrast, where does the opposition stand? Again, members will recall that in the last state election campaign members of the opposition had no fewer than seven different positions on this important project. Those who had the opportunity to watch *Stateline* last Friday night will see that very little has changed.

This critical project runs through the electorate of the Leader of the Opposition, so where does he stand? On the stoplightrail.com.au website the Leader of the Opposition is listed as a supporter. Perhaps he opposes the project. On *Stateline* on Friday night he said this—

We have had successive transport ministers who have basically just told the people of the Gold Coast they know what is best without adequate consultation.

There were 300,000 people consulted on this project over the course of two years.

Then he went on to say—

Well, it would be a disaster for the people of the Gold Coast if we don't get our transport problems fixed. We've spent a billion dollars and we have a failure so I certainly hope that doesn't happen.

As with other matters, even when it comes to critical infrastructure projects in their own electorates, the members opposite are—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has ended.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): As Queenslanders celebrate 150 years of independence, families and communities everywhere are learning the heavy burden and long-term price of almost 20 uninterrupted years of single-party government. The dark stain of the deceit, corruption and cronyism of the Premier and her Labor government can now only be removed with an independent royal commission that is free to scrutinise and explore every aspect of government culture. It is obvious that this morning's questions, which were ruled out of order, would not be ruled out if there was a royal commission. They are questions that could be answered in a royal commission.

Mr Reeves: That's untrue.

Mr LANGBROEK: If there was a royal commission they are questions that could be addressed by the commission because of the broad investigations such a commission would be able to carry out.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Members on my right.

Mr LANGBROEK: Accountability and transparency have become mere words for this government that lives and breathes on spin, advertising and showmanship. Budget dishonesty has led to record debt levels, the loss of the AAA credit rating that was once the hallmark of our economy and a fire sale of assets as part of a rushed ad hoc privatisation agenda. A power-at-all-cost mentality has led to the state Labor government actually passing laws to make it legal for the Premier and her ministers to lie to parliamentary committees and Labor's MPs now act as judge and jury when their parliamentary colleagues face possible criminal prosecution.

Election dishonesty has led to a corrupted electoral system that can allow the government to maintain power with minority support. It has led to the deliberate election eve concealment of unpopular and costly policies which were revealed within just weeks of the election having been held. Mateship has replaced merit, success fees have replaced fair tendering and access to government is by fee rather than by appointment or need.

In 1999 Tony Fitzgerald said in his report—

The Inquiry could not have proceeded without public confidence, cooperation and support. The power of some of the individuals involved, and the type of issues raised were such that it would have been impossible for the Inquiry to have succeeded without public confidence, cooperation and support.

That meant the inquiry had to be as open as possible, so that the public, including people with information, could see that it was a genuine search for the truth. Such a course was also necessary so that the Inquiry could generate momentum to overcome any attempt which might have been made to interfere.

Some 20 years on we are once again faced with the spectre of corruption, maladministration, cronyism and deceit from a Labor government that has so conveniently clung to the shadow of Fitzgerald when it suited it but when faced with a wave of allegations levelled squarely at this Premier and her government all that had come before has been swept aside. Just imagine if instead of the Fitzgerald inquiry the government had launched a green paper for public discussion. Imagine if the questions in the green paper had been written by the Premier's own office and confined only to those issues the Premier wanted to discuss. Then imagine that a simple one-month time frame had been put in place for all submissions and then imagine that the committee was deprived of investigative powers, deprived of the ability to call witnesses and deprived of the ability to access cabinet decisions.

Laughable as it may sound, the above model is exactly what the government's green paper into integrity and accountability is. It is a far cry from the meaningful efforts of the corruption-fighting Fitzgerald inquiry that was independent of institutional government, had access to cabinet decisions with the powers of a royal commission and whose terms of inquiry were expanded upon three times. That is why today I present the LNP's response to the Premier's green paper and a blueprint for reform and change that culminates in the call for a royal commission; an independent, open and transparent commission of inquiry into the allegations of corruption, cronyism, maladministration and deceit that have become part of the DNA of this Labor government.

In 1996 the former opposition leader and former Premier Peter Beattie reflected as to whether the window of opportunity opened by the Fitzgerald report was starting to close. Now it is apparent from the actions and inactions of this Premier and her government that the post Fitzgerald era is dead and the stench of corruption, cronyism and maladministration has returned. This new era of Labor government shall be marked in history as the post-Nuttall era which the LNP wants cleansed through a major commission of inquiry well beyond the confines of institutional window-dressing or a mere green paper that is worth nothing more than the paper it is printed on.

This blueprint I present today raises more than 30 questions that Queenslanders must be allowed to have a say on, including the need for a full royal commission just like the Fitzgerald inquiry was. These questions must be canvassed if there is to be any legitimacy to the ultimate outcomes. The people of Queensland deserve no less.

In his assessment of the current Labor government in Queensland, corruption fighter Tony Fitzgerald observed access can now be purchased, patronage dispensed, mates and supporters are appointed and retired politicians exploit their political connections to obtain success fees for deals between business and government. Far from trying to address and dismantle the core structures upon which corruption and lies have emanated, the Bligh Labor government resists a full royal commission and instead releases as a distraction a simple green paper limited to a sprinkling of issues that only the Premier and the Labor Party want the public to discuss. It is a green paper engineered for public relations and designed to give an appearance—and just an appearance—of a tired and corrupt government trying to clean itself up. The purpose of the opposition's response and blueprint is to provide Queenslanders with an opportunity to discuss the full ambit of anti-corruption measures that must be on the table. These are the issues that a royal commission must be allowed to explore, free from the influence of institutional government.

Fitzgerald was not given a time frame; he was given a blank cheque to root out corruption and reform the political landscape. He was not bound by only being able to investigate official misconduct that amounts to criminal behaviour; he went to the root cause and effect of government and set about dismantling institutional decay. For 11 years a culture of corruption, nepotism and cronyism has been allowed to grow and flourish in the Queensland Labor government. To add insult to injury, special laws were even passed to make it legal for the Premier and ministers to lie to parliamentary committees conducting investigations. For each of the last 11 years the Premier has sat around the cabinet table as a minister, Treasurer, Deputy Premier and Premier. How is it she did not see, say or hear anything and claims she does not know anything?

In 1995 the Premier entered state parliament and in her very first speech thanked her campaign worker, Di Fingleton. Three years later Di Fingleton was appointed Chief Magistrate against the appointment process recommended by the corruption-busting Fitzgerald report. In 2000 the Shepherdson inquiry forced Jim Elder to resign and Mike Kaiser was also forced to resign after admitting to electoral fraud. He was later appointed as the Premier's personal chief of staff and she approved a \$100,000 salary increase for him saying he was a mentor for other ministerial staff. The same Shepherdson inquiry found that Paul Lucas, the member for Lytton, made an opportunistic enrolment at the same address at which Mike Kaiser had fraudulently enrolled. He would go on to become Deputy Premier to Anna Bligh. In 2005 a CMC inquiry found that Anna Bligh's friend and cabinet colleague, the now jailed Gordon Nuttall, deliberately lied to a parliamentary committee about overseas trained doctors. The Premier subsequently seconded a special motion of state parliament exonerating Nuttall from facing criminal charges over his lies.

Ms Bligh: Two minutes, no names! Where are the names? Names! Secret dinners!

Mr LANGBROEK: They are at the ECQ and you will get them. In January 2006 the Acting Premier, Anna Bligh, announced that the Labor government would introduce laws that made it legal for her and other ministers to deliberately lie to parliamentary committees.

Fast forward to July 2009 and, after legalising lying and seeing a string of Labor members of parliament and mates either jailed or questioned over allegations of corruption, bribery, assault and unethical behaviour—those are the things we have had to deal with over the past few months—today we had questions ruled out of order that only a royal commission could answer. As the Labor government enters this new era of corruption, cronyism, maladministration and deceit, I urge all Queenslanders to have their say on the questions this government never wants answered and join with the LNP in calling on this Premier to show true leadership and establish an independent, open and transparent commission of inquiry into the practices of this Labor government—

Ms Bligh interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: You are the Premier and you are carrying on like a goose—over almost 20 years of uninterrupted rule. The people of Queensland deserve no less. The Premier has been found wanting on honesty, transparency, accountability and integrity. That is what the people said on the weekend when they judged her in the poll. They will judge her at the next poll. We need a royal commission. The people of Queensland, which is the best state in Australia, deserve no less.

Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Associations; Literacy and Numeracy

Ms MALE (Pine Rivers—ALP) (11.40 am): This morning I rise to inform the House of the work being done by teachers and parents across Queensland to help improve the literacy and numeracy of our students. On Friday night I hosted a function for the Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Associations on the occasion of its 60th annual general meeting and conference. I appreciated the opportunity to speak with Margaret Black, President of the QCPCA, members of the QCPCA executive and delegates from P&Cs from across Queensland. It was lovely to see so many life members attending, and I managed to catch up with a couple of them as well. The QCPCA is an important stakeholder in the education system here in Queensland as it represents the views of parents across the state and guides the work done by the 1,258 individual P&Cs in partnership with schools across the state. Educating our students is a collaborative effort between schools, teachers and principals, and parents and communities. As we all know, if we work together we will get the best outcomes for our students, both academically and socially.

As I moved around the function, I had the opportunity to talk to QCPCA members about a number of issues, including educating students about safe behaviour and bullying, school facilities and the work being done in our school communities to improve facilities and programs. I also had the opportunity to discuss the latest NAPLAN results, which were released last week. It should be noted that the number of students at or above national benchmarks has increased in 17 out of 20 areas tested and that we have improved more than the two leading states. We have lifted our rating from seventh to sixth overall with nine out of 10 students at or above national benchmarks. It has been a major effort to deliver improvements and ensure we maintain our focus on the foundations of education in our schools, that is, literacy, numeracy and science.

This government is committed to improving the literacy and numeracy of students across Queensland, which is why we commissioned the Masters review last year and were happy to receive his report earlier this year. We have started to implement his recommendations fully. It was this Labor government that realised the importance of the early years of learning, which is why we have implemented a full-time prep year across Queensland, which is accessed by about 98 per cent of possible students, and we changed the age that students can start school so that they are commensurate with students from other states. At the last election we promised to build an additional 240 kindergartens over the next four years, so that our three- to four-year-olds can access quality early education, which we know will also have a positive effect on literacy and numeracy outcomes for students in coming years. I made the point to parents that there is still a lot more work to do.

We will see this work on improving literacy and numeracy continue next week with the start of 72 summer schools across Queensland in the September school holidays. These summer schools will provide extra help for students in years 5 to 7 who are struggling to meet literacy and numeracy benchmarks. We have further initiatives such as the recently announced 10 Turnaround Teams who will go into low SES schools and implement strategies to fix problems ranging from curriculum implementation to behaviour management. This will be trialled in Wide Bay from January next year, Moreton and Logan regions from July 2010 and other regions will be phased in from January 2011.

School audits will be conducted by 16 principals who will audit every state school in Queensland to identify gaps in curriculum, learning, teaching or social issues that may be affecting student achievement. This trial will start next month with a preliminary focus on low SES National Partnership schools in the first six months. From October, 80 literacy and numeracy coaches will work with teachers in the classroom to help them teach literacy and numeracy more effectively. Importantly, 30 curriculum advisers, that is, 15 QCAR English project officers and 15 QCAR maths project officers, will help schools implement solid curriculum plans to ensure all students are being taught what they need to know to reach milestones and meet benchmarks. There are a variety of other measures such as additional professional development for teachers, mandated teaching times for literacy and numeracy, graduate teacher testing and continuing practice for NAPLAN tests. I note that the Catholic education system and the independent schools system are also working very hard to improve their literacy and numeracy results, and we have seen some great results from them as well.

There will be huge opportunities and resources available for parents and I know all schools work hard to keep parents involved with their children to benefit their education. All of these initiatives require the support of the entire school community, but particularly the parents. I encourage the members of the QCPCA to continue their already acknowledged support of the work that Education Queensland does and to continue the partnership with us as we steer our young charges through their school years and prepare them for their post-schooling life.

Child Safety; Sport

Ms DARLING (Sandgate—ALP) (11.45 am): The Bligh government is committed to protecting our most vulnerable community members, our children. I would like to pay tribute to all of the dedicated individuals and families that make up our child protection system in Queensland. Last Saturday I was joined by my colleague, the Honourable Phil Reeves, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport, on the final day of National Child Protection Week as we hosted the Bracken Ridge Foster Family Fun Day. Child protection is everybody's responsibility. In Queensland more than 7,500 children are unable to live at home, but thanks to people such as the dedicated carers I met last week and our child safety officers and workers, those children are able to live in a loving and caring environment.

I admire the valuable role our foster and kinship carers play in the lives of our children and young people. They open their hearts and their homes to provide stability to those who need it most. Organisations such as Foster Care Queensland, the Create Foundation, Families Plus and the Pyjama Foundation joined in the celebrations, as did the departmental staff who organised the day. I thank them all for their valuable work. I met some wonderful families, including two couples from Bracken Ridge who care for young people with special needs, Glenda and Ian, and Pamela and Ian. The smiles across the faces of their children showed me what a big difference those humble people make to the lives of those in care.

National Child Protection Week is about raising awareness of child protection issues across Australia. The Bligh government is committed to child protection in Queensland. This financial year we have seen a record investment of \$638 million in child protection in Queensland. In the past two years alone, 60 new child safety officers have been employed. This investment acknowledges the importance we place on keeping our children safe. This is an investment in our future.

Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland is the blueprint for our future and discusses ways we can have a Queensland that is strong, green, smart, healthy and fair. The government and our non-government partners and carers are committed to ensuring our kids have the best start in education, improving their health and wellbeing, and giving them access to all the support they need. The Bligh government has delivered improved literacy and numeracy support. While there is still more work to be

done, the improvements are already evident in the NAPLAN results and I congratulate teachers, families and students. The introduction of the prep year and the 240 new and expanded kindergartens due by 2014 demonstrate the importance of early years education. By the time our first preppies reach year 3, I know the \$90 million literacy strategy will place our students up with the best in the country.

Providing for more than 1,000 extra doctors and 2,000 extra nurses over the past two years goes a long way to helping Queenslanders reach the target of being Australia's healthiest people. However, achieving this is also up to the individual and we all need to find our 30 minutes of physical activity each day and eat five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit each day. I thank the parents, carers and teachers who go a long way to helping children understand the need to keep themselves healthy. The new children's hospital and the expanded paediatric network also will be very welcomed by all families. As both Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport, the Hon. Phil Reeves understands the importance of keeping kids safe and healthy.

I turn to the other side of Minister Reeves's portfolio to congratulate all of our Queensland sporting teams on some fantastic spectator sport last weekend. Even though I am a Brisbane girl, the battle between the two top-class Queensland teams, the Broncos and the Titans, was a win for Queensland and a win for sport. On Friday night I was a little disappointed to see the Lions exit the finals, but Lions fans have been thrilled to see our team in the final six. Congratulations to Michael Voss on such an incredible result in his first year of coaching.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Channel 10 for its coverage of the netball on Sunday. It was a great win for our Australian team. Netball has a huge participation rate in Queensland and the telecast on a commercial network is a boost to the sport's followers. I congratulate everybody who got out, strapped on a pair of boots or a pair of running shoes and enjoyed the great Queensland outdoors and took a little time to get fit and healthy and find their 30 minutes over the weekend.

Queensland Children's Hospital

Mr McARDLE (Caloundra—LNP) (11.50 am): The Queensland Children's Hospital has again made the headlines and yet again for all the wrong reasons. We know that the Bligh government was committed to all subspecialties being placed under the one roof. In fact, this government has referred to that hospital as a superhospital. It is also known that there were to be 12 neonatal intensive care unit cots located in the QHC complex. It is important to understand exactly what these cots do and, more importantly, what the neonatal unit does as a whole.

There are in fact three subspecialties within a neonatal unit. The first is special care for babies who are catching up on growth and development. The second is high dependency for babies who are not critically ill but still need complex care. Then there is the neonatal intensive care unit or cots. These cots are for the most seriously ill babies. The unit deals with babies who have concerns with breathing, bleeding in the brain, heart conditions, gut and digestive disorders, eye problems, jaundice, anaemia and infections. So we are talking here about very sick children.

The composition of a neonatal unit is also important. We have specialist neonatal nurses, we have physiotherapists, we have radiographers, we have dieticians and we have pharmacists. But who leads the team? Who is the person charged with ensuring these babies receive ultimate care? They are the consultant paediatrician or the neonatologist—a person one would have thought the government would go to to see whether or not its plan to destroy 12 cots would be in the best interests of the children of Queensland. But the weekend's media highlighted that that did not occur.

Dr Mark Davies, Associate Professor of Neonatology at the University of Queensland and the Senior Staff Specialist in Neonatology at the RBWH, is reported as saying, 'Personally, I think scrapping the QCH neonatal unit and shunting all surgical babies to the Mater Mothers' Hospital is crazy.' Here is an associate professor, a man who has the qualifications to lead the neonatal unit, saying that the government's plan is flawed, flawed to the core. He then goes on to say, 'Patient safety will be compromised.'

So here we have this government saying that it will scrap the 12 cots and Dr Davies saying that that will result in patient safety being compromised, but that does not in any way impact upon this government's decision. The government then trots out the old claim that it consulted. What does Dr Davies say? He said, 'We weren't consulted at all.' The Associate Professor of Neonatology at the University of Queensland and the Senior Staff Specialist in Neonatology at the RBWH says that he was not consulted.

So the question is: who is telling the truth? Is the Bligh government and in particular this health minister, who cannot talk on his portfolio for three minutes and who sends out his director-general to answer the hard questions? Or do we turn to the doctors who work in the wards, who treat the babies and who comfort the families of these very sick babies? Who do we trust to give us the truth? Do we turn to this government and this minister or to the associate professor at the University of Queensland who provides the care in the neonatal intensive care unit?

This government ignores them. It ignores the advice of the doctors and the nurses. The QCH is fast becoming a satellite hospital, and the government is quite prepared to compromise the health of children and refuse to consult with those who know best. I have no doubt that this hospital was announced and allocated a budget long before a health services plan had been developed and it has been doomed from the start. It is a dumbed-down hospital and, at the end of the day, the only ones who are going to suffer are the children of this state, because this government is more involved in developing and building an edifice to the Premier in her own seat than in providing care across the state. It is unbelievable that this doctor was not consulted about the rights and wrongs of what the government was planning to do, to the detriment of children.

I go back to an earlier point I made. No site analysis has ever been produced in relation to this site.

(Time expired)

Bulimba State School, Green Army

Ms FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (11.55 am): The global financial crisis has created rapid deterioration in growth and a spike in unemployment levels across the world. Queensland did not create the problem, but the Queensland government is unswerving in its commitment to developing local solutions that will create jobs and keep our economy moving. The Premier has informed the House this morning of the fruits of that commitment, with the growth in our state's economy exceeding the national average.

An important means of achieving the government's commitment to jobs is to ensure Queenslanders are able to get the right mix of training and vocational skills to be part of the workforce. That is why the government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative is such an exciting initiative. The initiative received \$101 million in funding in the 2009-10 budget to provide job related assistance and skills training to more than 21,000 long-term unemployed and underemployed people. One of the really excellent aspects of this initiative is the Green Army.

The Queensland Green Army initiative is a \$57 million Bligh government commitment to create 3,000 jobs over three years. It provides paid work for 2,300 job seekers on projects that have significant environmental benefits, and it provides green traineeships for 700 unemployed people. I am proud to say that the Green Army is achieving wonderful things in my own electorate of Bulimba. Organised through the initiative of Principal Michael Zeuschner, a contingent of Queensland Green Army recruits has been posted to Bulimba State School to spruce up this 143-year-old educational icon. I was very proud to walk around the school last Friday with the Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development to meet some of the Green Army's newest recruits and to learn about their mission but also to introduce the Treasurer to the children who have been working so hard to improve their school's environment.

The school was built on a steep slope and that, combined with the construction of new buildings, has reduced functional playground space. The Green Army recruits are receiving 20 weeks of training and paid work to landscape the grounds and make it safer and more attractive for the students. A \$228,000 Skilling Queenslanders for Work grant to the Construction Training Centre is enabling these 12 job seekers to learn new skills at the school and to earn a wage while they help overhaul the grounds to complement the latest improvements at the school.

It is fitting that the Green Army should be operating at this school. Bulimba State School is a lighthouse school in the local area, among other schools in our region, in its commitment to sustainability. Here are just a few examples of its outstanding performance in this regard. It has a school litter program, with the students cleaning the school and recycling items; veggie gardens, with the school being a demonstration school for the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, which encourages students to be involved in healthy and sustainable food preparation; solar panels; and newspapers and building materials are recycled. Its teachers visit other schools to talk to them about energy efficiency and environmentally sustainable alternatives.

The school practises water conservation through rainwater tanks and reticulation of water throughout the school. It encourages children to walk, wheel or car-pool to school. It is part of the Gateway Learning Community's EarthWorks program, in partnership with Greening Australia, which is funded by a grant from Boeing International. The program addresses the dual community needs of practical environmental restoration and student centred environmental education. The school also has an environmental club, involving both parents and student members, that meets every Monday. I very much enjoyed my own time with the club some weeks back, when students were able to show me their plantings and other activities.

Having the Green Army operate at this excellent school will not only mean work for unemployed people and improved facilities for its enthusiastic students but also increase the use of the school's facilities by other community organisations and raise even greater awareness of environmental issues among pupils and project participants. The job seekers working on the project, including parents and

carers wanting to rejoin the workforce, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Australian South Sea Islanders, and young and mature-age people who have been searching for work for some time, will be able to make a big difference to the school while learning skills that will stand them in good stead for future work.

The Green Army is a practical solution from the Bligh government to getting unemployed people back to work while at the same time improving our state's natural resources. By investing in our people and our natural resources in this way, Queensland will be stronger and well equipped to move forward with strength when the global economy stabilises in the future.

Land Tax

Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (12.00 pm): Today I want to raise the issue of debt and deficits here in Queensland as well as discussing land tax. We heard the Treasurer earlier today talking about investment property and the issue of land tax and the impact it is going to have, and also the fact that it is a year since the Lehman Brothers collapse.

We know that under Treasurer Bligh, and subsequently Premier Bligh, Queensland went bust in a boom. The rivers of gold that flowed from the minerals boom, the property boom and the growth of Queensland were frittered away by a government that threw money at every crisis it faced—and boy did it face some crises. We had the kids in care crisis, we had the health crisis, we had the Bundaberg doctors scandal, we had the water crisis. It is crisis after crisis by this government. What was its answer? Cash. Cash was used instead of good policy. Populism succeeded instead of planning. The result was a \$65 billion debt before the global financial crisis hit our shores. In the last year before the GFC fully struck, the government ran a deficit of \$1.55 billion in 2007-08. We were in the red by \$1½ billion before the global financial crisis. The foundations of Queensland's economic prosperity had been undermined before the events of last year and before the collapse one year ago of Lehman Brothers. Reckless spending and rampant growth in the public sector cost this state and taxpayers billions of dollars.

The government started squeezing the productive sector—the private sector—and redirected the taxes to the nonproductive government sector. Now where is it going? Over this month property owners throughout Queensland have been receiving their land tax bills, and they are increasingly being shocked at the increases in the taxes they are being asked to pay—and so they should be. Six years ago land tax in this state raised \$418 million. Now it raises over \$1 billion. From 2006-07 to 2007-08 the average amount of land tax paid in Queensland by land tax payers has increased by \$3,333. The number of taxpayers has increased. Over the last six years the number of land tax payers has jumped from 32½ thousand to 53,000—a rise of over 20,000 taxpayers or 64 per cent over that time. Average land tax per capita has increased from \$105.70 to \$185.50 for the whole of the population of Queensland—another 75 per cent increase—putting a lie to the line that this is the low-tax state.

Despite promises made by the Premier and Treasurer in recent budgets, more Queenslanders are paying more land tax each year. How does this affect business in Queensland? Let me mention some examples. For example, an industrial property in my own electorate at Fison Avenue in Eagle Farm was leased from the Queensland government under a special lease until 2005. In 2005 the lessee was able to freehold the property. The unimproved value went from \$1.15 million to \$4.9 million. Land tax increased from \$5,548 to \$41,000—a 290 per cent increase. She has tenants who run businesses. Do you think she can budget and recover for that amount of money?

Let me mention a property at the Sunshine Coast owned and operated by a business that employs 23 Queenslanders. In 2006 their land tax bill was \$2,850. In 2009, it is \$11,707. The owner says—

We employ 23 Sunshine Coasters and proudly market 'Made on the Sunshine Coast'. Where is the encouragement from the government to continue down this line? Should we chop jobs and turn to cheap imports to stay alive?

There is this one from another constituent—

On opening my land tax assessment this morning I notice that it has gone up 58 per cent and the unimproved value of the land is exactly the same. It appears to me that owning property is something that this government wants to punish you for. Stamp duty on the way in, land tax on the way through and CGT at the other end. Obviously none of Mrs Bligh's crowd own any property.

This affects property throughout Queensland. Many others have contacted my office, and there is no doubt that this is a rip-off of the thrifty, those who look after themselves and those who invest in our state. The figures speak for themselves. The increases are horrendous. As my constituent asks, is it reasonable to increase these charges? Is it commercial? Is it sustainable? Quite clearly, it is not. Jobs and investment are at risk. This is a rip-off of Queenslanders.

(Time expired)

Innisfail State College

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (12.05 pm): More than 740 students currently attend Innisfail State High School. The school has had a proud history ever since it opened in 1955, but like many other parts of town it suffered severe damage at the hands of Cyclone Larry in 2006 and required extensive repairs and rebuilding. A number of demountable classrooms were put in place as an interim measure. But from dark times can sometimes come great opportunity. It was recognised that a more effective and efficient delivery of education services could be provided to the Innisfail community through integration of Innisfail State High School, the Innisfail campus of Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE, and the Innisfail Inclusive Education Centre—all of which were being underutilised.

Community consultation commenced in August 2007, and there was overwhelming community support for the relocation to the TAFE site for the start of the 2010 year. On 25 May 2008, the then education minister, Rod Welford, announced that the state government had approved \$36.7 million for the redevelopment of the expanded Innisfail TAFE site into a new integrated community education facility under the \$850 million State Schools of Tomorrow initiative—the largest one-off state government investment in education in Queensland's history.

The aim of the State Schools of Tomorrow initiative is to provide high-quality educational facilities and technology which will better support modern teaching practices and provide improved opportunities for students. Innisfail was one of four projects approved for implementation as part of round 1 of the initiative, along with schools at East Ipswich, Inala and Wynnum. The community has never played a bigger role in planning for the future of state education in the area. It was even invited to assist in naming the new facility, which ultimately became known as Innisfail State College when it was announced by Minister Geoff Wilson earlier this year. Innisfail State College will provide an exciting new educational precinct and provide the community with a purpose-built 21st century teaching and learning environment. It involves transforming existing TAFE buildings, expanding the campus building zone by 1.15 hectares to 26.5 hectares, and building new centres for sport and performing arts which have capacity for 300 seats.

The redevelopment will include larger, flexible classrooms and science and computer laboratories, and a new Inclusive Education Centre, which will provide support for students with special needs. The high school and the TAFE will be fully integrated, which means high school students will be able to access school based apprenticeships, traineeships and higher level subjects. Linking the new and existing campus will be a large open, landscaped plaza where staff and students can relax between classes.

Last month I toured the construction site with Premier Anna Bligh. To say that I was impressed with progress would be an understatement. We met with representatives from project managers Evans Harch Pty Ltd who allowed us to have a thorough look through the new campus. I met with workers who were clearly thrilled to be working on such an exciting local project. Some of the children at the nearby child-care centre, which will continue to form part of the precinct, were even able to watch their dads at work on the construction site.

Construction is moving at a rapid pace, with a number of new buildings having already been handed over, including the new administration building, horticulture building and maintenance workshop. Refurbishment of some existing classrooms and staff areas is complete, and refurbishment of the former TAFE administration building is about to commence, with staff moving into the new administration block.

In Far North Queensland, we know that we live in a part of the world where natural disasters can have an enormous impact, as evidenced by Cyclone Larry. The government has made a commitment that, as it builds new facilities across the Far North, we will take the opportunity to ensure cyclone facilities are included. In the case of Innisfail State College, the purpose-built cyclone shelter capable of standing up to category 5 conditions will double as a performing arts centre. The concrete tilt panel walls have now gone up on the performing arts centre, which will also provide a covered outdoor performance court as well as internal music and performance facilities. Of course, we hope that the community will never need to use the centre in the event of a cyclone but, in case we do, it will be here for many years to come.

No project is immune from problems—real or perceived—and Innisfail State College is no exception. There have been claims that the Geraldton Bridge, which connects Fitzgerald Esplanade with Flying Fish Point Road across the Johnstone River, may not be able to carry the increased level of traffic that will come from the establishment of the school. However, all the advice that I have says that, despite the bridge being of advancing age, the Geraldton Bridge has the capacity to cope.

The changed traffic flows may mean, however, that the roundabout on the hospital side may require an upgrade to ensure the turning circle for buses is manageable. The inherited financial situation being experienced by the Cassowary Coast Regional Council is well documented. There are also concerns that the sewer infrastructure servicing the existing TAFE site and surrounding area has

exceeded its capacity and needs to be upgraded prior to any further development work proceeding in that area. I will work with the council and relevant government agencies to monitor the impact of the new education precinct, as well as any impacts that increased traffic over the bridge will have.

Of course, there is more to the school than bricks and mortar. It takes an individual with forward-thinking ideas to lead a school of tomorrow. Julie Pozzoli was an inspired choice as the first principal of Innisfail State College. I have met with her on a number of occasions since she took over the position and I continue to be impressed by her attitude and approach.

Innisfail State College will be the most modern education facility outside of Brisbane and will do amazing things to enhance employment and training opportunities for students. This is a learning opportunity that does not exist anywhere else in the state and it is exciting to be able to pioneer this concept in Mulgrave.

Labor Governments, Allegations of Corruption

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—LNP) (12.10 pm): The more the Queensland Premier and Deputy Premier argue against the establishment of a royal commission into corruption in Queensland, the more proof is offered to Queensland families that they both lack the political will to expose and fight corruption. The people of Queensland and the families of Queensland are entitled to ask why.

An examination of the parliamentary record might shed some light on this question. *Hansard* of 9 December 2005 shows that the Premier, the Deputy Premier and indeed every parliamentary member of the Labor Party voted to ignore the CMC's recommendation that a former member of this place face examination before a tribunal of fact and a Queensland jury. I table a copy of the record.

Tabled paper: Extract from the Record of Proceedings dated 9 December 2005, pages 4723-4725 [890].

Tabled paper: Extract from the Record of Proceedings dated 9 December 2005, pages 4743-4746 [891].

The question the people of Queensland must ask themselves is: did the Premier's own conscience and judgement call her to vote to ignore the CMC's recommendation or was she following the orders given by former Premier Beattie? Both the Premier and the Deputy Premier were part of a group of Labor politicians, led by Peter Beattie, who in December 2005 praised then voted to protect a now-jailed former member of this place from recommendations by the CMC that he should face the scrutiny of a tribunal of fact and a Queensland jury. In a special debate in December 2005 the Premier gushed these words in this place—

For those of us who are colleagues of the member for Sandgate, for those of us who have worked with him, for those of us who have sat with him around a cabinet table and know him to be a decent man ...

There were only three possibilities available to us when the Premier spoke those words: firstly, she was deliberately attempting to mislead this parliament; secondly, she was displaying an appalling lack of judgement; or, thirdly, she was displaying a remarkable and loyal ability to follow Peter Beattie's orders, and nothing has changed. On 9 December 2005 the Deputy Premier said in this place with regard to a corrupt and now-jailed former member of this place—

I know the member for Sandgate well and I believe that he is a good and honest man.

Which other politician does the Deputy Premier think is a good and honest man? The Deputy Premier in his recent public comments makes the argument that by calling for a royal commission the opposition is undermining the CMC. The Deputy Premier needs to explain to the people of Queensland which has the greater effect of undermining the Queensland CMC—calling for a royal commission into Labor corruption or voting against a CMC recommendation in this place which would have placed a convicted criminal before a Queensland jury three years earlier?

With every lame excuse the Deputy Premier now offers, with every desperate attempt the Premier cooks up to divert and distract the public's attention away from corruption and cronyism, unfortunately the evidence grows daily that the Deputy Premier and the Premier are not people of conscience and are not fit to lead Queensland. Newspaper headlines every day scream corruption and dysfunction. There is more today: Labor corruption and dysfunction with regard to our judicial system.

Will the Premier explain to the House which part of respected corruption fighter Tony Fitzgerald's statement she and government members do not understand? Fitzgerald said—

Access can now be purchased, patronage is dispensed, mates and supporters are appointed and retired politicians exploit their political connections to obtain success fees for deals between businesses and government.

In the history of humankind there has never been an example of a corrupt, dysfunctional government which is able to renew and reform itself. Renewal and reform has always come from outside that government. The only way renewal and reform will take place in Queensland in the 21st century is from outside this current government, starting as it did in the 20th century—in 1989—with the finding and recommendations of a royal commission to guide this new government.

Prostate Cancer

Hon. MM KEECH (Albert—ALP) (12.15 pm): Imagine if every month a bus carrying 47 Queensland men ran off the road at high speed killing everyone on board. According to the latest statistics, that is exactly how many Queensland men die each year from prostate cancer. Sadly, 572 men died in Queensland in 2004, and the 2008 numbers are similar. These men have families, friends and loved ones who continue to grieve their passing. September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. It is a month when as a government and as a community we consider ways in which we can help reduce the dreadful impact of this terrible disease. Unfortunately, around 3,000 Queensland men are expected to be diagnosed with prostate cancer in the coming year.

It is clear that men who feel supported, connected and informed are going to handle the health and emotional challenges much better than those who are isolated, uncertain and afraid. That is why I am pleased to commend the work of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, which helps to coordinate over 80 support groups across Australia—around 22 of which, at last count, are in Queensland. These groups provide support and advocacy to men and their families affected by prostate cancer. They meet regularly and provide a very important supportive forum for the exchange of experiences, ideas and the latest research.

I am very pleased to announce that tonight at the Beenleigh RSL a new support group for men and their families living in Logan and the northern Gold Coast will meet for the first time. The new Beenleigh Prostate Cancer Support Group has been established through the leadership of local volunteer convenor Peter Keech together with Graeme Higgs, the Queensland State Manager of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia. With the support of tonight's guest speakers, Dr Roger Hinsch and Prostate Cancer Foundation Australia ambassador Mr Rob Stirling, I am confident the new Beenleigh support group will grow in the tradition of other support groups around Australia in providing crucial regular networking opportunities to men, their wives and partners and their families.

The role played by research in trying to find answers and solutions for dealing with prostate cancer in Australia is absolutely crucial. Queensland is fortunate to have many highly talented researchers who are searching for the factors that initiate prostate cancer. Some are identifying new approaches to treating it, while other researchers are trying to discover or develop new tests or biomarkers that predict the future course of the cancer.

The Rudd government announced in January of this year a new \$7.5 million Prostate Cancer Research Centre at Brisbane's Princess Alexandra Hospital. The new centre is one of two dedicated Prostate Cancer Research Centres created as part of the federal government's \$249 million national cancer plan. The new PA centre is hosted by the Queensland University of Technology and conducts research that will play a vital role in improving cancer research and care in Queensland and across the country.

In implementing the Q2 policy, the Bligh government contributes significant funding to the Queensland Institute for Medical Research. I am advised that some of the current research of the institute is related to early detection of prostate cancer. In addition, Queensland Health has contributed state funding and is also working with the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to train urologists.

The Rudd and Bligh governments' focus on research is most important, but governments can only do so much. I commend the work of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and its recently launched national community service campaign. The campaign reminds people that, when it comes to prostate cancer, 'the difference is you'. It is clear that, if we choose to just sit back and let the problem get worse, that bus full of Queensland men that goes plunging over the cliff every month will just get bigger and bigger. In Prostate Cancer Awareness Month I take this opportunity to congratulate all of Queensland's Prostate Cancer Foundation support groups for the very important work they are doing and wish our new group at Beenleigh well in getting the message out that, at the end of the day, the difference is you.

Visit to Cambodia, Human Slavery

Mr FOLEY (Maryborough—Ind) (12.19 pm): Some 27 million people in the world live in slavery today. Fifty per cent of those people are children, and child and people trafficking is the third largest illegal industry in the world behind drugs and weapons. Recently my wife and I, our doctor and a few other people who were interested travelled to Cambodia where we saw firsthand the absolute horror that modern-day slavery has wreaked on these people. We met with the Australian Embassy. We met with the Australian Federal Police. We also had the unhappy opportunity to visit the killing fields and S21, the detention centre where Pol Pot murdered so many people in Phnom Penh.

It was disturbing to say the least as the father of six children to see things like the killing tree—a tree that was used to murder children. Two million to three million people were killed by Pol Pot, who was distinctly anti education. He would use his goons to round up people who had committed such serious crimes as wearing glasses and then summarily take them out and kill them in one of hundreds of

killing fields around Cambodia. I was particularly disturbed as I walked the paths in a killing field to see human bones and clothing sticking out of the paths as we walked along them. I cannot tell you the grief that I felt to see a place where so many Cambodians killed so many other Cambodians. Pol Pot, ironically, was a member of a wealthy landholder family who actually won a scholarship to study in France. But he bombed out of his course very badly, and I believe that that is at the heart of why he killed so many educated people.

We met with representatives of the International Justice Mission; Destiny people; World Hope, which is a charity that I am involved in; Chab Dai, which is an umbrella organisation; and also the magnificent people who do magnificent work at an organisation called Hard Places. People trafficking or people slavery—trafficking in some ways is too kind a word—exists in all of its horrors in our world today. When I spoke to the Australian Federal Police in Cambodia they talked about the issue of forced labour where people would advertise for people in Vietnam to come down and get fishing jobs in Cambodia. They would take them out for three months on a boat. They would feed them methamphetamine, or ice, and of course they would be addicted within a number of days and then they would simply not pay them any wages. Those people would continue working and they would pay them in ice or methamphetamine and their life expectancy was about one year. When they died, they were simply tossed overboard and the next person came along.

While I was in Phnom Penh a minibus full of us did a drive through the red-light district, and Phnom Penh is like one big red-light district. The driver was telling us that the police had picked up 22 under-age girls in one brothel raid two nights before and the previous night had picked up 28. These are sick paedophiles, and I do not resile from that word. I just cannot understand why anybody would find a child sexually attractive. Parents are selling their eight-year-old daughters into brothels in Cambodia for \$200. They pre sell their virginity and when the girls have been brutalised they put salt inside the girls to stop the bleeding, sew them up and pre sell them again. The extent of the horror that is happening over there—and I am sorry if that offends the sensibility of people in this House—is just appalling.

Sexual slavery also exists in Brisbane. Papua New Guinea has refused to sign the Palermo Protocol, and I have met with our Attorney-General on that issue. This is a situation world-wide where the Western World can no longer sit around and just say, 'That's somebody else's problem.' It is our problem. It is a real situation. I could tell members a hundred other horror stories, but this is a terrible issue where we must leave no stone unturned in stamping it out in our world today.

Surveyors

Mr MOORHEAD (Waterford—ALP) (12.24 pm): As it has been for the last 150 years and more, Queensland's future is being mapped out by the surveyors and spatial science professionals of Queensland. For such a large and diverse state, with only relatively recent European settlement, Queensland has relied upon the skills and hard work of surveyors for the development of our state. On Sunday I joined with Tom Taranto, the chair of the Queensland Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute, and Caboolture town group chair, Greg Williams, for the unveiling of a legacy project to celebrate 150 years of separation from New South Wales. This legacy project is made possible through grants from the Q150 program, a program that has supported communities to celebrate what it is to be a Queenslander no matter where in Queensland you are.

The QSSSI initiative will see a network of more than 40 permanent survey marks installed around the state to celebrate not only our state's history but also the contribution to our state by the surveying profession. It was Surveyor-General John Oxley who surveyed southern Queensland and chose Redcliffe as the first settlement in what was later to become Queensland. It was Sir Augustus Gregory who was appointed Queensland's first Surveyor-General, a noted explorer who founded the Institute of Surveyors in Queensland. Gregory also had the honour of surveying parts of the new border between Queensland and New South Wales upon the founding of Queensland. Prior to our separation, it was Sir Thomas Mitchell as Surveyor-General who explored Queensland when it was then part of New South Wales. It is surveyors who have explored, mapped and opened up Queensland for more than 150 years.

At Sunday's unveiling it was Bill Kitson, the curator of the Queensland Museum of Lands, Mapping and Surveying, who spoke to the crowd, sharing the proud history of Queensland surveyors. He spoke of the contribution of surveyors to our state like Oxley, Burnett and Gregory. But I should declare my interest in this debate. I am the son of a surveyor. My father did his cadetship with the department of main roads and went on to work for the former Caboolture shire council for more than 30 years. Growing up as the son of a surveyor was a unique experience. While on holidays, we would be driving through western Queensland with my parents and four siblings when the Toyota Tarago would pull over to the side of the road without warning. The next half hour would be spent looking for a surveyor's reference tree. Trips to the park would often be accompanied by a search for a permanent survey mark. I also learnt to appreciate the value of surveyors by carrying the surveyor's staff as my father mapped out local tennis courts, cricket ovals, athletic tracks and even the local aerodrome.

The permanent survey mark project establishes a link between our history and our future. Each of these permanent survey marks will record the latitude and longitude of the mark, allowing the calibration of global positioning systems. Motorists, bushwalkers and boaties will be able to check their GPS systems and make sure they are spot-on in the use of this new technology. Being located at historical locations around Queensland, the survey marks will provide a strong link between our pioneering past and the technology of the 21st century. People using their GPS, a technology built upon centuries of data collected by surveyors, will be reminded of the history of our state over the last 150 years. This is an innovative project to provide a legacy for generations to come, ensuring that they understand the pioneers of Queensland and the role that they played in mapping out Queensland. It may also help young Queenslanders to realise the value of the surveying and spatial sciences professions. Whether building a road, mapping national parks, a house block or a football field, surveyors and spatial science professionals provide an opportunity to map out a strong career for the future.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hoolihan): Order! The time for the matters of public interest debate has expired.

TRADE MEASUREMENT LEGISLATION REPEAL BILL

First Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (12.29 pm): I present a bill for an act to repeal the Trade Measurement Act 1990 and the Trade Measurement Administration Act 1990 and to make particular consequential amendments to other legislation. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Trade Measurement Legislation Repeal Bill [\[892\]](#).

Tabled paper: Trade Measurement Legislation Repeal Bill, explanatory notes [\[893\]](#).

Second Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (12.29 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The bill repeals two acts administered by my department, the Trade Measurement Act 1990 and the Trade Measurement Administration Act 1990, to facilitate a national system of trade measurement as agreed by the Council of Australian Governments—COAG. The bill also includes various transitional provisions to ensure that there are no gaps in administration during the changeover to the Commonwealth.

While the subject matter of this bill may seem dry, the transfer of the administration of trade measurement to the Commonwealth is a significant milestone in Queensland's history. Trade measurement is the use of standard forms of measurement as the basis for the price in a transaction. It is well documented that trade measurement has been central to commerce throughout human history. This will always be the case, as almost all products from the farm gate to the kitchen plate are sold by measurement in one form or another.

The ability to weigh or measure to an ever-increasing accuracy has not only been crucial to trade and commerce but has also made possible the greatest scientific discoveries and engineering achievements. This appreciation of the importance of standards of weights and measures goes back thousands of years, with the earliest known uniform systems of weights and measures evidenced among ancient societies of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia.

In modern times, trade measurement's contribution to the economy should not be underestimated. Its economic value in Australia, that is the value of goods sold by reference to measurement, is estimated at \$400 billion per year. Trade measurement is also an important component of consumer protection. Seventy-five per cent of trade measurement transactions are between businesses and 25 per cent between business and consumers. Fair market practice in the sale of goods by reference to measurement is an essential component of a competitive market.

However, standards seldom come about by agreement between individuals and government has found it necessary to enact legislation to lay down the standards and the units which must be used. Over the past 150 years, that is since Queensland became a self-governing colony, Queensland trade measurement officers have gone about their work of ensuring the accuracy of measurement equipment and maintaining testing standards. A key role of trade measurement inspectors is visiting traders across the state to check their measuring instruments and ensure they are not marketing short measure products. For example, Queensland officers check products and measuring instruments at grocery

stores, processing and packing plants, warehouses, produce agents, fuel depots and service stations. The administration of trade measurement includes highly technical areas of responsibility. Over time, our inspectors have adopted highly specialised skills in developing standards and test procedures for the wide range of measuring instruments, methods of production and supply across industry sectors.

For example, the correct supply of a bulk fuel by an oil depot may depend on both its temperature and accurately metered volume of supply. Fuel measurement standards have been developed under trade measurement law for this purpose. Bulk grain is now sold by both the measurement of quality and quantity. The trade measurement authorities have recently developed standards for testing the protein content of grain, which is a significant indicator of market value. The work of trade measurement inspectors often goes unseen but, as I have indicated earlier, it is a vital ingredient of a well-functioning market. It enables business to compete on a level playing field and consumers to be confident they are getting what they pay for.

I want to place on record the government's recognition of the high standard of work and commitment by the staff of the trade measurement branch of fair trading operations in the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation. For many years, the Queensland office has been regarded as the leader in the national field of trade measurement. I would like to especially mention the dedication, expertise and management of the chief inspector, Malcolm Bartlett, who has given almost 40 years of service to Queensland trade measurement.

This bill is in response to the identification by COAG in 2006 of trade measurement as a cross-jurisdictional hot spot impeding economic activity and requiring regulatory reform. Currently, each state and territory administers similar trade measurement law to provide a national legal framework to ensure that weights and measures used in trade are accurate. Following a major national review confirming significant problems with the current administrative arrangements, on 13 April 2007 COAG agreed to establish a national system of trade measurement to be fully funded and administered by the Commonwealth. No referral of power by the states is necessary, as there is a head of power under the Commonwealth constitution to make law in respect of weights and measures.

From 1 July 2010, the Australian government will assume responsibility from the states and territories for all trade measurement, including enforcement. The Commonwealth has already enacted law adopting the state legislation and enabling Commonwealth enforcement to begin on that date. All Australian jurisdictions, including Queensland, have signed a COAG National Partnership Agreement including agreed time lines to implement the transition of trade measurement to the Commonwealth. This bill progresses the government's commitment to implement its part of the national agreement on reforming the administrative arrangements. Not only will the bill repeal the Queensland trade measurement law on 1 July 2010 to coincide with the date when Commonwealth enforcement begins but it will also facilitate a smooth transition, avoiding gaps in enforcement and adverse impacts on stakeholders relying on trade measurement services. For example, transitional provisions will enable the finalisation of court proceedings instituted by the state of Queensland for offences committed that are still on foot at the time of the changeover to Commonwealth enforcement.

The bill also enables the transfer of information to the Commonwealth prior to the changeover date about trade measurement licensees and regulated traders. This allows the Commonwealth time to establish registers, staff appointments, infrastructure and work schedules and will avoid adverse impacts on stakeholders and trade measurement employees. The move to central administration of trade measurement is designed to deliver benefits sought by businesses, consumers and government. It will reduce compliance costs and provide efficiency gains for business while maintaining existing standards of service and levels of consumer protection.

It is important to note that the transfer of administration of trade measurement will not result in a reduction in trade measurement services to Queensland. The national agreement includes states and territories maintaining continuity of service and existing service standards during the transition period. The Commonwealth has given a commitment to maintain the same level and standard of service under the new national regime as existed immediately prior to the changeover. This will be closely monitored to ensure the Commonwealth meets the commitment.

However, the transfer will have a positive financial impact on the state of Queensland. Under the COAG agreement, the Commonwealth will fully fund its ongoing administration and the states and territories will not be asked to make a financial contribution for the costs of the transition. Arrangements are being made in the transition process to ensure that trade measurement staff are not disadvantaged as a result of the changeover. All staff have been offered employment by the Commonwealth with the intention that they will undertake very similar roles in similar Brisbane and regional locations to where they are presently based with similar salary scales.

In submitting this bill to the House to progress the government's commitment to COAG to transfer responsibility for the administration of trade measurement, the government pays tribute to the importance of the last 150 years of service by trade measurement officers to this state. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Elmes, adjourned.

SUSTAINABLE PLANNING BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 3 September (see p. 2182), on motion of Mr Hinchliffe—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Mr ELMES (Noosa—LNP) (12.40 pm): I rise to make a relatively short conclusion to a speech I started 10 days ago on the Sustainable Planning Bill before the House. Queensland perhaps more than any other state is the place where people choose to live based largely on the grounds of lifestyle. Lower salaries for comparable work is a great indicator of the value that members of our community place on lifestyle, not income. Perhaps it is the key measure of this value.

Lifestyle is greatly impacted by development decisions. Under this bill decisions are made by the minister or a bureaucrat in George Street who are totally insulated from the things that matter to the people in those communities about whom these life-changing decisions are being made and who are blissfully unaware of their needs and aspirations. The balance is tipped far too far towards development, with scant regard for the communities to say how it will be for them. Accordingly, I call on the government to take three progressive steps to meet the aspirations of local communities. These are, firstly, to include an authority for local governments to prohibit development; secondly, to extend the periods of public consultation; and, thirdly, to delete the deemed approvals provisions. Indeed, in an ideal world communities would be able to see the effect of public consultation on the instrument before it is finally decided.

This two-stage process which I am advocating for all public consultation is already present in the redistribution process for electoral boundaries. It is a good, open, transparent process and it gives the public some confidence that their voice is actually heard and not just listened to. Such a process would redress the angst felt by communities that they are mostly regarded as a necessary evil, only to be courted and valued in the period immediately preceding an election and at no other time.

I am disappointed, given the title of the bill, that there is not even an attempt in the bill to address some form of mandatory environmental information when considering development applications. That the bill is silent about this sends a strong message that the environment really does not matter to this government. I hope green groups are keenly aware of the adage 'By their actions shall ye know them', and that they take umbrage at the approach being taken here. This is an approach that need not rest in the too-hard basket. Some of the government agencies consulted during the DA process could easily define the sort of environmental information essential to facilitate their consideration. It is a fact that it is not defined and that is a real worry.

Finally, developers are still able to refuse to supply information requested by councils. Section 278(1)(b) and (c) should simply be deleted. That it remains is a key example of how far this minister and this government will go to tip the balance in favour of this mad scramble for development at any cost. This scramble appears to extend to the increased discretion given to the Planning and Environment Court to excuse noncompliance and to allow for major amendments to development conditions. The umpire needs to be independent and fair and justice needs to be done and to be seen to be done.

Overall this bill does not meet the needs of my community, my electorate or the people whom I represent in this place. It will accelerate the rapid reduction in the quality of their environment and their lifestyle. While I understand and appreciate the fact that the opposition is supporting this bill before the parliament today, in many ways I condemn it as an opportunity lost.

Mr HOBBS (Warrego—LNP) (12.42 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak to the Sustainable Planning Bill. I know that there are many members wishing to speak in this debate. I commend the shadow minister for his comprehensive summary of the bill. He has an intricate knowledge of this legislation and the implications of it. There are a number of issues that we need to discuss further and clarify so that the councils who have to implement these plans have some clear direction as to where they are going, how they are going to get there and what the impacts are going to be when they do get there.

In his second reading speech the minister said—

One of the key changes to the purpose of the act is that the system delivers sustainable outcomes. Sustainability takes into account environmental impacts such as the effects of development on climate change... For the first time, climate change has been specifically recognised in the bill as a key factor influencing the sustainability of our communities by referencing it as a prime example of a key planning and community issue that needs to be taken into account in planning and development assessment processes.

No-one can argue about the impacts of climate change. That is not my intention today. What I want to raise with the minister and the parliament is the impact that this bill will have on the front line for the councils that have to implement it. We have not seen the regulations, but councils are given no guidelines in this bill in relation to what they have to work towards. The bill states that individual planning schemes will have to take into consideration potential adverse impacts on climate change as a result of development and that such adverse impacts ought to be addressed through sustainable development

including, for example, sustainable settlement patterns and sustainable urban design. What exactly are those requirements? The government has not been definitive in this regard. Are we talking about coastal areas or riverine areas? It is not defined and it is unreasonable to expect councils to guess how they can meet those government expectations. What does the government mean by 'potential adverse impacts on climate change'? We need a clear statement of the expectations of councils. The planning professionals need to know exactly what is intended.

I will give members an example. The Gayndah shire, for instance, had a development application in relation to the flood plain on the Burnett River. The consultant said, 'Let's raise it 20 per cent to allow for climate change.' The council said, 'Fine, but how did you arrive at that?' 'Blowed if I know. It seemed a good figure to me,' was virtually the answer. The federal government, in its wisdom, cannot work out an emissions trading scheme. In Australia we have not worked out exactly what it means. We know there is an issue. We are not arguing about climate change; we are arguing about what it means when somebody has to sign on the dotted line. Which planner will do it? We need a recognised base to work from. The government is putting the bill before the House but it is not telling councils what it is they have to do. All it is saying is, 'Take climate change into consideration.' If the government wants to say that, it should put in the bill, 'We do not care what it is; you do not have to do it, so long as you think about it.'

The other matter I want to raise is compensation. What happens, for instance, if a developer argues against a development application? It will end up in the courts because there is no scientific definition of what has to be done. The government has not set out a definition. It is very important that we look at ways of avoiding that situation.

Let us consider what is likely to happen on the Gold Coast. If the Gayndah example is used on the Gold Coast, in a 1 in 50 or 1 in 100 year flood event, half of Robina would be gone and there would be no more development in Varsity Lakes. Clear Island Waters, parts of Mudgeeraba, parts of Labrador—half the seat of Broadwater—would be gone. These places are built on flood plains. By legislating that climate change has to be taken into consideration, that basically takes out a third of the area earmarked for growth in the South East Queensland Regional Plan.

Mr Hinchliffe: You take it into account, not prohibit.

Mr HOBBS: The minister may explain later on in his summing-up, and I hope he does, how councils will be able to determine that. If 20 per cent is the figure, and that is the arbitrary figure that is being talked about at the moment, what it means is that no more development can take place in those areas. That is what will happen under the new act. How on earth will the government get on? Not only will there be the loss of housing to consider; there will also be the loss of revenue. What about stamp duty? As it is, the impost that the government has put on councils by taking away their water and sewerage infrastructure assistance has cost at least an extra \$5,000 per block.

Mr Hinchliffe: The member for Noosa is saying too much development and you are saying too little.

Mr Fraser: Which is it? Too much development or too little?

Mr HOBBS: Sorry?

Mr Fraser: The member for Noosa says there is too much development; you are saying there is too little now. I can't figure out what is what.

Mr HOBBS: I am saying that this is a different thing altogether. This is entirely different. I am talking about this particular clause and the impact it will have on those working at the coalface. A planner will sit down, rub his chin and think, 'How am I going to work this out?' He will say, 'The minister hasn't told us, so I'll have to guess.' I suppose he will have a cup of coffee or maybe two cups of coffee. He will go out and have a smoke, and try to work out what on earth he is going to do. Then he will go back inside because he has had an idea. He will ring a Labor lobbyist. That is what he will have to do. It is the only way out of it. We will call this Labor lobbyist 'Fred'. Fred will call the generic minister and say, 'Comrade, developers can't get developments done because planning schemes are stalled due to section 11.' The minister will say, 'Have you got your success fee negotiated? The bill doesn't define potential adverse impacts on climate change. We'll give you blokes a sustainable income for years to come.' This is the same old planning bill. This is the sustainable Labor mates bill. How on earth would it get through otherwise?

The minister will say, 'Tell your mates the scheme is okay. Tell any of those pesky community groups that if they give you any trouble I will call it in. We will do a ministerial call-in.' 'You'd call it in, Minister?' Fred will ask. The minister will say, 'Yes, but only because there's no appeal left and they can't appeal it anyway.' Fred will say, 'It's good to do business with you, Minister.' The minister will say, 'Good to hear from you, Fred.' The minister will also say, 'Don't forget the fundraising dinner next week.' That is what Labor mates are for. This is exactly what this is all about. The reality is that those people will be forced to hire lawyers, and they will need Labor lobbyists as well, to try to work their way through it. They will be talking to the minister and the government.

I turn to another issue. We are not arguing about climate change. As I said before, we are arguing about the process. In Queensland we have seawall protection laws, which they do not have in New South Wales. I am not sure how far up the coast they extend. That will have a further impact. On the Gold Coast, if the seawall is eroded the owner has to ensure it is replaced or repaired. That is fine and that should happen. The reality is that there are further impacts with that. What happens if the level rises by 20 per cent? There will be a significant change in all—

Mr Hinchliffe: This 20 per cent you have invented from Gayndah. Some bloke in Gayndah has told you 20 per cent and you've hung your hat on it.

Mr HOBBS: That seems to be the figure that is used. What is it? Minister, you tell us the figure. You tell councils what figure they should use.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Member, resume your seat. Member, please remember to talk through the chair.

Mr HOBBS: Absolutely. I hope that the minister will expand on how councils will administer this legislation.

I wish to discuss a few other points, particularly in relation to the history of the bill. The Integrated Planning Act was passed in 1997 and some significant changes have been made since then. Certainly this bill improves that legislation and no-one argues about that. However, I do wish to raise some issues, because I think the bill will have some unintended consequences. I assume that the government will be keen to get onto those quickly and fix them up. Also I assume that the regulations will be road tested, as was the case with the Local Government Act. Local government regulations will be tested to see if they work and then they will become part of the subordinate legislation. That is important, because at this stage we do not know what the regulations will be.

Ministerial call-ins are an important part of this legislation and the previous act. We have to have them. It is unfortunate that over the years this government has used ministerial call-ins to a significant degree.

Mr O'Brien interjected.

Mr HOBBS: I take the interjection from the member for Cook. I would say to the parliament that Labor ministers do more call-ins in a year than Russ Hinze did in his lifetime. That is the reality.

Mr O'Brien: Nonsense.

Mr HOBBS: You count them up.

A government member: That's a risky road to go down.

Mr HOBBS: It is not a risky one. It is a very accurate assumption. If members opposite look they will find that to be so, and there are good reasons for it. Down the track, when there is a royal commission, we will find out a lot more about those. You are probably lucky you were not the minister earlier on. However, that will be for another time.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will speak through the chair.

Mr HOBBS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. This is an issue that we need to consider carefully. Ministerial call-ins are a sacred thing. They are important to have because there are times when we need the right development at the right time, although there are numerous cases of call-ins that have been less than fair or reasonable.

The issue of deemed approvals is also important and was not part of the original bill that was negotiated with stakeholders. Overall, the level of consultation undertaken in relation to the bill was pretty good. An important factor in a process such as this is trust. If the stakeholders cannot trust the government, serious problems will arise. Obviously at the moment local government has some serious issues with the government and the minister. Deemed approvals were snuck in to this legislation. While councils are not entirely happy with that, they acknowledge that if the applications can be sent back, which they can if they are not correct, things might work out okay. They are working their way through that. But it is—

Mr Hinchliffe: It's a higher bar.

Mr HOBBS: Yes, it is a higher bar for the applications, and that has been important before. In the past everybody has blamed everybody else: the applications were wrong, the councils were wrong, there were delays getting things back from the agencies and so forth. Hopefully, this will improve that situation. We need to be able to watch that. If changes need to be made, we need to be able to make those changes reasonably quickly, particularly in relation to state government agencies. In the past some agencies have responded very slowly. I cannot see how on earth they can improve that situation, but let us hope that they do because there is a real problem there.

The other issue relates to cost shifting to local government, which has occurred throughout this whole process. As I was saying before, the climate change proposals will mean a further cost-shift to local government. For instance, if the state government does not define the percentage increase that will result from climate change, councils will have to try to do that research. That will be a further cost—

Ms Jones: Are you talking about sea level rise?

Mr HOBBS: Sea level rise, yes.

Ms Jones: We're doing the modelling. Eight million bucks.

Mr HOBBS: That is good. When will that be finished?

Ms Jones: We're starting it this year.

Mr Fraser: Not before this speech.

Mr HOBBS: That is right. This bill will be passed today and the regulations will come in. How far away are the regulations, Minister?

Mr Hinchliffe: Before the end of the year.

Mr HOBBS: So we will see them by the end of the year. I have raised a few issues and some genuine concerns that need to be taken into consideration. I hope that they are taken in the spirit in which they were given.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 pm): I rise today to make a contribution to the Sustainable Planning Bill. In doing so, I congratulate the shadow minister, the member for Gympie, on his contribution. I know that he has done a lot of research into this bill.

I would like to focus on one aspect of the bill that has far-reaching impacts on Queenslanders' lifestyle, and that is infrastructure charges. This is something that has certainly become an issue in my electorate of Surfers Paradise, as part of the Gold Coast City Council, and it is something about which I have had words to say in the local media on the Gold Coast. I have been misrepresented in the local media as well. It was reported by Geoff Chambers that I had asked that there be an administrator appointed to the Gold Coast City Council. I want to clarify very specifically that at no stage have I ever called for the appointment of an administrator to the Gold Coast City Council on this particular issue. But I have said that the Gold Coast City Council needs to do something about infrastructure charges, and I said that some months ago, because of the stifling effect they are having on development. We have seen that over the last year especially on the Gold Coast, yet the Gold Coast City Council has refused and in fact been intransigent about any attempts to modify its infrastructure-charging regime.

It is very interesting that, as mentioned by the shadow minister in his speech on the second reading, only one council has an approved priority infrastructure plan, or PIP, which sets the infrastructure charges for its region, and that council is the Gold Coast City Council. If we take the Gold Coast as a case study, it is clear to see that this system has major flaws, and I am going to go through some of those in a moment. The government has encouraged other councils to adopt similar programs based on the success or otherwise of the Gold Coast model. But, as I say, given the flaws that are inherent in the Gold Coast PIP, clearly something needs to be done before this system is adopted more widely throughout the state and has the same effect that it has had on the Gold Coast.

From the outset, I would like to point out that the ability for councils to charge appropriate infrastructure charges on development is a critical part of their financial management. I acknowledge that. All members here do. It is important for councils to have appropriate revenue sources. It allows councils to cover the additional costs incurred when development occurs. There are many former councillors in this House. I see the member for Buderim is here. He would be very aware that, in relation to development and the costs incurred by council, PIP charges ensure that the wider rate base does not carry the cost. In other words, if other people are made to pay these charges, mum and dad ratepayers will not necessarily have more expensive rates.

It is also clear that often the developers who construct the buildings required to provide the housing or business premises that are so crucial to our future are finding these charges excessive, complex and highly variable. There are numerous cases of this that I am sure members are aware of and can provide anecdotal evidence to that effect. The shadow minister, the member for Gympie, has met with the UDIA and other development groups who have expressed concerns about this.

The UDIA, I know from going to its annual general meeting on the Gold Coast, has looked at the cost of infrastructure charges on developments. Queensland's record of being the low-cost state was blown out of the water by what it found. In New South Wales there is a \$20,000 limit for infrastructure charges, excluding water and sewerage. Victoria and South Australia average only \$5,200 in infrastructure charges. But on the Gold Coast infrastructure charges on a single house are around \$35,060 and for a single lot in a greenfield site they are \$48,986—so around \$50,000 per residence. Very obviously, if a developer has to pay those sorts of charges, they will be passed on and they will be passed on at the end—to the purchaser. So that is \$50,000 that a new home buyer will have to find in this tight economic climate, or \$50,000 that an investor looking to provide affordable rental accommodation will have to increase their rental return by to obtain some sort of yield and \$50,000 less in Queenslanders' pockets, impacting on their cost of living and thereby their lifestyle.

Very importantly, for all that we speak about the growth in population on the Gold Coast, South-East Queensland and Queensland in general, there is no doubt that we run the risk of having economic refugees in terms of housing. If we are going to say that the most affordable house and land package on the Gold Coast is \$100,000 more expensive than a comparable package on the outskirts of Melbourne, eventually something has to give and people will end up saying that they cannot compromise their lifestyle as much as is required of them to have to borrow more to be able to buy or they may not be able to buy in the first place. This is an embarrassment for our state. We have not yet seen numerous examples of economic refugees. But that is what governments are there for—to plan to make sure that these things do not happen.

All indications are that the costs are growing, and we have seen examples of that in the media recently. I recently spoke to a small lot developer on the Gold Coast who pointed out to me that in 1998 a two-lot subdivision in the suburb of Labrador took about seven pages of forms to fill out, he had to go through two offices and it went through council in six weeks. Now the same two-lot subdivision would take hundreds of pages, he would have to go through 12 offices and it may take up to six months to go through council. That is a significant impediment for development. Costs get passed on and they are being passed on to the developers, who have been seen and are seen by the Gold Coast City Council as a milch cow.

The Gold Coast has traditionally had an economic base of tourism, development and retail. We can ill afford with the current downturn in the economy to be affecting one of those major arms, and that is development, along with the other arm that has already been affected and that is tourism.

Ms Struthers: You didn't support our housing development at Southport. Why did you knock that back? \$2.6 million and you knocked it back—not in this area.

Mr LANGBROEK: If the honourable member wants to interject, we are actually talking about PIP charges, which I do not think the department of housing is up for.

Ms Struthers: You are talking about affordability of housing—12 units you knocked back.

Mr LANGBROEK: We are talking about development on the Gold Coast. The minister has no idea what this bill is about and is talking about ancient history.

Mr Hinchliffe: You were talking about affordability in rental properties.

Mr LANGBROEK: We are talking about PIP charges. Very clearly, what we are talking about here is that developers over the last year have found it very difficult with the current Gold Coast City Council's PIP regime. It has nothing to do with what the Minister for Housing is talking about.

In the recent budget we saw the Premier and Treasurer take an axe to the state grants and subsidies that local governments relied upon to fund infrastructure such as water and sewerage, and the larger South-East Queensland councils will be the hardest hit. It is estimated that slashing these subsidies to the bone has added more costs—about \$5,000 to the cost of a new house. Once again, the state government's cost shifting is increasingly hitting local governments' bottom line. Councils face a hard choice: either they hike up their rates or they increase their infrastructure charges. As I said before, rather than passing on to ratepayers, often increasing infrastructure charges is the more attractive option to council. However, this is a false economy. On the Gold Coast alone, it is estimated that the property development industry is the lifeblood for 49,000 people. It is estimated that 13 per cent of the Gold Coast workforce is employed in development and construction. These are real jobs for real people on the ground, not the mirage of employment that the Premier paints with her 100,000 jobs when clearly when you look at the statistics there are 50,000 more unemployed than last year and 14,000 more since the election.

These development jobs may not be new. They may be just an hour a week and they may not be productive. These are the 100,000 jobs which the Premier promised at the election. As I said, they may not be new jobs, they may be as little as an hour a week and they may not be productive, whereas many of those with jobs in development and in the building industry are supporters of those opposite and are having to deal with the complications of unemployment caused by, amongst other things, these restrictive PIP charges that have happened under this government's watch.

We have these infrastructure charges which are levied by councils under PIPs, and they typically cover sewage, water, transport, community and recreation facilities, and stormwater infrastructure. Over the last decade the Integrated Planning Act, which I referred to, has made the process much more complex. The bill before the House does not address this issue but continues the system established under the IPA. As the provision of such infrastructure is the responsibility of councils, these charges are designed as user pays to ensure the development carries the cost of infrastructure provision instead of the general ratepayers. But the question many people are asking is: why are these charges so high?

Councils often calculate charges on planned density, not actual density, thereby imposing higher charges for infrastructure capacity which may not be used. I note my parliamentary colleague the honourable member for Coomera has a practical example of this inconsistency that he intends to speak on, or may already have spoken on. The infrastructure charge may also include costs compensating for poor planning and infrastructure provision in the past or catch-up. For example, there may be long overdue need for the provision of a new road or car park, and councils may allocate the cost of this

upgrade to the infrastructure charges of a new development. In this way, developers are carrying the costs for infrastructure that benefits the wider community and should be funded from the general rate base.

Many of those opposite and those in the community who have never been in business may not see an issue with these charges. They may well say, 'We need infrastructure. Someone must pay, so let's just slug the developer.' That is clearly what we have seen and has become an issue over the last year as many developers have found it difficult to move their product and have faced difficulties obtaining finance to enable them to progress on new projects.

This is a false economy. For example, as recently as June ALDI supermarkets cancelled two new centres because the Gold Coast City Council charges were \$1.5 million. This has directly impacted the lifestyle of those on the Gold Coast, as now two neighbourhoods are not able to choose to buy from ALDI. This adds to the cost of living and reduces competition in the grocery market—all of this clearly because of skyrocketing infrastructure charges. Thankfully, this has been recognised by the Gold Coast city mayor, Ron Clarke, and, as he said a month ago, they are going to do something about this.

The Gold Coast was calculating the charges on possible future planned density, not actual density, and it is estimated that ALDI was charged 10 times what some neighbouring councils charge. It is estimated the infrastructure charges for the development of a suburban shopping centre on the Gold Coast is around \$7 million. Just over the border in the Tweed shire the comparable cost would be \$4 million. Yesterday in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* it was reported a tupperware business run by a mum from home is facing \$10,000 in development charges. The question is: how can this be reasonable?

We have already seen developers moving their businesses away from the Gold Coast. Projects all over the coast have stalled. As I said, the Gold Coast City Council is starting to recognise that such a charging regime is short-sighted and counterproductive, but the changes are yet to be seen. Yesterday, again in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, the Gold Coast City Council released a report that found a critical lack of infrastructure and development on the Gold Coast. The council planning chief, Warren Rowe, went as far as warning developers they must start building. This misses the point, because such development will only occur in an environment that is less hostile to the private sector.

The South East Queensland Regional Plan has estimated that the current population of the Gold Coast of 466,500 will go up to 749,000 by 2031. Some 143,000 new dwellings will be required—a 70 per cent increase. The associated development infrastructure will be critical. Infrastructure charges, combined with the drastic land shortage on the Gold Coast, will make this aim very hard to achieve.

There have been numerous practical solutions on how to reform infrastructure charges on the Gold Coast—firstly, a possible restriction on infrastructure charges so fees never exceed a set percentage of the total project cost and, secondly, charging for the actual limit of the building works detailed in the development application rather than the potential of the site. Unfortunately, such moves by the Gold Coast are glacially slow and are not guaranteed to occur. Reforming the infrastructure charges regime in Queensland is critical for our future, and especially for other cities and other shires which may be inclined to follow the example that has been set so far on the Gold Coast. These efforts will improve the quality of life for Queenslanders and provide a long-term benefit for Queensland. It is time this government began listening to all Queenslanders. You may be assured that an LNP government will.

Before I conclude, in my MPI I talked about presenting the opposition's blueprint to parliament this morning. I seek leave to table that document in parliament now.

Leave granted.

Tabled paper: Integrity and Accountability in Queensland—Issues Paper No. 2 [895].

Mr DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (2.45 pm): I rise to speak to the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. This bill replaces the Integrated Planning Act, but there are no substantial changes to the act, which itself underwent many amendments over the years. I certainly applaud the new emphasis on sustainability, as indicated in the new title of the bill, although whether it meets the objectives remains to be seen. There are some important terms and definitions in this bill that are worthy of highlighting. Chapter 1 specifies that the purpose of the act is to achieve ecological sustainability. It also intends to take into account short- and long-term environmental effects of development including the effects of development on climate change. That intention needs to be taken very seriously, particularly when you consider the potential impact of climate change on coastal areas like the Sunshine Coast.

I believe it is worthy to note the concerns of environmental groups on the Sunshine Coast that the climate change provisions are general in nature and that there are no specific targets included for emission reduction. Without targets or quantifiable measures, how do we ensure that we are achieving sustainability? There is the danger that ecological sustainability will become a secondary consideration to other priorities. Importantly, will the government apply the same criteria to building its own infrastructure? Again, this is particularly relevant in coastal areas like the Sunshine Coast.

There is plenty of evidence around to show that climate change is going to have an impact. Our planning must reflect that. I draw attention to an excellent feature article on this subject by Kerrie Sinclair of the *Courier-Mail* just last week. The article points out that there is a lack of coordination between

governments at all levels including the federal government. We have developers going to court to force development on land that may be subject to future flooding. We cannot continue to say that because land is inside the urban footprint it is still appropriate to develop. We cannot continue to be driven by the notion of affordable housing. We have put strategies in place that will protect our community in the future.

I would like to also point to an article in the *Australian* last week in which Mr Bernard Salt discusses the implications of future population growth on our natural resources and our urban planning. I am concerned that we are tinkering around the edges with details in planning rather than looking at the big picture. I am also surprised to see that the minister has extended the consultation period for the draft South-East Queensland climate change management plan to October. Surely if the government is serious about this bill delivering sustainable planning it should develop a climate change plan first and consider the planning issues that flow from it.

This is a very large bill, but I would like to highlight what I see as some of the key issues. One of the matters required to be taken into account in making planning instruments and in assessing development applications is the following: 'supplying infrastructure in a coordinated, efficient and orderly way, including encouraging urban development in areas where adequate infrastructure exists or can be provided efficiently'. We are entitled to be cynical about this when we consider that only last year this government demanded that local councils bring forward development of greenfields sites in South-East Queensland. If the government were serious about sustainability, it would not be demanding fast-tracking of developments when it knows perfectly well that infrastructure is not there to support it.

There are some improvements in relation to the local planning scheme requirements of this bill. The introduction of 'strategic outcomes' replaces the previous 'desired environmental outcomes'. The explanatory notes of the bill suggest that these strategic outcomes should be environmental, social and economic and that measures should be identified to help achieve them.

What is not clear is what planning guidelines will apply and how a strategic outcome will be defined. These will be important issues for local governments in developing new local planning schemes. More importantly, clause 117 states that the process for a local planning scheme will be determined by the minister and described in regulations. We have no way of knowing what the regulations might specify until after the bill is passed.

This is a real issue for local councils that need to implement new planning schemes. The Sunshine Coast is a good example. There are currently three separate and quite different planning schemes for the previous councils. There is an urgent need for the council to develop a single, integrated planning scheme but it does not know what the new rules are. Past history suggests that it can take a year or more for the department to develop new regulations for planning schemes.

The bill also requires that a number of aspects of the planning scheme be standardised. To delay the development of the new schemes would be unacceptable, and I seek the minister's assurance that the regulations for these provisions will be determined as a matter of urgency. The provisions for development applications to be made under a superseded planning scheme have been tightened, with a maximum of 12 months allowed for lodgement of these applications compared to the previous two years. This is a positive change. Having more than one planning scheme in operation for any length of time creates unnecessary confusion and complexity.

The integrated development assessment system, IDAS, has also been retained in the bill with the addition of some significant new components. Unfortunately, the opportunity to streamline and simplify the development assessment process has been missed. We still have a very complex piece of legislation, even without the addition of the regulations.

Compliance assessment will streamline some of the elements of the development approval by allowing for an alternative to the current type of assessment. It will be particularly useful for simple developments or stages of development where assessment can be made against the technical criteria. Local authorities will need to be mindful that they cannot reject development applications under the compliance assessment and that they must meet the statutory time frames.

The introduction of deemed approvals for code assessable development applications has a number of implications. We are likely to see planning schemes with an increase in impact assessable development to avoid the risks associated with deemed approval. Currently, many of the code assessable applications relate to complex developments which require considerable time to process. They may involve a large number of information requests. This has an implication for council planning resources and decision making.

There is the potential for councils to refuse applications in order to avoid them being deemed approved. This may then lead to a larger number of appeals. Alternatively, there is the possibility that councils could use the deeming provision to allow unpopular or difficult applications to be put forward without debate. I hope the minister takes that on board.

Prohibited development has been reintroduced in this bill. One useful outcome of this is that it will prevent local authorities from having to assess inappropriate development applications and in turn avoid possible court appeals. However, only the state government may specify prohibited development. This removes the opportunity for local governments to set prohibitions that may be appropriate to their own area.

Again, we need to see the details of the planning provisions to comment on the prohibitions. There should be sufficient scope for the local government to incorporate prohibitions relevant to their area. Again, I draw on the example of the impact of climate change on developments as just one example.

The proposed changes to IDAS should improve processes at the local and developer level, but the bill has not addressed processes at a state level. The demands of various state agencies involved in the referral process are time consuming, are sometimes contradictory and can create unnecessary delays in decision making. This lack of coordination at the state level needs to be addressed. I note that my colleague the shadow minister has proposed some useful amendments to that end.

The bill also provides for expanded ministerial call-in powers. While clause 424 states that the minister may only call in an application if it involves state interest, the definition in schedule 3 of the bill is broad. It gives the minister a great deal of discretion in determining what constitutes 'state interest'. The minister is now also able to direct local councils to decide or not decide planning applications. When we consider the number of call-ins that have been made in the past 12 months—and I do note that there has been a change in minister since then—these are significant powers. I also have some concern about the extension of the powers under the bill to other eligible ministers who are not specified.

There are some victories for common sense in the bill, including provisions for applications and submissions to be lodged electronically and the removal of the need for assessing authorities to issue a show-cause notice prior to an enforcement notice. The requirement for development applications to include mandatory information should improve the standard of applications and assist in the decision-making process. However, what constitutes 'mandatory' should be clearly defined so it is not open to interpretation. This is important as the inclusion of this information is a condition of a properly made application. The last thing we want to see is more applications ending up in court due to a lack of clarity in the IDAS requirements.

I am pleased to see in chapter 9 of the bill that there is a requirement for additional information about development applications to be made publicly available. Residents and other interested parties are entitled in this day and age to be able to access information about new development applications that may affect them.

Chapter 8 of the bill addresses infrastructure. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that good sustainable development relies on effective infrastructure. This is the only way we will achieve good sustainable communities. I note that the minister will issue guidelines governing the infrastructure plan which will again be detailed in the regulations. It is a concern that we are debating this bill without knowing what will be included or not included in those regulations. It could well be an issue of the devil being in the detail.

Last year, prior to becoming the minister, the member for Stafford came to the Sunshine Coast and addressed a forum that I hosted called 'No development without infrastructure'.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr DICKSON: I appreciated you coming. He said that the government would not allow greenfield processes until appropriate infrastructure is in place. I would like to remind the minister of that commitment as it is very relevant to this chapter of the bill. I will no doubt be reminding him again in the future.

Greenfield sites have no existing infrastructure. Everything from water, sewerage, roads, public transport, schools, recreation and community facilities will need to be provided from scratch. There are a substantial number of clauses in chapter 8 of the bill that talk about infrastructure charges. There are no major changes compared to the previous act, but I believe there are issues that should be highlighted. One is the requirement for priority infrastructure plans for existing planning schemes to be approved by June 2010. This is an unrealistic time frame which places unfair pressure on councils. They face being unable to levy realistic infrastructure charges if they fail to comply. I understand that there are priority infrastructure plans that have been lodged with the state government for an extended length of time without being processed. This is not the fault of councils, but they may be the ones to suffer the consequences.

Subclause 636(2) and clause 672 confirm that infrastructure charges collected by the local or state government do not need to be held in trust. This allows government to use those funds for other purposes, provided it is able to supply the infrastructure when required. How do we ensure this is in fact going to occur? And what happens when the infrastructure cannot be provided when required? There have been instances where infrastructure payments have been made by developers for one area but used by the local authority in another area. This is clearly not what is intended in an infrastructure agreement.

Clauses 638 allows local authorities to supply different infrastructure from that specified in the priority infrastructure plan, provided the infrastructure provides the same standard of service. This makes sense if there are technological improvements or other changes that would make alternative infrastructure more appropriate. I am concerned about how 'same standard of service' might be interpreted. The clause claims that by requiring the same standard the community and those who have paid the infrastructure charges are protected. But is this to be done by consultation or purely decided by the local government? The community expectations truly need to be safeguarded.

With regard to clause 652 of the bill, the explanatory notes contain a lengthy discussion about the infrastructure charges in areas where infrastructure has not already been provided or planned—that is, greenfield sites like Palmview. They include provisions for maintenance and operation costs for up to five years in order to minimise the costs to local government. The explanatory notes go on to acknowledge those provisions by stating—

... create pricing signals that are designed to promote development in areas where infrastructure is available or planned to meet anticipated future development demands.

Ad hoc urban growth that occurs without regard for the planning and supply of essential supporting trunk infrastructure imposes significant costs on the community and, over time, constrains governments' ability to provide residents and business with necessary services and desired standards for those services.

The notes go on to say that this clause is about ensuring proponents, not the community as a whole, meet the additional infrastructure costs of unplanned development.

My question to the government is this: how is this going to work? The intention of fast-tracking greenfield sites was to create more affordable housing. Does the government really believe that if a developer is to meet the infrastructure costs these will not be passed on to the community? The residents who will be living in those developments will be hit for sure. What about the ongoing cost of maintenance and operating infrastructure that is not a local government responsibility? Developers may be called on to pay for roads, footpaths, parks and so on. They may even build schools. But who will provide the buses on the roads and the teachers in the schools? The state cannot push that responsibility on to the developers or the local government.

If the government is serious about the sustainability that this bill is supposed to deliver, it needs to look at its own role and responsibilities in the development and the provision of the infrastructure. These are not just matters for the developers and the local government. However, in looking at chapter 8 of the bill, one would be forgiven for thinking that providing infrastructure is just a matter of local governments apportioning charges to developers, who will then provide what is required. We have already seen a significant shift in infrastructure costs from state to local government through the reduction of grants announced this year in the budget. The impact of the withdrawal of water and sewerage grants will be particularly significant, as these are essential services in many communities.

It needs to be recognised that infrastructure costs are massive, particularly when they are required for greenfield developments. At the end of the day they are a cost to the community, whether it is homebuyers, taxpayers or ratepayers—or all three. An option for the government to consider in its regulations for this bill is provision in planning schemes for benefit area levies for new developments, and I stress that these are only to be options for new approvals—not retrospective applications in existing areas. These provide an option for residents to be charged additional levies for specific uses—for example, to commit the local council to a higher level of maintenance of parkland in that area. These levies would offer an additional source of much needed revenue for councils while providing residents with a guaranteed service. More importantly, residents know what levies they will be required to pay before they buy into the development. While overall the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009 is an improvement on the act it replaces, I believe there is still more to be done in order to ensure that planning and development in Queensland is truly sustainable and serves the needs of our communities.

I now turn to the need for a hospital and public transport to be delivered on the Sunshine Coast. We continue to hear about the push for development in Queensland and that many people are moving to Queensland. We understand the impact on the budget, and it is a huge impact. I understand what debt the government had prior to this growth spurt in Queensland, but now the rubber has to hit the road. We cannot allow development to occur on the Sunshine Coast until the government builds that hospital. Some 300 people from the Sunshine Coast are coming to Brisbane every day for operations, and the government needs to explain to its constituents in Brisbane that that is 300 beds that they are missing out on. More importantly, those 300 people have to bring their families from the Sunshine Coast to Brisbane to be operated on.

If that hospital is put in place it will allow the growth to continue, and that is going to be a tick in the box—that is, that is what the government wants. It is going to bring in more revenue and that in turn will be delivered to the coffers of Queensland's bottom line. The government needs to be prepared to fulfil the commitments and promises it made to the people of Queensland during the past two elections in a row. It said that it would deliver a hospital on the Sunshine Coast, and I think 2012 was the first date and then it was 2014. Consequently, the price has gone up as well in that it started at \$900 million, went up

to \$1.1 million and it is \$1.2 million now. It is probably going to be \$2 billion by the time this hospital is delivered on the Sunshine Coast, but until that hospital is delivered the development industry is dead on the Sunshine Coast and that is going to put a lot of people out of work.

The minister himself made that commitment when he came to the Sunshine Coast. He said that he would not allow greenfield sites to be developed without appropriate infrastructure in place. I have to deliver that message to him on behalf of Sunshine Coast residents. That infrastructure relates to the hospital and public transport. CAMCOS will not be delivered until 2020-something. Is that the right system we want delivered on the coast? What can be delivered now efficiently and expediently to the people of the Sunshine Coast region with the money the government has available? We need that hospital. We need public transport, and we need it yesterday. We have a population of 350,000 people. They do not have the same benefits as the people of Brisbane or the same benefits as the people of the Gold Coast.

I understand that the government has decisions to make on a regular basis to deliver certain pieces of infrastructure, but let us talk about need. What is really needed in this state? Are people's lives really important to this government? Is that what is needed? Do we need to save people's lives? That is the consideration I am asking the government to take on board, because I mean this very seriously. This House has a huge responsibility to the people of Queensland, and I think need has to be the most important assessment that we make. We need to keep Queenslanders alive. Do we need to play football? Do we need to swim in pools? No. But we need to keep people alive. How can the government explain that to the mums and dads who need to get in to a hospital for life-saving emergency surgery when they have to drive 110 kilometres to Brisbane for that necessary need? I ask the minister to please take that on board before he approves any other major greenfield sites on the coast, because if he does they are going to be levelled at him. That need needs to be fulfilled before he allows any future development to occur. I beg him to take that on board, because lives are at stake here.

Deputy Speaker's Ruling, Tabling of Document Out of Order

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Before calling the honourable member for Murrumba, I have a statement to read. I refer to the document tabled by leave by the Leader of the Opposition in his contribution to the bill. It has come to my attention that there are portions of that document that contain material which are sub judice in accordance with Mr Speaker's ruling this morning. In accordance with precedent, I therefore rule the document out of order as being sub judice and it is deemed not tabled. I refer to Speaker Reynolds's ruling of 9 October 2008 in this regard. I have ordered the Clerk to return the document to the Leader of the Opposition.

I once again say to all honourable members that they have a duty of care with regard to matters that are before the court. I would ask that the principles that are clearly outlined in the standing orders with regard to sub judice be strictly adhered to. This parliament does not want to do anything that in any way, shape or form intervenes in the quite proper conduct of a court proceeding. I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to please check with the Speaker before attempting to table the document again.

Hon. DM WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (3.06 pm): It was with some interest that we all listened to the remarks of the honourable member for Buderim. It appears that the view from the lofty heights of 'Mount Buderim' is somewhat less optimistic than the view from this side of the House. It appears that the view from the mount is that the changes are not that great and that the cultural shift that is introduced by this bill is not that great and there are a vast number of details that need to be addressed. That appears to be the view from the mount. It appears to me that what we have here is the same level of critique as in the Sermon on the Mount but without any of the beatitudes.

The honourable member for Buderim should note that there is a major cultural shift in this bill. It is a move from an eight-year planning framework to a 25-year planning framework. It is a move from the medium term to the long term, and it is a move from a local planning framework to a regional planning framework. It is a big-picture move. It is an opportunity to take into account all of the lifestyle issues that the honourable member for Buderim was raising. It gives planners that opportunity which they did not previously have to the same extent. For that reason alone, the honourable member should have applauded the bill. It does exactly, in fact, the things that he was saying needed to be done. For example, by virtue of the provisions relating to the recognition of state interests in the planning instruments, we have an opportunity for a greater degree of coordination with respect to the objectives that the state undertakes. I have spoken in this House on a couple of occasions about a number of the objectives that the state has that need to be taken into account in planning. I will just mention two of them, and I think that to a considerable extent this bill makes it easier to facilitate these.

The former minister for housing, who was very concerned to achieve housing for those who most needed it, introduced a large number of new programs. For example, he even acquired caravan parks to provide housing for people in emergency circumstances. I think we need to look down the track of ensuring that we do not have local planning policies or local planning initiatives that cut across the importance of providing housing for the people of this state. Very often in the past under previous legislation it has been in the interests of local councils to rezone caravan parks. Caravan parks provide

a very useful function for emergency housing for certain people. It was only after a certain caravan park was rezoned in my electorate that an influx of people came to me saying, 'We haven't got anywhere to go. We need emergency housing.' I could no longer say to them, 'There will be a place that you can stay at the Alpha caravan park,' or one of the others that have been rezoned. In the past, it was in the interests of local councils to rezone caravan parks, because they were sitting on prime development sites that in the long run would provide quite high rates as those sites could be used and would want to be used by people who wanted to live in luxurious circumstances.

It ought to be possible for the housing minister to put a veto on any determination that a caravan park or some other form of emergency housing be rezoned by the local council unless it meets the state's needs. The needs of departments such as the housing department are imperative and ought to be recognised as such. This legislation goes some distance in that direction and, in that respect, I applaud the minister.

In respect of transport, in this part of the world—and indeed in Australia—we have a culture that the development industry develops properties and then the government catches up by putting in infrastructure afterwards. In some other parts of the world—in some parts of Scandinavia and in particular in the German state of Bavaria—the culture is the reverse. In the German state of Bavaria, I am aware that it is not permitted for an area of land to be zoned for development until such time as it gets the tick-off from the minister for transport, who will pretty much give that tick-off only if the land is on a railway line. Thus you have in the state of Bavaria a situation where there are a large number of villages spread around and about the capital of Munich, all of them accessible via fast railway train, all of them within one hour by very fast train of the centre of the city. These villages are places where people live and commute to work. There are green belts in between those villages and the city. That is an optimum situation, but it is a situation that you can get to if the minister for transport has the capacity to determine whether a suburb can be built.

To be frank about some of the suburbs in the electorate that I represent, in large part they have been built by grasping capitalists who were interested in squeezing the last penny out of the wretched poor who were going to live in those residences and they gave no thought whatsoever to the infrastructure, or to the needs of the people, or to the kind of lifestyle that was going to be lived by the people who were going to occupy those dwellings. That stage of our history has passed, but we need to go in reverse. We need to ensure that development takes place where it is optimum rather than where the government comes in and cleans up the shortage of infrastructure after development has occurred. It is a matter of putting the horse before the cart instead of the cart before the horse. We should be ensuring that there are transport corridors in place in South-East Queensland before a suburb is built. The South-East Queensland plan goes a tremendous distance in that direction. This legislation is really effective because it takes the matter even further by giving recognition to state interests.

I would like to mention the thorny and difficult issue of injurious affection. The doctrine of injurious affection holds that if you change the environment around somebody's property in such a way that it diminishes the value of their property, then you are liable to compensate them for the expenses that they have incurred as a result. What that means in the context of the Narangba Industrial Estate in my electorate, for example, is this. The state government has said, with respect to the crown land in the Narangba Industrial Estate, that if somebody is conducting a special industry, or what used to be called noxious and hazardous industry, and chooses to move on, then the site will no longer be used for noxious and hazardous industry and will be transitioned to general industry. By that process the site can evolve into an industrial site that is compatible with the residential uses surrounding it. That is an entirely desirable situation and an entirely enlightened position by this government.

However, in respect of those sites on the Narangba Industrial Estate that are in the hands of private owners, the doctrine of injurious affection applies. That means that if the local council, which is responsible for zoning property, zones those properties as general industry, or announces that when the present owner moves on the site will be zoned as general industry, then under the doctrine of injurious affection they will be liable to provide compensation to the present owners. This bill addresses the issue of injurious affection. It reduces certain use-it-or-lose-it clauses from two years to one year. I think that is a very forward-looking view.

In future I think it will be necessary to revisit the issue of injurious affection. I think we need to do some more work and to have more conversations and more discussions with people about this issue. It is a difficult issue, but it has to be possible to enable environments to evolve in such a way that something, which is not compatible with a harmonious residential dwelling type of situation, can be made into exactly that, because in so many areas of the state we have residential dwellings being built right up against places that were once quite noxious point sources of pollution.

I might mention the point sources of pollution issue. One day I received a call from a resident in my electorate who said, 'We were sold this block of land and they did not tell us that it was quite close to Narangba Industrial Estate. Is this against the law?' I said to them, 'I have to tell you it is not against the law. Perhaps it should be otherwise, but it is not against the law.' Not long after that I got a call from some estate agents who said, 'We've had some people complaining because we sold them land that

was quite close to the Narangba Industrial Estate and we did not tell them. But we do not have to do that, do we?' I said, 'No, you don't have to do that. It is not required by law. Maybe it would have been an advisable thing to do to generate a bit of goodwill,' and the estate agent said, 'But if we did, of course, we wouldn't sell any of it.' There is the problem.

I wonder if at some stage we should be addressing precisely that point. My constituent makes the point that it would not be too hard a thing to introduce a legislative requirement to the effect that if there was a point source of pollution nearby, be it an industrial estate, a piggery or a chook farm—

Mr Messenger: Or a flying fox colony.

Mr WELLS: Or the close proximity of the honourable member who just spoke. Whatever the source of pollution might be, it should be incumbent on the estate agent to mention that to the prospective purchaser. I think that is something that we could give consideration to in the medium term.

This hefty tome is a visionary work. It has involved a tremendous amount of effort by the honourable minister and his predecessor, not to mention his departmental officers. It represents a degree of coordination that has not previously been seen in any planning instruments in the state. Indeed, Queensland planning instruments tend to win national awards, so what we are seeing here is the benchmark. What we are seeing here is indeed an impressive piece of work. The work of planning is always ongoing, it is always evolving. It is always going to be possible to do it a little bit better, but this is an advance that is a quantum leap and I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (3.21 pm): The Sustainable Planning Bill 2009 is 745 pages long. I believe that it is one of the largest bills that has ever been introduced to this House and I place on record my thanks to the Parliamentary Counsel, the officers of the department and the minister for all the work that has gone into it.

I will briefly talk about the purpose of the bill as it relates to my electorate. I dedicate my speech to the memory of Rick Natrass, who the Minister for Climate Change spoke about this morning. Rick was the local leader of the Greens party in my electorate and a good friend of mine. In my view he was Ipswich's greatest environmentalist and someone dedicated to the environment, which is what this bill is about. He was dedicated to animals and also to the preservation of koalas and trees in our community.

Rick's funeral was held last Friday. I was honoured to be invited to attend this very private funeral with his family and friends. At the service it was said that when Rick passed away all the brush turkeys, snakes, possums and birds in our electorate had tears in their eyes and I am sure that they did. He will be sadly missed by everyone in the electorate of Bundamba. In memory of Rick I would like to talk about managing the effects of development, particularly in the electorate of Bundamba. Rick and I shared the view that tree clearing in our electorate is absolutely and utterly disgraceful and something that as a community we cannot allow to continue.

Many people in my electorate know that I live in Collingwood Park. The incredible tree clearing that has occurred in the area in the name of development is, in my view, clearly unsustainable and should never have been allowed to happen in the first place. Tree clearing makes the area far too hot, particularly in Ipswich where we have a hot climate in summer and a cold climate in winter. Tree clearing for new houses to be built leaves no trees in the environment with the result that the houses are far too hot and have to be air-conditioned either at the building stage or not too long after because people simply cannot live in them without it.

We need to stop tree clearing in suburban areas, particularly around Ipswich, as it is not sustainable. It is not sustainable as far as people are concerned and also as far as our wildlife habitats are concerned. In fact, koalas and our other animals have been destroyed in this process of the rape of our environment and I think it has to be stopped.

In relation to section 5(1) concerning decision making being accountable, I was at Springfield on Saturday and I gave out many presentations for the Springfield fun run that is held each year at the Orion shopping centre. The biggest issue that was brought to my attention was in relation to planning decisions and the naming of parks being accountable to the community. In relation to the Springfield parkland, which all of us thought was going to be named either the 'Springfield Central Parkland' or the 'Springfield Parkland' or something that had the term Springfield in it, the state government gave the Ipswich City Council a \$5 million grant and a \$5 million interest-free loan, and \$10 million was also granted to the council by the federal government. To be honest, I have no idea what the Springfield Land Corporation or council contribution is, but I think that it is very important to place on record that there has not been very good accountability in this process. My understanding is that the community has not seen the final plans for this parkland and that the people of Springfield Lakes are outraged that the parkland is to be named the 'Robelle Domain Parkland', because it has been named after a developer and his wife and it actually makes no sense.

My understanding from talking to many people at Springfield Lakes on Saturday was that there was no consultation with the local community and that they actually want the name overturned and the community to decide the name of this parkland. The state government has contributed \$10 million and the federal government \$10 million towards this great parkland. I am sure that it will be an iconic parkland, but the local community wants to be consulted on the name. That is why it is so important to

have accountability in planning and development processes. They want the decision to call it the 'Robelle Domain Parkland' overturned, consultation in relation to it, input into the name, input into the decision making, input into the accountability processes and they want to be able to decide on it. I am sure that Councillor David Morrison and other councillors in the area would agree with me on this.

In relation to sustainable development, I have said in this parliament before that there are no churches at Springfield, Springfield Lakes, Augustine Heights—except for the Catholic school chapel—or at Brentwood and yet all of these developers claim that they are master planned communities. I say to everyone in this parliament and the community that they should take absolutely no notice of any advertising that says a development is master planned. It is not master planned for the community; it is master planned to get as much profit as possible for the developers.

In fact, I was very angry—and still am personally quite upset—at the fact that we have no churches in those particular suburbs. When the Ripley Valley Task Force got on its feet I personally rang all the churches and the Ipswich ministers fraternal and got them to buy up early because I did not want to see the same mistakes that happened in the Springfield area also occur at Ripley. It is my clear view that housing estates with no churches are not communities; they are just a conglomeration of houses which are testament to the greed of developers. Housing estates without scout dens and guide huts are in that same category.

We really have to ask ourselves as a community of people who have had the advantage of modern education and planners employed at state, Commonwealth and local government level: what in the hell are we developing here? Are we developing communities? Are we developing housing estates that have no soul? That is something that I do not want to be involved in. I know many people in my area who say that they bought the dream, they bought the advertising. In reality, what they bought is very different from what they thought they were buying.

In relation to Springfield, I place on record my condolences to the family of Lloyd Bird, a former coalminer, who passed away recently. In the Springfield area Lloyd Bird was almost single-handedly responsible for the revegetation of Opossum Creek. Last week I went to his funeral. Everyone there knew of his dedication to the environment, particularly the Opossum Creek area. Without his dedication to the revegetation of Opossum Creek, it would certainly have been a blight on our area.

I wish to talk about the railway line that is to be built in Springfield and Springfield Lakes by 2015. I have brought this up with several transport ministers and I will bring it up again today. The plan is to build a railway line through the Springfield central area. It absolutely amazes me that, while we talk about sustainable development and building decent facilities, apparently TransLink has planned for only 100 car-parking spaces, for God's sake, at the Springfield terminus. I am absolutely gobsmacked that so-called planners in TransLink, the Department of Transport or wherever they are can say that it is reasonable to provide only 100 car parks for the Springfield area. For heaven's sake! Over the years I have told them that people will come in from Redbank Plains, Ripley, Bellbird Park, Goodna, Collingwood Park and other areas and they will want to park and ride. If they do not change their ridiculous view on this and provide more car-parking spaces for us, I can imagine that, come 2015, the 100 spaces will be filled within the first 10 minutes of that car park being opened.

They tell me that they want people to catch buses to the bus interchange and then hop on the train. That is all well and good, but let me tell the House that I was once a young mother—

Mr Wells: You still are.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you. I am still a young mother, although I am not so young these days. I can remember when my older daughter was in grade 1 and my baby was in child care. There was no way in the wide world that I was going to get on a bus and drop my daughter at her primary school, get on another bus and drop my other child at family day care and then get on another bus to go to the train station. That is mindless stupidity and something that I will never support. I want the people of TransLink to pull their heads in and get real, because it is not right that they are going to provide only 100 car-parking spaces at the Springfield railway terminus.

I turn to section 5(1)(c)(ii) of the act, which refers to adverse effects of development on human health. Twice this year I have been hospitalised with asthma due to what my asthma specialist says is development in the Collingwood Park area, where developers have been allowed to ride roughshod over the local community. They have allowed dust and dirt to cover the local area to the point where people, including me, have become very ill and have had to be hospitalised. It is no fun when you cannot breathe because developers have been allowed to ride roughshod over the local community.

I would like to thank the Minister for Health. I wrote to him and brought this situation to his attention. Queensland Health officers came to Ipswich and laid down the law to the developers and got them to wet down the local area. While it might be good for the developer to save money by not having to compress or wet down the dust, what about the cost to the health system? What about the cost to me? What about the cost to families in my area that have children and others in hospital due to asthma and other respiratory diseases? It is just not on. Our community will not put up with it anymore.

For many, many years—I do not know for how long—we have put up with the disgraceful stink and smell that comes from the landfill at Swanbank. One day my electorate officer Stephen Axe and I drove to Swanbank and read the riot act to the local company. It was only then that they started to pull their heads in and do the right thing by the local community. I would ask all state members in this place to imagine if a whole area in their community, whole suburbs involving 5,000 or more people, could not hold family barbecues on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon because the smell was so bad that they were vomiting. Can members imagine if that happened in Brisbane? Can members imagine if that happened on the Sunshine Coast? That was the disgraceful situation that we were expected to put up with. I must say that the company did do the right thing after being outed by me and people such as Joe Llewellyn and other decent retired coalminers in our area.

I shake my head over the issue of housing choice and diversity. There is no need for developments that face the west to be approved by councils. For God's sake, we are living in 2009. Developments should face north. In my view, companies and people who want to build houses should be forced to build those houses facing north. There is no sense in building houses that are hot and that are constructed out of heavy materials such as brick and tile. It is absolutely unbelievable that that happens. In areas like Ipswich we need lightweight houses that take advantage of a north-facing aspect and the prevailing winds and that are built with the passage of the sun in mind.

I turn to section 5(1)(g), which relates to community involvement. It seems to me that what happens in my area is that if a developer owns land somehow that gives them the God-given right to cut up that land in any way, shape or form that will give maximum profit. I believe that is a disgusting and disgraceful way to plan. It appears to me that our local council does not pull them into line by saying that that is not the right thing to do. Some constituents have said to me that it is unforgivable that people, and particularly the developers, are allowed to cut up blocks of land to 150, 160 or 180 square metres. It is all right if you live in really salubrious areas of Brisbane, or places such as Coogee or Bondi, where everyone has plenty of money and can go to the beach and enjoy themselves. There are lots of things that they can do; they can go to restaurants and so on. However, most of my constituents do not have a lot of money. There is no entertainment. They cannot get out of the suburb. Taxis will not come to Augustine Heights or Springfield Lakes. There are very few restaurants and few people can afford to go to them anyway because most people are mortgaged up to their heads. It is ridiculous.

There has to be far more community involvement. Communities should be involved in all planning decisions. In fact, I would like to see the developers throw open their plans to communities even before they land on the tables of the councils. They should be able to show the council that they have gone to the community and that they have the approval of the community for what is now being presented to the council. I believe the communities should be involved in all these planning processes. Why can we not have community impact statements? Why can we not have health impact statements? I have brought this up before. Why can they not be mandated in legislation or mandated in by-laws? In my view, it does not matter who owns the land; we should all be able to express concerns in relation to that land. Once the houses are built, they will be there for generations. Therefore, we all must have responsibility for this in our local communities.

I come back to my original point in relation to master planned communities. I do not believe any community is master planned. Where are the cemeteries? Where are the crematoriums? Don't people die in Springfield Lakes? Where do we put them? Where are the churches where you can have christenings? Where can you have funerals? Yet they are called master planned communities. It is a disgrace.

I hope that this Sustainable Planning Bill will be something that we as a community in our local area can hang our hats on. I am calling on all of us to get together on this and to take no notice of the advertising—'move up', 'live up', 'whatever-it-is up'. In my view it is nothing more than advertising. If anyone needs to know what the planning is for the area, they should contact their state member of parliament because at least we will tell them the truth. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (3.40 pm): I rise to speak on the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. But, first, as an Ipswich boy—I was born in Ipswich—I commend some of the comments of the member for Bundamba.

Community is incredibly important, and good planning does involve the support of good communities always. Having worked very strongly in my own community over many, many years, I know how important community is in terms of dealing with the community and planning appropriately.

The member for Bundamba mentioned park and ride—an issue very close to my heart. I have sympathy for those at Springfield regarding that issue. It does amaze me that this government has banned any additional park and rides within 10 kilometres of the city. In my area, Taringa, Indooroopilly, Sherwood, Graceville and Chelmer railway stations, including Corinda Railway Station in the member for Mount Ommaney's electorate, all will have no additional park and ride. This is a situation in relation to which my office has constantly been bombarded with complaints. While it has been a long time since my children were that young, I well and truly remember trying to transport them. I have great sympathy for young mothers who have to get their children to the train station and cannot walk, obviously cannot cycle and need to ride and need a park and ride.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr EMERSON: I take the comment from the member for Everton. Obviously he is concerned about the massive gap at the Indooroopilly Railway Station. Clearly, it would be unsatisfactory for his constituents, as it is for mine. This government continues to ignore this issue even though it was raised more than three years ago and before the government spent \$26.5 million of taxpayers' money upgrading the station. The Deputy Premier claimed at the time that this station set the standard for infrastructure projects into the future by this government.

As I said, I am talking about the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. The Integrated Planning Act was introduced more than a decade ago in 1997. It was introduced in an effort to give greater certainty and clarity of planning, especially as our state then was and is now dealing with extraordinary levels of growth. But clearly the bill has reached its use-by date. Flaws have become more apparent and also community expectations have meant that IPA no longer meets their requirements. I have been to numerous community meetings over many years at which issues about IPA have been raised and its failure to deal with planning and development issues.

The previous legislation has failed to deal with the more complex issues that now have to be taken into consideration in the planning and development in our towns and cities, including the very important environmental considerations. This has led to—and I am sure the minister would recognise this—too much time being taken to deal with issues, increased costs for developers and increased costs for the community when they have to object to developments. The system has become inefficient, awkward and unresponsive to the community and the business community's needs and desires.

This has also led to fairly acrimonious dealings between developers and the community. In my area I know that people are not opposed to development as such but they are looking for appropriate development. What we need is appropriate legislation to help both sides of the argument come to some sort of resolution. I am pleased to see that many of these shortcomings have been dealt with in this bill before the House. As I said, I have worked with community groups in my electorate over many years and I understand the frustrations they have felt, along with the developers. The minister has said that the new regime will 'reduce unnecessary red tape' with the introduction of a 'user-friendly fast-track system'. He said that the new act will see 'applications out the door within a week'.

The minister has indicated a desire to streamline the process of approving proposed developments, especially with the system of deemed approvals. Greater efficiency in dealing with applications should be commended. While builders and developers may welcome these changes, it is important, as I indicated previously, that the role of the community is acknowledged in recognising and determining the shape of our communities. The people who live in the communities should be determining how the areas they live in look and grow.

Clearly there are many challenges ahead of us driven by the unprecedented population growth we are seeing. It is a difficult challenge for all of us. Every member in the south-east corner is facing this challenge. We have to be aware that it is not something we can put our heads in the sand about and ignore. I see the minister nodding. He understands those issues as much as I do. This dramatic growth in Queensland's population is detailed in the South East Queensland Regional Plan, in which we see a need for an additional 156,000 dwellings forecast by 2031. From memory, we have about 350,000 dwellings at the moment, so that is a fairly massive increase over that period of time.

The pressure on housing affordability and availability and on the environment requires timely, good quality and transparent planning and development frameworks. Our planning does need to be more efficient, simpler, user friendly and we need to clarify the roles of planners and councils and what the expectations may be of the community and residents in an area. I mentioned community engagement before. This is particularly important in improving community engagement in local planning and in the preparation of planning schemes in order to enhance community confidence. Community confidence in legislation is vitally important. It must be seen that the laws provide consistency in what they are looking for and that the community is involved in reaching an outcome.

I would like to speak on two particular aspects of the bill—firstly, deemed approvals. I was particularly interested to see the comments of the Property Council's Executive Director, Steve Greenwood, on the issue of deemed approvals. Mr Greenwood said that deemed approvals, where certain development applications were automatically given the green light if they were not decided by a set deadline, would ensure that valuable jobs and resources were not lost because applications were not unduly held up. In its submission, the Property Council recognised that the new laws might fuel community anger. The submission stated—

While we recognise the likely resistance by local government and some community groups to a system of deemed approvals, we believe that such an approach would deliver real, tangible benefits.

At the very least, it would encourage government to focus its regulatory resources on those issues of greatest community significance, and reducing regulation of development that offers little community risk.

Under this bill, if most code assessable applications are not decided within time, they will now be deemed to be approved and a council would have 10 days to apply conditions or standard conditions would apply. This is designed to discourage councils from sitting on controversial applications without making a decision. As I said before, efficient processing of applications is to be commended.

Governments are, after all, elected to make decisions and that is what we expect them to do. But there is the risk of undesirable outcomes with deemed approvals. Firstly, this change may lead to unintended consequences of some decisions being rejected as they approach the time limit. Councils with limited resources may decide that they have not had the time to fully anticipate what is involved in the application and will play safe and decide to maintain the status quo rather than make a considered decision because they have not had the time.

Secondly, there is no provision for exceptional circumstances where such timeliness may not be met. Again, as I mentioned, small councils—not the Brisbane City Council, which has large resources; as we all know, it has a budget bigger than Tasmania and South Australia combined—across our large state do not necessarily have the resources to deal as efficiently as the Brisbane City Council with some of these applications. Obviously, cases of natural disaster and other events may mean that it is impossible for a decision to be made. As a result, projects that should be rejected may be deemed approved.

The other point I would like to make relates to ministerial call-ins. The bill includes provisions for ministerial call-ins. Such provisions are not intended to be used regularly or often—I see the minister nodding—but they are often used by this government. There is no right of appeal against ministerial call-ins. Ministerial intervention powers are expanded under this bill, including being able to direct councils to decide or not to decide applications. The past 12 months have seen 12 ministerial call-ins and there have been increasing tendencies for ministers to use this power. I do note that earlier in the debate the minister told this House that he does not have such an itchy trigger finger. Time will tell, but I do take him at his word on that.

One other point relates to the renaming of this bill—‘sustainable planning’ instead of ‘integrated planning’. The concern here is that this is just spin by this government, which has a tendency to do this for PR purposes. Sustainability is a core principle of the Integrated Planning Act as well as the current bill, so the name change does not make any real difference to the substance of the bill. Given the name change and the previously mentioned South East Queensland Regional Plan, I do raise the issue of the suburb of Indooroopilly in my electorate which has been identified under the South East Queensland Regional Plan as a principal regional activity centre. What that means is that residential development densities under the plan in this area would be 120 dwellings per hectare or greater. I believe that any higher density in Indooroopilly must be centred on the railway station so that it maximises the use of public transport and does not add to traffic congestion. Hopefully by 2031 that problem will have been solved. If the LNP gets into power it will be solved. My concern is that the Bligh government or a Labor government may not solve it even by 2031, given that it has ignored this problem for so many years thus far.

Secondly, any higher density must be coupled with an effort to enhance green space and preserve the lifestyle that makes Brisbane so attractive. The Bligh government has repeatedly refused to rule out selling off its 11-hectare DPI site at Meiers Road for development when the research facility moves out in 2011. Given the high-density targets I have mentioned, it is vital that the DPI site is preserved as green space. In announcing the preservation of a road reserve adjacent to the site, the Premier said that she was aware of the local community’s concerns. I do know that the local community has spoken to the minister about this issue as well, and he is well and truly aware of the concerns from locals about the loss of this green space and the future of this site. The Premier said that she shared the community’s concerns to preserve the natural habitat in the area and was committed to maintaining green space and expanding parkland in Brisbane. The Premier and the minister can demonstrate that commitment by preserving the DPI site. Rather than allowing this land to be lost to development, it should be preserved as green space as an investment in our community’s future. We are not making any more green space, and this opportunity cannot be lost. As the member for Bundamba mentioned earlier, community is important. This is a great investment in our community.

Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (3.54 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. First of all, I congratulate the shadow minister and member for Gympie for his outstanding contribution so far and for what I know is still to come. When we talk about infrastructure and transport infrastructure, it is amazing that we all seem to be singing the same song. TransLink has ceased a bus service in my area. I was almost promised a week or so ago that it was thinking about returning the bus service to the area. Indeed, I was even given an undertaking that by Friday of last week I would have some answer on that. Numerous phone calls were made yesterday and today, and I still do not have an answer. TransLink has a lot to answer for, and I support the two previous speakers in their views that TransLink should get its act together.

As I said, I rise to contribute to the debate on the Sustainable Planning Bill. My contribution is a straightforward one. It relates to infrastructure charges. I have become aware, as the member for Surfers Paradise mentioned, of an incredible example of infrastructure charges based on planned density, not actual density. The application has been made to the Gold Coast City Council for the construction of a workshop as an addition to an already council approved and operating motor vehicle sales centre. In the construction phase of the workshop, there is no doubt that jobs would be sustained in the construction industry. Once complete, this workshop would add an estimated 10 new jobs to the

employ of the motor dealer—full-time jobs, not part-time jobs and not one-hour jobs. These full-time jobs are desperately needed in the local area. They are jobs that would see a boost to the local economy. 'Jobs, jobs, jobs.' Where have we heard that before?

Why haven't these jobs been created? It is due to infrastructure charges that have been determined under the only priority infrastructure plan that has been signed off: the Gold Coast City Council priority infrastructure plan—the one that has been alluded to by the member for Gympie and the member for Surfers Paradise. I am told that this case has been described by those in the industry as one of the most absurd assessments ever seen. In assessing the application, the Gold Coast City Council applied the maximum priority infrastructure plan charges of over \$2 million. These were based on planned density, not actual density. Indexed at today's costs, the figure is over \$2,200,000. This is not for a \$10 million building—\$2,200,000 in infrastructure charges is for the construction of a workshop at a cost of less than \$1 million. The total cost including infrastructure charges is \$3 million for a building that would provide 10 new jobs in the area. Some \$300,000 per new job is totally unviable.

This case has been going on for two years. Let me give you a brief example of how these amazing figures can be conjured up. Let us assume that an application is made to build a workshop as an extension to an existing approved facility. However, we find that the particular block of land could have a multistorey building on it. The Gold Coast City Council, under the priority infrastructure plan, applied the charges as though a multistorey building were being built. Clearly, you would say, the property owner has a choice: build a viable workshop that will accommodate an existing tenant's needs or, after the expiry of the tenant's lease and any option to renew, consider the possibility of building a multistorey building, except there is not a choice. The infrastructure charges being applied make the workshop totally unviable. The result is an unhappy landowner, an unhappy tenant, no new jobs and no additional services offered to the local community.

If sensible infrastructure fees were charged two years ago, I have no doubt that this project would be complete and those 10 full-time jobs would have been created. We see comments and opinion in the local Gold Coast papers where the Gold Coast City Council blames the state government for these charges. The inference is that it—the council—has no choice. I call on the minister to come out and state categorically that the state is not holding the Gold Coast City Council to ransom by forcing it to charge these fees at the maximum amount. I have no doubt that once this supposed impediment is removed we can get on with the job of building on the Gold Coast.

We can see some jobs, jobs, jobs created on the Gold Coast. We can see the much needed infrastructure developed around the northern Gold Coast corridor. The Coomera town centre is desperately needed. Many developments in and around the town centre are needed.

The development of a workshop to create 10 new jobs and provide services to the local community is also desperately needed. We can only hope that common sense will prevail on this one and, for that matter, we can only hope that all development applications on the Gold Coast are treated fairly and equitably so that we can get on with building the northern Gold Coast and get the northern Gold Coast moving.

In closing, I know that the bill has many worthwhile elements to it. However, I also note that the member for Gympie will be moving amendments necessary to provide more clarity and certainty to some of those elements. I look forward to the government's support of the opposition's amendments to this bill. On that basis, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr HOOLIHAN (Keppel—ALP) (4.00 pm): At the outset I would like to congratulate the minister and his staff on the Sustainable Planning Bill. To look at it it could almost be a Dan Brown novel to equal or outrival his new publication.

The Sustainable Planning Bill really has had a long germination. It goes back many years. Planning in Queensland has for many years been a dog's dinner. I say that very kindly with respect to dogs. I lectured in law and the environment at Central Queensland University for a number of years. The hardest thing to get across to people studying environmental law in particular is the issues surrounding the Integrated Planning Act and a system known as IDAS. I see that IDAS is dealt with in this legislation. I would have liked to see it disappear. It would give some real thrust to applications to councils.

I think it is very instructive to consider some of the background to the Integrated Planning Act. The Integrated Planning Act came about because of a number of pieces of legislation, most of them entitled 'Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act'. It imposed a variety of requirements on councils. We had differing start dates. We had differing dates for a whole series of things.

It was offered in 1995 by the then Borbidge government as a sop to developers. It was not passed and did not come into law until 1997. It started out to streamline development, particularly on Gold Coast. Sadly, it did have a major impact on a lot of areas other than the Gold Coast and it even impacted on smaller areas.

Sustainable planning is something to which this state has to aspire due to the fact that by—and I heard the figures yesterday—the year 2036 we will have approximately eight million people living in Queensland, many of whom will live in the south-east corner. There are still not a great number of people who want to live outside the south-east corner. Whether that is because of development or

whether it is because of a lack of services, I do not know. I certainly would not swap my current residential area for any other. I know that a lot of people I am friends with would not swap our area for an area in South-East Queensland.

Unless some real thought is given to planning and the method by which planning proceeds then this state is destined to fall apart in terms of both the built environment and the social environment. The future for future generations will be very poor.

The length of the bill is probably indicative of the need to address every requirement that is currently able to be considered as possible. We find this with other legislation too, but there is no doubt whatsoever that at some future time there may need to be some reconsideration of the detail provided in this bill.

I have had some long discussions with my local council, the Rockhampton Regional Council, and its civil operations manager who was originally the engineer for Livingstone Shire Council. He and the council have expressed to me considerable satisfaction with the underlying terms of this bill. They are very pleased with the way that it has given them certain rights and abilities to reject applications. It does spell out very strongly how councils must approach applications for subdivision.

It has always been a concern, particularly in country areas, that if one owns—and I heard the member for Bundamba mention small areas—100 acres and there is a requirement on the council to cut off three one-acre blocks because they want to give it to the family, suddenly they find that it is not given to the family but becomes a money-making enterprise. At the end of the money-making enterprise we have four people living there who all want the infrastructure and services. They cannot be provided to a small number of people.

Planning has to be orderly. Planning has to be sustainable. It has to be undertaken in sequence so that where there is infrastructure people can use that infrastructure to get the most benefit out of where they live. Where there is no infrastructure there has to be adequate planning to allow infrastructure to be installed. It can only be installed if both local and state governments have the ability to meet the costs of installing it.

All in all the bill gives the councils and the minister the power to take all necessary actions. As I said, there may well be a need for small changes in the future. It gives the councils the power to take all necessary actions to allow for good planning—good infrastructure planning and good environmental planning. I believe that, properly applied and properly followed by all councils throughout Queensland, it will provide very good planning for future development.

Ms van LITSENBURG (Redcliffe—ALP) (4.07 pm): I rise to support the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. This bill reforms Queensland's planning and development system. It follows on from the current Integrated Planning Act 1997, which is being reformed due to the booming Queensland population and the housing affordability issues.

This bill proposes a wide raft of changes that will hone the current legislation and make it more effective and reflective of the needs of councils and communities, providing more consistency and certainty and giving the community more effective access to appealing against approvals through the Building and Development Dispute Resolution Committee which will not incur the huge costs of going through the Planning and Environment Court.

Most importantly, efficient, responsive and effective planning and development legislation is a key factor in sustaining vibrant, healthy economies. Since 1997 the Integrated Planning Act has given Queensland the edge in economic development. It is the only planning and development assessment legislation in the nation that seeks to comprehensively integrate planning at state, regional and local levels and to integrate development assessment across such a broad spectrum of issues. This ensures applicants benefit from a transparent and accountable development assessment process and receive a single, integrated and bankable approval upon which to base their investment decisions.

These advantages of comprehensiveness and integration have been carried forward and strengthened in the Sustainable Planning Bill. The importance of healthy economies in building a sustainable future is recognised in the purpose of the bill. The bill explicitly identifies that one of the three pillars of sustainability is economic development and states that economic development occurs and that—

... there are diverse, efficient, resilient and strong economies (including local, regional and State economies) enabling communities to meet their present needs while not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs ...

One of the key means of delivering good planning outcomes in the bill is through integrating state, regional and local policy under a local government planning scheme. The bill requires planning schemes to include policies for identifying and protecting resources such as energy and agricultural resources. For example, the current state planning policy on extractive resources aims to protect significant extractive material deposits, their buffer areas and haul routes from encroachment by incompatible development to ensure these vital resources are protected and can be developed in the most sustainable and efficient way, thereby keeping costs down in the building and construction industry.

The bill also makes provision for both a local government and the minister to take decisive action in implementing planning or regulatory controls immediately to ensure serious adverse economic conditions do not occur. For example, in the past there has been the implementation of a temporary local planning instrument to facilitate the use of a showground to provide temporary housing in connection with a major project, ensuring the economic viability of the project was not jeopardised by a lack of available housing. The vital improvement of key infrastructure to the economic development of the state cannot be understated.

The bill includes a process for ministers or local governments to designate land for key infrastructure, thereby speeding up the process for its delivery. The destination arrangements are subject to important checks and balances to not only ensure appropriate levels of environmental assessment and consultation but also allow decisive action to be taken. In the case of a minister designating land, this may happen if the minister considers, among other things, the delivery of the infrastructure facilitates efficient allocation of resources, satisfies statutory or budgetary commitments to its delivery, or satisfies community expectations for the efficient and timely supply of infrastructure. Efficient and effective development assessment is at the heart of a healthy economy, particularly in Queensland where development to meet rapid migration and economic growth is so critical to our economy.

Time is money is a common catchcry for the development industry. Unnecessary delays in the development assessment process mean holding costs that can affect the viability of a project. The Sustainable Planning Bill rises to these challenges by continuing and strengthening the integrated development assessment system, the IDAS, to provide a world-class development assessment system. There are several improvements to key parts of IDAS to make development assessment more timely and efficient, with flow-on economic benefits. A key measure introduced through the bill is that certain code assessable applications will be deemed to be approved if they have not been declined within the allocated time. Deemed approvals are a significant reform and ensure that assessment managers fulfil their accountabilities. Deemed approvals mean vastly improved assessment times and greater certainty for the industry, with faster on-the-ground delivery of appropriate developments.

Quick approvals for applications already consistent with the community endorsed planning scheme will provide significant economic development and resulting community benefits. This will be the case in my own electorate of Redcliffe, where there is a lot of backfilling development where old homes on large blocks are being replaced by two- to four-storey unit blocks, increasing the housing density. Despite the global financial crisis, there has been a steady continuation of these smaller developments as well as several more high-profile mixed use developments, including shopping centres, short-term accommodation and dwelling units. I believe this continued development demonstrates that Redcliffe's economy is on track and will take off in the near future. These developments will bring more people on to the peninsula to live, but they will also provide greater shopping density and enable us to niche market our shopping precincts as stand-alone shopping destinations. It will increase the number of jobs on offer on the peninsula, giving local people more employment opportunities and ensuring that they can have a better standard of living. That is an outcome I am working hard to ensure the Bligh government can deliver in the coming years.

The whole application stage of IDAS has been reformed to give much clearer guidance to applicants about what is expected of them in terms of the information supplied with their development application. While this raises the bar in terms of the quality of applications coming into the system, it will lead to savings throughout the process by minimising the number of information requests and delays by incomplete or invalid applications. If applications are incomplete, assessment managers will have to give applicants a notice stating exactly what needs to be fixed in order for their application to be accepted and applicants will be able to make these changes within a month without paying any further fees. Applicants will also be able to go to the Building and Development Dispute Resolution Committee to resolve disputes with assessment managers about whether their application is complete or the accuracy of acknowledgement notices. This will help overcome delays and costs associated with not being able to get a valid proposal into the system. The circumstances in which applications can be changed have also been clarified and expanded to allow applicants to change applications in response to submissions without penalty. This ensures that applicants can respond to community concerns proactively without being financially penalised.

The bill includes new arrangements for reviving lapsed applications in some cases. This addresses problems with the current legislation where applications have been inadvertently allowed to lapse due to oversight or misunderstanding, incurring more cost for applicants. Applicants have also incurred delays and costs in the past if they have missed out on identifying one or more referral agencies for an application. The bill allows a missed referral to be fixed without having to submit a new application or start the IDAS process all over again. The application will simply wait until the referral process for the missed referral agency catches up with the rest of the application.

One of the biggest innovations in this bill is the new compliance stage. This introduces a special fast-track tick-and-flick approval process for minor or technical matters which are either low risk or capable of a technical solution. Many types of developments that now need code assessment will in

future be suitable for compliance assessment, saving time and money for applicants. Another major cost for industry and the community is infrastructure charges. Under IPA, a transparent system of infrastructure charges was developed. I commend the minister for his efforts to ensure that all local governments prepare a priority infrastructure plan soon so that they can start using the more transparent and equitable charging arrangements. These arrangements have been carried through and strengthened under this bill.

The government has listened to the concerns of industry and included several innovations, such as consistent approaches to increasing charges for inflation, providing cost credits for existing uses and perhaps most importantly arrangements for phasing in new charges to ease the burden on industry. I commend the minister for this bill. As a councillor in a previous life, I understand how this bill will plug the gaps in the current IPA scheme. The Sustainable Planning Bill will continue the strong economic leadership provided by the Bligh Labor government. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr WATT (Everton—ALP) (4.20 pm): I rise to also speak in support of the Sustainable Planning Bill. This bill represents the most significant overhaul of Queensland's planning legislation in over a decade. As I think all members of the House are aware, Queensland continues to record huge population growth. I remember only a few years ago that people were struck by the fact that Queensland's population was growing by 1,000 people per week. We are all amazed that, despite economic slowdowns, the population continues to grow even faster. It is now growing at the rate of 2,000 extra Queenslanders per week. We have talked previously about the challenge that that rate of population growth provides to any government in terms of service delivery, but it also provides a significant challenge in terms of planning developments in the future. This level of population growth makes it incredibly important that our planning legislation is robust, contemporary and balances the economic benefits that arise out of development with the social need for affordable housing and also with the environmental need to retain the green spaces that we need to preserve our wonderful lifestyle and for our biodiversity to thrive.

This bill also, for the first time, ensures that our state's planning legislation considers the impacts of climate change. I think that that is a particularly noteworthy aspect of this bill. The bill provides a more flexible and less process driven planning regime to the one that is set out in the current Integrated Planning Act, which this bill will replace. This bill will also provide a clearer and faster development assessment process while giving due consideration to the environmental consequences of proposed developments.

In recent years housing affordability has been a key concern, especially for younger Queenslanders. Although over the past couple of years throughout Queensland the increase in the price of houses has levelled out to some extent, I know that for many young Queenslanders buying a first home still remains a significant challenge. Before I entered parliament, as part of my work I was involved in discussions between local governments and developers, given that they were two of the major participants in housing developments. Those discussions often revolved around how we could resolve the issue of housing affordability. Not surprisingly, local governments and developers chose to blame each other for the problem. Developers would say that local governments took an unreasonably long time to consider their development applications and would not adequately free up land for housing development. On the other hand, local governments would say that developers were land banking—that they were accumulating large amounts of land and refusing to open them up to development and that the reason local governments sometimes took a long time to evaluate assessments was that developers would often not supply the information that was required for local governments to consider those applications. Members could imagine how tiresome those arguments became. I know that the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning has also been subjected to those sorts of discussions in the past.

This bill seeks to overcome this blame game by driving a culture of working together to consider development applications quickly and fairly. It requires applicants to provide the information required for local governments to make quick decisions, but it also requires local governments to assess applications in a timely manner. Equally, the bill also requires the community to get involved at early stages of the assessment of a development rather than waiting until the last minute to raise objections.

The current emphasis on community engagement, which we see in the soon to be overhauled Integrated Planning Act, is picked up and improved on in this bill. In my own community of Mitchelton, the Brisbane City Council is currently going through a neighbourhood planning process. This process results from the current planning regime of the state government which is found in the Integrated Planning Act. I think it is a very good process for the community to be involved in and I commend the Brisbane City Council for undertaking this process in different parts of Brisbane. Of course, I should point out that this process began under administrations previous to the Newman administration, but I give credit where it is due. It is good that the Newman administration has continued with this approach.

In the Mitchelton area that I live in, my constituents are not so much concerned about the increased number of residents who are likely to be accommodated in Mitchelton. I think that everyone in Mitchelton understands that it is an area that is fairly close to the city, has good public transport links and many other social amenities. So the issue is not so much about the number of people who are looking at

being accommodated in Mitchelton in the future. However, the really big concern that people have is the impact of those additional residents on local traffic. Like most of the other suburbs of Brisbane, Mitchelton experiences some level of traffic congestion, particularly on Samford Road. I have begun discussions with the Brisbane City Council to ensure that the neighbourhood plan takes note of those concerns and makes an effort to not only deal with the extra traffic that will be thrust upon local roads as a result of this plan but seizes this opportunity to improve upon the traffic situation that the people of Mitchelton experience at the moment.

I raise this issue because this community engagement process, which is such a feature of the Integrated Planning Act, will be not only replicated in this bill but also improved upon. I commend the minister and his department for their efforts to improve on that process. This kind of community consultation that we are seeing in the Mitchelton neighbourhood plan will be improved as a result of this bill.

The other main issue in this bill that I wanted to mention was how it deals with environmental concerns. One of the key changes to the planning regime that is ushered in by this bill is the increased emphasis on sustainability. A purpose of the bill is that the planning system should develop sustainable outcomes. Obviously, sustainability is a very broad term. One interpretation of it is that we need to take into account environmental impacts such as the effects of development on climate change. The fact that this bill is going to pick up climate change as a key feature and ensure that development applications are considered in relation to their effect on climate change and the effect of climate change on those development applications is, again, a really noteworthy aspect of this bill. I believe that, once again, it places the government at the forefront of dealing with climate change and dealing with environmental risks to our future. It really demonstrates the contemporary nature of the bill. It shows that the Bligh government is at the forefront of ensuring that we do not just try to mitigate climate change—and we are all aware of the many efforts that this government is undertaking to ensure that we mitigate the effects of change—

Mr Finn interjected.

Mr WATT: As the member for Yeerongpilly points out, that wonderful document Q2 provided groundbreaking and challenging targets for the Queensland community in relation to climate change. This bill demonstrates that we are not just about mitigating climate change; we are also about making sure that our legislation adapts to the challenges of climate change and makes sure that our planning practices and development assessment practices also adapt to the threat posed by climate change.

As I mentioned, sustainability is a fairly broad term. It does not just mean climate change. One of the other aspects of sustainability, which we can see picked up in this bill, is its increased emphasis on making sure that public transport is a key consideration around planning regimes. I want to mention that point because a couple of the other suburbs in the electorate that I represent—at the northern end of the electorate—are Albany Creek and Eatons Hill. They are wonderful suburbs with wonderful people, but one of the key issues that the residents of those suburbs raise with me on a regular basis is the very poor public transport service that is provided in their part of the electorate. Obviously, part of the reason for poor public transport services is the level of funding. On a number of occasions I have tried to convince the Moreton Bay Regional Council, which is the council area that those suburbs fall into, that it needs to start investing in public transport, just as the Brisbane City Council and, to a lesser extent, the Gold Coast City Council do. Part of the issue is funding levels, but the other part of the issue in ensuring that communities receive good public transport services is the need to make sure that suburbs are designed in a way so that public transport can get in and out.

Unfortunately, when the suburbs of Albany Creek and Eatons Hill were first designed, inadequate consideration was paid to public transport being able to negotiate those streets. Anyone who takes a drive around the streets of those two suburbs will see that they contain windy, narrow streets with little chicanes and lots of cul-de-sacs. Cul-de-sacs are good for people who live at the end of them who want a quiet life, but they are very bad for those people who depend upon public transport to get around. There is a very large number of people in the community who want to use public transport because it is a cheaper and more environmentally sound way to get around. I am pleased to see the emphasis on public transport that we see in this bill. It will ensure that the residents of future developments will not suffer the problems that the residents of Albany Creek and Eatons Hill face.

I ask the minister to address another concern that has been raised with me in relation to this bill. A couple of people involved in local conservation groups in my area have raised concerns that the expedited process of considering planning applications that is a hallmark of this legislation may result in environmental considerations not being given adequate consideration. I have had some discussion with the minister's office and have been assured that that will not be the case, that while on the one hand we are trying to push forward with these applications and ensure that they are considered quickly to promote economic development, adequate consideration will be given to environmental issues. I would like an assurance from the minister that we will not see green interests being bulldozed in the sole interests of economics. It is a balancing act and I am confident that this bill reflects that, but I would like the minister to elaborate a little bit on it if he could. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (4.31 pm): I rise to make some comments in regard to the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009 before the House. This bill replaces the Integrated Planning Act. The minister has coined the term that it is evolutionary rather than revolutionary. I was in local government when the Integrated Planning Act was introduced in 1997 and I recall full well that the Integrated Planning Act was indeed a revolutionary change. It was a fundamental change to the way we in small regional local governments operated and it caused an enormous degree of change right throughout the local government sector.

The fact that the minister has coined that term, that this bill before the House is evolutionary rather than revolutionary, will be welcomed by those people who still work within the local government sector and who remember full well the revolutionary change that was brought about by the Integrated Planning Act in 1997. The Integrated Planning Act was introduced with promises that it would address many of the issues that had plagued local governments, developers and local communities. In a great many respects much of that promise was realised. However, I think the Integrated Planning Act has been misused over a long period of time by those who want to be overly pedantic and those who want to stifle, for whatever reason, the proper processes that should surround planning and development throughout those communities. I am pleased to see that some of those opportunities for people to be overly pedantic have been addressed within the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009 before the House this afternoon.

There are a couple of areas that I want to restrict my comments to: firstly, part 3 of the bill before the House that deals with the concept of regional plans and the broadscale planning that has been undertaken in one form or another across regional areas within Queensland for quite some years now; secondly, the effect that this bill and the Integrated Planning Act before it have had and continue to have on small regional communities which, of course, make up all of my electorate. I want to deal with those two things in their turn.

Firstly dealing with the issue of regional plans, I think it is very timely that the government has moved to strengthen the process of regional planning, particularly to address an issue that certainly has some currency within my shadow portfolio of Mines and Energy. The increasing conflict, for want of a better word—and I regret that conflict is probably an accurate description—between opposing land uses in areas such as the Darling Downs is something that has to be addressed by government and presents a challenge to all of us who are involved in the compilation of regulation to ensure that that issue can be addressed in a way that respects everybody's rights but also provides processes to ensure that Queensland and Queenslanders generally are able to benefit from the development that can potentially take place there.

The issue has come to the fore because the Darling Downs has long been recognised as one of the outstanding fertile farming areas not just in Queensland or Australia but in the world. It is known as the food bowl of the state. In recent years the fact that that outstanding farming area overlies extensive resources of coal and gas has brought another issue to the fore and that is how those industries co-exist with the agricultural industries that the Darling Downs has been famous for for quite some time. Obviously the mining industry, especially the coal industry and the emerging gas industries, and other mining sector industries have co-existed with landholders in Queensland for many, many years and have done so very successfully across a range of industries.

What is different about the Darling Downs situation is that it is probably the first time that those industries have had to face the challenge of co-existence in an area that is so densely settled and so tightly held by many generations of traditional owners or particular families and landholders of the land that is now in question. Certainly across my electorate, in the Bowen Basin and further north and west, the mining industry has been able to co-exist and while that co-existence has caused a degree of angst at times and landholders have always had to face the prospect of having to buy another property or move to another property if their land was found to be needed for the mining industry, there was an uneasy co-existence that has developed over a period of time.

There has also been a recognition in the community generally—a growing recognition over recent years—that we have a responsibility to protect areas of high value. When those areas are areas of high environmental value, I think the argument is over. The community generally accepts that the mining industry needs to respect areas of high environmental value. The statutes that we pass through this place and the processes that the industry works with certainly reflect that.

I want to take this opportunity to make our position very clear, that areas of high agricultural value should attract the same recognition in the community generally and in the mining community and deserve the same type of protection as has been accepted as the norm for areas of high environmental value. It presents a challenge for those of us who are involved in this type of regulation, but I think the integral tool in meeting that challenge is to have a regional planning process that provides some degree of statutory certainty for both landholders and the mining industry to allow that co-existence to develop and to provide the outcomes that everybody wants to see.

The regional plans that have been in existence to date, especially in areas like the Darling Downs and the broader areas of Queensland, have not had the regulated land use that is required for that sort of planning certainty. As I understand it, two regional plans do have that element of regulated land use. Certainly the SEQ plan in South-East Queensland was the first to address the issue of regulated land use and the FNQ plan similarly has done so, albeit in a slightly different way. I believe that element can provide the solution for conflicting land use issues in areas such as the Darling Downs. The regional planning process that is needed must ensure that areas of special agricultural value are identified and are not considered for mining, just as is done with areas of special environmental value. Of course, the difficulty will be when the planners come to draw the lines and define the areas. Of course, that is the same difficulty that is faced in planning processes no matter the issue that is being addressed. That issue is what causes the difficulties. Meeting the expectations of the various parties in regard to that certainly will be a challenge.

Just as I think this sort of protection needs to be reserved for the very best and the most special environmental areas, so it is that I think the sort of protection that I am proposing and that the LNP has adopted as our policy should be reserved for the very best and the most special agricultural areas. I know many landholders. I know that over time people acquire an emotional attachment to their land. Just about everybody thinks their land is special. Just about everybody suffers a degree of angst and is distressed by the arrival of a mining company, a mining project or, indeed, any proposal for the compulsory acquisition of land. I have spoken at length in this parliament about the need to recognise the property rights of those people. I have spoken at length about the necessity to amend the compulsory acquisition of land act to better respect those property rights. So it is with the regional plans that, hopefully, will regulate land use under this sustainable planning act. I hope that those regulations properly respect the rights of the landholders.

The bill before the House this afternoon is welcomed because it is a step in the right direction that will assist those of us who have to deal with conflicts that have arisen. It will give us an opportunity to try to put in place in regional areas a planning process that addresses those issues, that respects the property rights of the long-term landholders and also the property rights of the competing land users, in this case the mining industry, and that allows a balance to be struck between the need to exploit those resources for and on behalf of the people of Queensland and the need to respect the productive fertility and the special values of a particular agricultural area.

I turn to the second area that I want to talk about in consideration of this bill—that is, the effect on small rural communities of the Integrated Planning Act and its evolution into the Sustainable Planning Bill. As members would recognise, my electorate is composed entirely of small rural communities. There are about 12 communities, all of which are small by anybody's definition. The largest community would be Biloela, which has a population of about 5,500. Most of the other towns have populations of between 1,000 and 3,000. They are small communities. In those communities the planning issues are very different from those of the large metropolitan areas. We recognise that. As far back as when I served in local government, we recognised that the challenges we faced and the questions that we had to consider were very different from what people in similar positions had to deal with in Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Cairns or any major metropolitan areas. Regrettably, I do not think those differences were well enough recognised by the architects of the Integrated Planning Act and, regrettably, I do not think those differences have been well enough recognised by the architects of the bill before the House this afternoon. Now the onus is on the practitioners who will implement the processes within this legislation to properly recognise those differences and to take account of them in the decisions they make and the conditions they apply.

I have seen some quite ridiculous examples, but one that sticks in my mind more than most related to a development application made by a farmer's co-op called Monto Grains Cooperative for a change of use of a grain silo located eight or 10 kilometres south of Monto. The town planning consultant who had the job of considering that application somehow felt that the Integrated Planning Act required there to be a certain number of car-parking spaces provided. Somehow that related to the shed that the Monto Grains Cooperative was proposing to use for a different purpose. We are talking about a grain silo located in the middle of a big area of land. However, a very young and very keen town planning consultant was adamant that, to get the change of use approved, a certain number of car-parking spaces had to be provided. There were all sorts of codes about what a car park consisted of in terms of bitumen, markings and so on. It was plainly ridiculous, but it is a good example of the sort of thing that can happen if the practitioners who implement legislation do not take a realistic view of what is reasonable in the circumstances. That is what needs to happen. Not only this legislation but all legislation that we consider needs to be broad enough to allow the practitioner, the person who is making the decisions, to properly decide what is reasonable in the circumstance because the circumstance varies very markedly across the state. The circumstances with regard to planning in my electorate are very different from the circumstances with regard to planning in the minister's electorate. The legislation has to be able to take account of those differences.

In large urban areas, subdivisions are a major issue. They are also a major issue in our communities, because there is a very obvious need for rural residential subdivisions in our areas. A lot of small communities depend on the inflow of people who move to small communities for the lifestyle.

They need somewhere to live and they are seeking something other than a thousand square metre urban block. Small communities need to be able to provide that lifestyle to allow those people to contribute to their economic base. I know that there have been some bad examples of rural residential subdivision in Queensland. Certainly I have them in my electorate at places like Proston and the Gaeta Road at Mount Perry. Everybody knows that they are bad examples, but we should not use those bad examples to exclude the good options from being developed. We should look to those bad examples as a lesson in what not to do when we set out to allow communities to develop a rural residential lifestyle that can be an important part of their economic base.

There is one town in my electorate that I think is a great example that people should go and have a look at, and that is the little town of Wondai. The former Wondai shire council—under the stewardship of Percy Iszlaub, the mayor at the time, and David Carter, who is now the mayor of the South Burnett Regional Council—did a great job in the planning of Wondai and its immediate surrounds. It ensured that there was a broad range of options for people who wanted to come and live in Wondai. In the year before last, Wondai had 32 new houses built in the town and its population increased. People can go there and they can choose to buy a small urban block, they can choose to buy a one-acre block and they can choose to buy a five-acre block. All of those options are available and in a planned and well laid out way that ensures that Wondai can benefit from the tree change trend—people who want to opt out of the crowded urban life and live in a small community where they do not have to worry about security, where they do not have to worry about parking, where they do not have to fight the traffic to get to the shops.

A range of communities can benefit from having those choices but are curtailed by the state planning policy, which prevents the development of those rural residential subdivisions in an overrestrictive manner in many cases. I would like to ensure that other towns in my electorate can follow the example of Wondai and be able to implement a planning regime that is suitable for their area that provides good development options for their particular area and provides great opportunities for Queenslanders to enjoy the lifestyle that all of us who live there know and appreciate. The shadow minister has indicated that we will not be opposing the bill before the House. It will no doubt not solve all of the problems but hopefully it will be a step in the right direction.

(Time expired)

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (4.51 pm): At the outset I want to add my support to the comments made by the member for Callide. I, too, have an electorate that has some 12 small regional and rural communities all of a similar size. I basically support everything the member has said. I rise today to contribute to the debate on the Sustainable Planning Bill. I note from the outset that the opposition will be supporting this bill but with amendments. Clearly a bill of this size and complexity has a significant number of aspects that could be considered. But I want to begin by exploring the name change, a very obvious but relatively inconsequential amendment to the Integrated Planning Act.

'Sustainable' and 'sustainability' are words used frequently these days and some would say so frequently that they have lost their original meaning. What is that meaning? The Oxford dictionary online says that industry, development or agriculture is sustainable when it avoids the depletion of natural resources. The generally adhered to definition—particularly when it comes to planning and development—considers the need to balance environmental, economic and social factors of our society.

Others are not so concise in their definition. Another reference to sustainability suggests that it is regarded as both an important but unfocused concept, a bit like 'liberty' or 'justice', and a 'feel-good buzzword with little meaning or substance'. Sceptics already abound when it comes to sustainability, and rightly so. I came across one blog that had the following to say, 'The word sustainable has become so pervasive that its usage is often just plain silly.' The author goes on to note the following real-life examples: 'sustainable toothpaste', 'sustainable tourism', 'sustainable economics', 'sustainable music', even 'sustainable sports cars'. I agree with the author as he continues—

There's no doubt that doing things in a truly sustainable way is a noble goal. Accomplishing a worthy goal in a way that's infinitely repeatable is best, and that's what sustainable really means ... It's still a good goal, and as such, sustainability deserves not to be diluted into a meaningless buzzword. Thus, true environmentalists should be the first ones to object to the misleading pop-culture usages of the word that we see every two minutes.

The blogger concludes—

When you hear [the word sustainable] be sceptical. Figure out what they're really trying to say, and what their motivation is. And for [goodness] sake, don't buy any bone-powder toothpaste just because it says 'sustainable' on the package.

So, despite being an advocate for true sustainability—the sustainability I was taught through my science degree—I, as the blogger warns, am sceptical when I hear it used. I am hopeful that this name change—from the Integrated Planning Act to the Sustainable Planning Bill—is more than an opportunistic attempt to cash in on the latest buzzword, particularly given that the core principles of 'ecological sustainability', as defined in both the current act and the bill before the House, have not changed at all. I hope there is more substance to the name change than just acknowledging the increased use of terms such as 'environment' and 'sustainable'—used some 82 times in the current act but some 1,253 times in this bill.

I am hopeful because, if the sustainable planning enshrined in this bill is, as it should be, largely about getting the balance right between environmental, economic and social drivers, then Glass House would be a real test case. At present Glass House clearly balances protected green space, viable agricultural land, economic productivity and community living. If anything, the environment and agriculture are on the positive side of the ledger by a long, long way. But, as the government has taken a regional approach, as it should, to planning and development, this positive imbalance in Glass House goes a long way to achieving ecological sustainability across the entirety of South-East Queensland. But the trick is to maintain this balancing act, and that is where the enactment of this legislation hopefully comes into play.

I note that, as the minister announced in his second reading speech, the proposed bill will be supported by an associated package of regulatory and statutory guidelines that will provide further guidance about the implementation of the legislative changes and enable more flexibility into the planning system. Also, the proposed legislative framework supports the long-term benefits of effective state and regional planning to guide localised planning with clear linkages across all plans and policies, and it ensures an array of quick switches to move appropriate development applications through the system more efficiently and effectively. I am also very cognisant that the day-to-day operational implementation of this bill will fall largely to our regional and local councils—councils such as the Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast regional councils.

Considering all of this, I would like to address a number of issues that, firstly, will enhance the 'ecological sustainability' of Glass House and Queensland more widely—issues that cut to the chase when it comes to protecting the environment and protecting prime agricultural green space; secondly, will assist local councils in developing their own plans and schemes; and, thirdly, will hopefully deliver better outcomes for all in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast. Whether it sits under the sustainable planning regulations or legislation overseen by this department or by DERM, the government, if it is serious about sustainability, needs to reconsider its system of voluntary conservation agreements. In this state there are really only two options. The first is Land for Wildlife.

Land for Wildlife supports the maintenance and enhancement of native flora and fauna on private land through cooperative agreements and advisory services. It also aims to encourage landholders to integrate nature conservation with other land management activities. But members are not supported financially. Instead, they are supported through workshops, quarterly newsletters, property visits and assessments, phone support and incentives such as free plants and access to propagation facilities. Yet, for very little in return, landholders spend one to two weeks a year on habitat management on their Land for Wildlife properties. Land for Wildlife landholders are contributing some \$6.7 million worth of time on habitat management and spend approximately \$3.5 million per year to achieve nature conservation outcomes.

The other arrangement is a formal conservation agreement with DERM. Landholders in this instance get some financial assistance in the form of pro rata reimbursement of transfer duty and/or land tax. Both options fall well short of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water in New South Wales, particularly under its Conservation Partners Program. If a landholder enters into a formal and legal conservation agreement in New South Wales, they receive property visits, management advice, rate exemption, money for on-ground work, signage, technical notes and newsletters, field days and local networking. A number of my constituents who have land in both jurisdictions cannot believe that we here in Queensland do not offer similar compensation and assistance for undertaking such voluntary arrangements. These individuals and families take pride in the role they are playing to protect and conserve nature corridors in our state, complementing the work of the state itself, and yet they get so little in return. That is hardly sustainable.

Similarly, if the government is serious about sustainable planning, it will give more proactive support when it comes to alternative agricultural practices. From the outset, though, let me be clear: I am not calling for a relaxation in our biosecurity or food safety legislation. I am instead calling for flexibility in improving acceptable alternative agricultural practices, and I would like to give just one example. Joe and Karen Herron live in Conondale, on a beautiful property at the confluence of the Mary River and Elaman Creek—yes, the same Mary River this government is fixated with damming; a finer example of unsustainable planning you will struggle to find. Joe is a former dairy farmer and he is pretty innovative. Already he has experimented with Redclaw. Now he wants to consider free-range chickens and eggs. Fantastic, you might say. Well, you might until you realise that current regulation requires Joe to pay an \$18,000 fee just to have his application considered by council—considered, not approved; considered. Why? Because owning more than 20 chickens is considered an intensive farming practice. What farmer in his right mind would outlay that kind of money with no guarantee of approval?

Why are we making it so difficult for our farmers? We lock up their land in regional landscape, which is not a bad thing given our need to feed ourselves and to do so from as local a base as possible, but then we lock up their ability to innovate and move with changing farm practices. Joe does not want to start up a battery shed operation with tens of thousands of chickens. He wants to run a couple of

hundred free-range chickens offering the eggs and poultry products to the local market in and around the Blackall Range. Why, when we are talking about sustainable planning, are we making it so difficult to truly be sustainable?

On the same note, a number of constituents have discussed with me the difficulties they are facing in keeping their family farm viable. Our current farmers are ageing. Their assets are tied up in the property, and they have been advised that because of their assets they cannot receive the pension. They are also unable or unwilling to sell the family farm in which they have invested so much time and energy. Not that long ago a farming family could subdivide a small acreage block to allow the next generation to move onto the property to assist in running the farm and to provide support to their ageing parents. Yes, the rule was abused, but we threw the baby out with the bathwater in this case.

I would like to read from a submission to the SEQ regional planning process made by the Martin family of Beerwah—

I would appreciate it if you would read the following to give you some background information on what we believe to be a perfectly reasonable submission.

Approval has already been given by Caloundra City Council (now Sunshine Coast Regional Council) for a second dwelling to be built on our farm of approx 13 hectares. Council whilst being sympathetic cannot give subdivision approval as the S.E.Q Regional plan restricts them from doing so.

We are self funded retirees aged 75 & 69. There are still some fruit trees on the farm to be kept tidy, rider mowing and some chainsawing of tree limbs, heavy work of that nature which is beyond us.

Our daughter and her husband who are both in good jobs have been advised by the bank they would get approval for a house loan but need title to do so.

The submission to cut off this one block is to give to our daughter and husband, for nil payment, land on which to build. They would then be closer to help us with the heavy chores as we get older.

The block in question is between our farmhouse and neighbours house with street frontage. From that house, up Bell Rd to the intersection with Steve Irwin Way, is all housing blocks on both sides of Bell Rd all with houses already built. This proposed dwelling would be in keeping with the street plan.

...

I understand the intent of the S.E.Q Regional Plan is to stop indiscriminate development of producing land. As our farming life has wound down to mainly maintenance, we feel our plan of a one off house block for family is being unfairly denied by the S.E.Q regional plan.

...

Our feeling is that we are little people caught up in a law to protect farming land. Governments in Australia, both State and Federal encourage people in their old age to stay in their family home. In our case this could be accomplished with family nearby.

We hope you will look favourably on this request and would appreciate hopefully approval with feedback and suggestions on how to get 1 block rezoned.

To us as a family this request seems very straight forward and compassionate.

We await your consideration and reply,

Kind regards,

RS & JM Martin.

Unfortunately, the Martin family are not alone. I also met with the Harvey family from the Glass House Mountains who are in exactly the same situation. These families have been penalised because some individuals did the wrong thing. I call on this government, as part of its regulatory guidelines under this legislation, to reinstitute a ruling, albeit a tighter one than we had before, that gives these families the straightforward and compassionate solution they are looking for.

Before I conclude, I would like to spend some time considering this government's attempt to plan for sustainable growth. I am very conscious that my comments are limited due to current CMC considerations. So, rather than focus on the additions to the urban footprint in the SEQ Regional Plan, let me instead look at some glaring omissions. This government claims to respect interurban breaks. It claims to promote transit oriented developments. It claims it wants to maintain the heritage nature and feel of hinterland communities. It claims it wants to stimulate local economic growth, and it claims it wants to reduce reliance on vehicles and on pollution. If those claims are correct, then wouldn't the government have supported the Sunshine Coast Regional Council's proposals for sensible, minimal growth in the rail corridor—growth that would have had immediate access to a soon to be upgraded rail service that will deliver passengers to principal activity centres like Caboolture and Strathpine or even the CBD itself in the south and Nambour in the north? It makes sense, doesn't it?

If that is the case, then properties owned by the Skerman family at Beerwah and the Horne and Young families in the Glass House Mountains would have made logical additions to the urban footprint. Each of these families owns land adjacent to the rail corridor. In the case of the Skermans and Youngs, the land is adjacent to the existing urban footprint. In the case of the Hornes, it is a classic infill option on Railway Parade, Glass House Mountains that already has developments to its north and south, and town water and sewerage running past its front door. But, no, in the electorate of Glass House the

largest growth is slated for the communities of Wamuran, D'Aguilar and Woodford—communities that rely on a single transit corridor, the D'Aguilar Highway. As members would well appreciate, given I have raised the matter on a number of occasions already, the D'Aguilar Highway already has question marks over its safety and its ability to support such population growth.

This bill talks about sustainable planning, but in practice it and its associated regulations leave me scratching my head. What is more, for farmers like the Hornes of Glass House Mountains or the Webbs of Taintons Road at Palmwoods who have residential developments on their doorsteps, there is nowhere for them to go. Every time they start up their tractors, they cop a barrage of irate phone calls. Every time they undertake necessary farm practices such as spraying, they are accused of environmental vandalism by their neighbours—neighbours they did not have as little as two years ago.

The government has to do more to work through the problems it has created by arbitrarily drawing a pink line on a map. For starters, it needs to apply its own filter of sustainability to its decision making. If you believe the title of this bill, the Sustainable Planning Bill, then it aims to deliver on some lofty and worthwhile goals. Unfortunately for me, the proof will be in the detail. Whilst I commend this bill to the House, I ask the minister to give careful consideration to the matters I have raised when developing the associated guidelines that will inevitably support this bill.

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (5.08 pm): I rise to speak in general support of the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009, which has been introduced by the government. This bill will repeal the Integrated Planning Act 1997 and amend an additional 63 other acts. In 2006 the then minister for environment, local government, planning and women, the Hon. Desley Boyle, member for Cairns, announced a review of the Integrated Planning Act 1997 with the release of the discussion paper 'Dynamic planning for a growing state: options for improving Queensland's Integrated Planning Act 1997 and the integrated development assessment system'.

The findings of the review were made in the Planning for a Prosperous Queensland agenda released by then minister for local government, planning and sport, the Hon. Andrew Fraser, in August 2007. The planning reform reference group was established to advise the director-general of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning as to how to implement the Prosperous Queensland agenda.

The Sustainable Planning Bill is as a result of that review and the recommendations of the Prosperous Queensland agenda. The purpose of this bill is to attempt to achieve ecological sustainability by managing the process by which development happens, managing the effects of development on the environment and coordinating and integrating planning at the local, regional and state level.

The bill seeks to address the issues in the Queensland planning and development assessment. It seeks to streamline the existing planning and development requirements in an effort to reduce the time frames and costs associated with development applications. The bill also seeks to standardise the planning process to make it easier for developers to operate over multiple local council boundaries. The bill attempts to streamline, clarify and provide greater flexibility and responsiveness to the existing planning and development framework systems. While this bill seeks to streamline processes, it brings its own complexities and difficulties.

As a result of the increased infrastructure and development throughout Queensland we now see a more lengthy and costly process for development applications. We have previously seen major development applications being lodged with incomplete and insufficient information. Council is then required to issue requests for this information from the developers. Developers then have a 12-month grace period, which can be extended further, to provide that information.

It is as a result of these numerous incomplete applications such as these lodged with councils that we end up with lengthy delays. This is an abuse of the approval process which results in an inefficient, timely and costly system. It is no wonder the public always complain about the red tape when our councillors and bureaucrats are tied up issuing requisitions to developers when the information should have been provided in the first place. Council is then tied up with numerous development applications that are not as comprehensive as they should be and the whole process takes far longer than is actually required. As a result of incomplete applications, other development applications are also held up. The government's answer to the increased time frames is to include a deeming provision which provides that if council does not reject an application within a certain decision-making period then certain applications will be deemed to be approved.

It is interesting to note that this government is trying to place time frames and deeming provisions on local councils and not on state government agencies when the government itself fails to respond to certain issues and make decisions within a timely manner. As we have seen with recent legislation introduced in this House, sometimes it is all too easy to put things into the too-hard basket when a decision has to be made and action needs to be taken.

While this deeming provision is aimed to discourage our local councils from dragging their feet on contentious issues without making decisions, this could backfire. We could see development applications that should be rejected actually being approved simply because council is ill-equipped to

deal with the number of applications being submitted, whether this is as a result of understaffing, staff on leave, the complexity of proposed developments, a sudden increase in applications, community emergencies or other factors or a developer's abuse of the process by means of overinformation. Another consequence of the deeming provision might just be the increase in applications being rejected merely because the time limit is approaching and council is unable to deal with those applications.

The Sunshine Coast Environment Council has raised a few concerns regarding the legislation including that tighter time frames will also restrict the amount of community input to proposed developments. The Sunshine Coast Environment Council has also expressed that the time for notice to the public and lodgement of objections by local residents and community members should be extended to allow for proper community consultation.

This bill will require applicants to ensure that their applications are comprehensive and complete, in an approved form, contain all the relevant information and meet the mandatory requirements that are being assessed. However, I note that the bill will still allow applicants a grace period to provide further information if requested, but this grace period has been reduced from 12 months to six months. Further, the bill will still allow developers to have their development applications approved without supplying information requested by the council.

Although the bill will require certain mandatory requirements to be in an approved form, too often information required to be provided is omitted because the standard forms can be easily manipulated and changed and there is no regulated form. The amendment to the bill that will be moved by the member for Gympie, the shadow minister for infrastructure and planning, will ensure that the mandatory requirements of development applications are prescribed by regulation, although I note that the regulations to the bill are yet to be released. The mandatory requirements must be prescribed and consistent in order to limit disputes. The Sunshine Coast Environment Council expressed great concern that the mandatory requirements should expand to cover environmental information, including environmental information specified by referral agencies as mandatory or specified by assessment agencies including council as mandatory in the local government planning schemes.

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council's corporate plan and ambition is for the Sunshine Coast to be Australia's most sustainable region—vibrant, green and diverse. The people of the Sunshine Coast want to continue to preserve the character and the livability of the region and increase the sustainability of the area. In order to maintain this vision and sustainability, developers need to be accountable and must ensure that developments are ecological, address environmental concerns and incorporate sustainability principles.

The bill allows for ministerial call-ins. While there are a couple of constraints on the ministerial call-in power, there is no right of appeal against such ministerial call-ins. The bill also expands the ministerial intervention powers, including the ability to direct a local council's decision on approving or rejecting applications. In exercising the powers and considering applications the minister is only required to consider what is in the state's interest.

This is another example of how the Bligh government is not accountable and certainly not transparent. With no right of appeal against the ministerial decision, the people of Queensland cannot question the decisions of those who are in the pockets of those with money, including those developers who want their applications approved. This government talks about being accountable.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: With every speech I make in this place, why is it that when I start talking about accountability and integrity it gets the government members offside? Is it something they do not want to hear?

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): Order! The House will come to order.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BLEIJIE: They are still going, Madam Deputy Speaker. They cannot cope hearing the words 'integrity' or 'accountability'.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Over all the interjections, I put to the House that perhaps I have hit a nerve. Perhaps I have hit a nerve when I am talking about accountability—

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I have hit a nerve. What is the answer to this accountability and integrity crisis in Queensland? Put on a chef's hat and go on *MasterChef Australia* and cook up a storm?

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: If the government members will allow me to continue, under this bill the state government will have the ability to approve applications in some instances rather than the council. As a result, developers can get their applications through faster and their investment will be paying off. The ministerial call-in provision gives way to reinforce, as the Queensland Conservation Council secretary Simon Baltais describes, 'the unholy alliance between government and developers'.

We have constantly spoken in this place recently about government transparency and accountability. The relationships that this government and its members have with developers should be questioned. The fact that this legislation allows some development applications to leap over local government approval into the lap of the department is wrong. Without making any reflection on the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, I believe that this process has the potential for abuse, regardless of the government in power.

I understand business and their irritation with red tape, but the ability for development approvals to rely purely on the state government is dangerous, particularly this state government. While I understand the frustration that developers have in being held up by councils in the approval process, it is not a simple rubber-stamp process. Various studies need to be carried out to determine the long- and short-term viability of subsequent developments that are approved by the state. I also believe that the state should have the power to recommend alterations and amendments to developments that do not fulfil all of the necessary obligations.

In my electorate we have recently seen such a case. The proposed Palmview development was initially released by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council in March before it was rejected by the adjacent community. It was then slightly amended and released as a second position paper by council. Despite huge concerns from many sectors of the local community about certain aspects of the proposal, including the adverse effects on local infrastructure, the position paper was endorsed, unanimously I might add, by the council in June of this year. It is now before the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning. In a letter to the minister I have outlined the direct impacts this proposal will have on the current Sippy Downs community.

It is this current system of accountability for development proposals that is sturdy and rigid and caters for developments such as Palmview to be thoroughly examined at both the local and state government levels. If the bill is passed it will have significant implications for all stakeholders in respect of both the process and the planning outcomes. These stakeholders cannot be certain what the implications will be because the key operative provisions of the bill are deferred to guidelines and regulations which have not, to my knowledge, been published.

I talked before about some issues on the Sunshine Coast. We have particular concerns about the fast pace of development of greenfield sites, particularly the Palmview development, which was announced last year as a greenfield development site. Council was all but ordered to come up with a development application and a plan for that particular region. The Palmview development caters for some 14,000 new residents in my electorate, not to mention new residents to Caloundra South. In relation to the South East Queensland Regional Plan, the extra burden of the growth is in my electorate on the Sunshine Coast.

I note that earlier today the member for Buderim outlined the minister's commitment that the government would not allow development to take place on the Sunshine Coast without having appropriate infrastructure in place. I say to the minister that this will apply to the Palmview development. There is no infrastructure to cater for 14,000 people on this greenfield development site. You cannot put 14,000 new residents through the heart of a master planned community; you cannot split a master planned community such as Sippy Downs into two with a green link—all for the benefit of a community that does not yet exist. If this development gets state government approval it will do just this. It will have a major impact—without the appropriate infrastructure—on the Sunshine Coast.

Of course over the last 10 or 12 years we have heard about the CAMCOS rail. It has been continually delayed. We now have plans for a multimodal transport corridor in my electorate to be developed and implemented by 2026.

There is a commitment from the minister that no development will take place without infrastructure, yet a major piece of infrastructure missing on the Sunshine Coast is the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. Where are these extra 14,000 people to obtain health care on the Sunshine Coast? I can tell you that it will not be at the Nambour General Hospital. I met recently with ambulance officials on the Sunshine Coast who told me that at times between 10 and 15 ambulances are waiting at the Nambour Hospital just to discharge their patients to the hospital without any ambulances actually being on the road. This hospital is needed on the Sunshine Coast. We have a multimodal corridor going behind the planned site of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. I say to the minister that if he is wanting to fast-track any development or any infrastructure on the Sunshine Coast, let it not be the Palmview development but let it be the Sunshine Coast University Hospital because residents on the Sunshine Coast are in dire need of appropriate health care and services for which they are currently having to travel to Brisbane.

In closing, the Sunshine Coast University Hospital Action Group will be taking this matter further and will be organising a march to the hospital site at Kawana Waters. They will tie 450 ribbons to the fence around the hospital site, representing the number of beds at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital for which construction should begin relatively soon. I say to the government that it must get serious about health needs on the Sunshine Coast. This is an infrastructure asset that we absolutely need. I call on the government to bring it forward.

Mr SORENSEN (Hervey Bay—LNP) (5.23 pm): I rise to speak to the Sustainable Planning Bill. The Integrated Planning Act, which was introduced in 1997, will be replaced by the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. While the minister told us back then that the Integrated Planning Act was going to streamline development processes, it has become slow and unclear and causes dissatisfaction between councillors, developers and, most of all, the community.

The layers of bureaucracy have caused major blow-outs and these costs are usually passed on to house buyers. Costs will blow out even more because of the climate change provisions of the bill. How will councils know what to implement into their planning scheme if there are no guidelines to follow? Will councils be forced to conduct studies into the effects of climate change in their area, and who will pay for this in the long run? Will there be infrastructure charges on new developments and those sorts of things? It goes on.

In my area climate change will be defined within the coastal management plan. How will climate change affect the definitions of coastal tidal areas, especially in the coastal zones, coastal hazards, physical coastal changes, tidal waters, coastal resources, coastal building lines, coastal management districts, vegetation, storm tide inundation and redevelopment areas that already exist on the coast and which will be redeveloped over the years? There are also the maritime developments to consider. It is a big thing to provide maritime facilities in coastal areas such as boat ramps, marinas and even coal ports and that sort of infrastructure. How will climate change affect the agricultural industry?

Another thing to consider is state coastal land. Many councils put infrastructure on the foreshore and those types of things. How is climate change going to affect those councils and us in the future? Who is going to foot the bill at the end of the day? Then there are the private landowners along the foreshore of our Queensland coastline to consider. How will it affect them in the long run? How will the government ensure those coastal landowners comply with all future new regulations?

What will the RL levels be in the future and will councils have to do the engineering modelling and come up with the answers? At the moment most of the RL levels in Hervey Bay are about four metres. It will be interesting to see what the future brings in relation to RL levels and floor levels for buildings. It will be interesting to see who pays for that at the end of the day. It would be good to be able to support the local governments in that area.

At the end of the day, what is development? It means different things to different councils. In some councils it means developing a mine, which brings both prosperity and financial problems. The mine will become a major asset to the community but the roads and other infrastructure then become a liability to the local government. I have known councillors in western areas who have complained bitterly in the past about mining coming to their area. They get very little out of mining in terms of rateable properties because there are active and inactive mines. It is a real issue out there and it is something that has been brought to my attention. The councils end up with the liability of maintaining the roads due to the heavy traffic created by the mines. While the state government receives a windfall in collecting the royalties, the councils usually have to pick up the maintenance, especially of the road infrastructure and other social needs in these areas.

It will be quite interesting to see what happens. In other areas it also means ports and marinas, which brings similar problems. The infrastructure needs to be in place in order to export the material that is mined. At the end of the day, the infrastructure needs to be in place which creates the jobs and then the people move into those areas. It is kind of interesting to follow it right through from one end to the other. Whichever way we look at it, other areas such as national parks and World Heritage listed areas are really tourist developments.

This development creates a lot of traffic and industry. It is no different from any other kind of development. The tourism industry is a very large industry in Queensland and it is an industry that we should promote all the time. The tourism industry is the major industry in the area that I represent and attracts large numbers of people. In some cases councils have to maintain the infrastructure so that people can get to and from these developments.

Most people think of a developer as being a big developer, but in a lot of cases a developer is a small family who is wanting to subdivide one block into two. They need some sort of security. I hope that this bill will provide that security for those people who just want to subdivide their block into one or two lots. A lot of such applications go to the council. Not all developers are big multinational companies. They are just families who have invested in a small piece of property. At the end of the day, all they really want is to have a superannuation scheme and to make some money.

My view is that tourism creates industries which attract people to areas such as the area that I represent. One only has to look at the development magazine, which states that Queensland has eight out of 10 of the fastest-growing cities in Australia. I will run through them. Hervey Bay is expected to grow by 87 per cent by the year 2027. Gladstone is expected to grow by 56 per cent, the Gold Coast-Tweed is expected to grow by 54 per cent, the Sunshine Coast is expected to grow by 52 per cent, Cairns is expected to grow by 50 per cent, Brisbane is expected to grow by 45 per cent, Mackay is expected to grow by 44 per cent and Townsville is expected to grow by 43 per cent over that period.

Industry is an important part of my home town, and the retirement industry in my area is quite important. I hope that we do not neglect the infrastructure that we need for some people who do not have a lot of money. We need caravan parks. In my area a developer tried to rezone a caravan park into something else. There were 38 relocatable homes in that caravan park. We managed to block that. I hope the minister could use the call-in powers and call in some of those types of developments to provide a type of housing that we need for people who do not have the money to buy multimillion-dollar homes.

We also need to make sure that we can build nursing homes for high-care and low-care patients. In some areas permission is not granted for those developments because the developers want to construct buildings two and three storeys high to make building these facilities viable. They cannot build those types of buildings in a residential area. We really have to look at that issue when the building is going to be a retirement village or a nursing home.

Mr Moorhead interjected.

Mr SORENSEN: I have. I have tried to work hard towards it. I am glad to have that interjection, because we have to take care of the elderly people in our community. I think that is one way of going about that. Sometimes it is very hard to get approval from the council to construct retirement villages, but we need relocatable home parks in our communities as they provide affordable accommodation. I know that the government owns one of the caravan parks in Hervey Bay. That caravan park provides a lot of low-cost housing. We have to make sure that we have those types of developments in our planning schemes.

In terms of the tourism industry, Fraser Island, which is a World Heritage listed area, needs infrastructure such as marinas and boat ramps to make sure that we provide the facilities to maintain the tourist industry there. Then comes the motels and the developments to house all of those people who visit the island. Some 350,000 visitors visit Fraser Island every year. We really have to make sure that the infrastructure is in place so that the tourism industry can house those people who want to visit Fraser Island.

In terms of the retail industry, some of the bigger developers of shopping centres in fast-growing areas are copping a hiding through the infrastructure charges that are being placed upon them in order to develop these retail outlets. This also occurs in the building industry in terms of housing developments.

The Sustainable Planning Bill will replace the Integrated Planning Act, which we were told was going to solve all the problems. Will this bill solve all the problems? I guess it will not, but in some areas I guess it will. Some of the problems that I experienced in the past related to overlays. For example, a builder wanted to build a house on a property but he had a vegetation overlay. One of the council officers said that he did not want to remove the trees. Another officer who looked after the fire services said that the builder had to have a firebreak. So how can we have one person saying one thing and another person saying another thing? They are some of the problems that we have with overlays. I think that really needs sorting out.

I believe that the call-in powers will protect some assets, such as airports, sewage treatment plants and even some of our flood plains where engineers say that they can engineer a drain through the flood plains. I believe that if we have a natural drainage system there we should leave it there and use it as a vegetation area, which could take all the water. We would not have to build concrete drains and things like that. It would be environmentally friendly and we could have vegetation corridors throughout the city and things like that.

What worries me most about the call-in powers is when the next election comes around and some green group finds a rocket frog somewhere on a proposed development. Will the government call it in just before an election just to be popular? But I believe that the call-in power should be used on the Traveston Dam. It will affect Fraser Island, it will affect the Great Sandy Straits and it will affect other World Heritage listed sites.

Mr Shine: You would be in favour of the amendment.

Mr SORENSEN: I am in favour of looking after the Great Sandy Straits. I am very conscious of the Great Sandy Straits and what it means to Hervey Bay.

To give members an idea of the amount of red tape that we have, I refer to research done by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Queensland has a total of 70,784 regulations, instruments and papers. Queensland has the most of all the states. In terms of the number of business regulations by type, we have 93 and New South Wales comes in at 75. So members can see that we really have a lot of red tape and in a lot of areas we are a bit overgoverned in Queensland.

This bill sets out a strategic planning framework at state, regional and local levels. It will be a 25-year plan, which I believe is a good thing. There is also a 20-year community vision, a 15-year infrastructure plan to service projected growth and a 10-year plan for development, which I believe is a little bit short, because 10 years is not very long. There is also a five-year working plan to deliver serviceable land. I have seen some developers go through the courts and it takes them more than five years to get their development applications approved.

Chapter 5 refers to designated land. At the end of the day, it is good to have designated land as long as you compensate the owner of that property at a reasonable price to make sure that they are not disadvantaged. The Building and Development Dispute Resolution Committee will give smaller investors an opportunity to question some of the conditions that have been put on some of their small developments. So it will give them a way of avoiding the huge court costs which can accrue just on an application for a subdivision or two.

I have heard comments from those in the legal profession that we are heading towards expanding the role of state government by the implementation of standard planning scheme provisions and the expansion of reserve powers, conditions and call-in powers. As for IDAS, at the end of the day there is still the application stage as well as the information and referral stage. It can take years to get through those processes. Departments do not coordinate on many aspects of an application, which causes hold-ups in developments. This is a real problem. A matter is referred first to one department and then another. Some departments will ask for a report on something and then when that report is finished they will ask for another report and then another report. I have seen the situation where there were three requests for reports one after the other and wondered why the three reports could not have been done all at once.

Ms MALE (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.41 pm): I rise in support of the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. An overhauling of the current planning laws is long overdue. I am sure that all long-term members will agree with me that dealing with planning laws is often a frustrating process for the public and government agencies as well as members of parliament. It is a highly complex and specialised area, and therein lies half the problem. Very few people have a full understanding of how the current planning laws work, the history behind them and the roles of each government agency, especially local government.

In 2003 I had a crash course in planning laws when the Maleny Woolworths dispute blew up. The situation was not helped initially by the local councillor at the time, who did not understand her own council's planning laws let alone the role of the state government in the decision to approve the Woolworths development. The decision to give the site in Maple Street, Maleny an as-of-right development approval dated back some 20 years. It was subsequently not picked up during public consultation several times about the town plan. When the site, which had been used for a cattle saleyard, was bought by a developer and he announced plans to have a shopping centre on the site, community members were surprised and outraged by the announcement. They were even more outraged when they realised that council had, over decades, not rectified the mistake to make a sensitive piece of land at the entry to their town a building development site. Neither the developer nor the council assisted the community to deal with the many issues that then occurred. The whole thing was a disgrace. I must say that the replacement councillor from 2004 to 2008, Councillor Dick Newman, did understand planning and was very helpful to both the community and to myself.

It is for this reason that I have long advocated that the whole process surrounding planning needs to be changed, and I am pleased to see that this is occurring. This bill will lead to coordinated and integrated planning at the local, regional and state levels. This reform agenda started in early 2006 with extensive consultation with stakeholders and the public and was further moved along by the release of two discussion papers. It was expected that the Integrated Planning Act 1997 would be amended, but it was decided that this did not go far enough and that an extended review needed to occur. The reform agenda then contained 80 actions, of which 42 involved significant legislative change. About two-thirds of the reform agenda relates to operational and cultural reform, but it was decided that new planning legislation was considered necessary to provide a framework for a best-practice planning and development system. Hence this bill will replace the current Integrated Planning Act 1997.

The emphasis remains on an effective regional planning framework, which we have implemented with the South East Queensland Regional Plan. This SEQ Regional Plan has provided certainty about land uses and designation within the South-East Queensland area and has allowed councils to also ensure their planning is working to provide good outcomes for people in relation to lifestyle, liveability and the environment whilst allowing development to be planned to best fit in with communities. This bill also assists in this land use planning and development by streamlining the development system at plan-making and development assessment stages.

One of the problems I have seen over the years is the length of time that councils take to work through documentation and approve or reject applications. This means that developers and communities can be left hanging, sometimes for years. This bill does not provide developers with the chance to sneak their applications through, but it does mean that councils need to do their work in a timely and cost-effective fashion. Another part of this streamlining will be to make the infrastructure charging regime more transparent and equitable and it will be enhanced by standard planning scheme provisions.

As the minister has stated, this Sustainable Planning Bill is a document which bestows on participants in the planning process certain responsibilities. Applicants have a responsibility to provide all of the necessary and relevant information that will enable the council to properly assess the proposal in front of them. Councils have a responsibility to assess applications in a timely and appropriate manner. State government agencies who are part of the referral process must ensure state interests are included in our state planning instrument and should be involved from the beginning of the application process, rather than the end. In my area, quite often that happens very well with Main Roads but sometimes not with some of the other departments.

The final part of this is that the community has a role to play. The legislation provides for efficient community engagement at all appropriate stages and requires stakeholder involvement to make it effective. This bill will ensure that planning and development involves our community along with government. There will always be a degree of concern over new developments, especially as they relate to vegetation clearing and care for wildlife. I think council needs to look carefully at all future developments in relation to lot sizes, retention of vegetation et cetera and also look closely at the provision of affordable housing opportunities within these developments.

Planning should complement our community and enhance opportunities for people to live in an environment that satisfies their needs and wants. Environmental considerations should be paramount for new housing developments, as should access to infrastructure and transport. Industrial developments need to be provided so that local people can work in the local area. This is what communities are all about. I look forward to seeing the implementation of the Sustainable Planning Bill and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DOWLING (Redlands—LNP) (5.46 pm): Today I rise with some trepidation to support the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. It is a significant document heading in the right direction. However, I believe it is doomed to fail and will not deliver on the critical objectives: environment, streamlined process, certainty or sustainability. I appreciate the work that has gone into the document and the consultation with interested parties. It is dependent on the bias one brings to the table as to whether one believes the bill will deliver outcomes positive or negative.

I heard conflicting rhetoric within the minister's second reading speech and believe the bill may frustrate even further the delivery of affordable housing, adequate supply of product to market and any timely delivery of infrastructure. I have taken the time to talk with industry—those who understand the current system, the ones who have been crying out for reform—and their comments vary. They are complimentary on parts of the bill and scathing on others. The bill appears to have been drafted by the state and for the state with little or no input by industry or local authorities—the very same local authorities responsible for managing and coordinating the process, also the level most likely to slow and frustrate the process; the concepts are fine but in practice will only lead to less certainty and more delays; any opportunity to simplify and streamline the process has been lost and indeed replaced by additional procedures which, given the underresourcing within the state and local authorities, will lead to further confusion, frustration and delays.

These comments are from an industry needing help to streamline the processes and relying on this bill for certainty. Most people who have approached me have prefaced their comments by saying that the bill has promise. I suggest that it has been another broken promise. Overall the legislation tends to diminish the power of local government authorities in favour of the state. On this issue people are divided depending on the council area they live or work in. One school of thought is that this is not a good move as the further the decision making is from the action the more philosophical and hence less pragmatic the decision will tend to be. The opposite school of thought is that the further council is removed from the process the better the process is and the less nimby-driven, parochial decisions are likely to be made.

There is nothing in this bill that provides any confidence that the state will be more timely, efficient or equitable in its decision making. One example cited to me was an applicant who waited over six months for the Department of Infrastructure and Planning to advise who would be the assessment manager for an MCU that was already approved. Indeed, many state departments have opted for satellite legislation rather than integrated legislation that has led to the erosion of the integrated planning system.

The bill is a bit of a bandaid and not a solution. The introduction of the concept of prohibited development is retrograde. It can make it easier for councils to be lazy and remove the necessary flexibility that should be inherent in the system. It could also create an opportunity for user pays. The introduction of yet another form of assessment, namely compliance assessment, is of questionable value. The quid pro quo is the introduction of deemed approval for certain code assessments.

Industry could live with the introduction of compliance assessment if, as proposed, subdivision and other code assessable applications can be deemed approved after the expiry of statutory time lines. Unfortunately, it is more likely that local authorities will amend their schemes so the majority of code assessable applications become impact assessable as occurred on SMBI, the southern Moreton Bay islands. Alternately, the compliance assessment process will become unwieldy as local authorities use CAs to do their assessment. If this were to happen the whole concept of speeding up the process will be lost. This may be avoided by the introduction of standard planning scheme provisions, which is a commendable aspect of the bill. The devil, they say, is in the detail and the detail of this is yet to be seen and tested. In short, there is potential for many of the efficiency benefits of the deemed approval system to be lost and overshadowed by the additional post-decision process.

Compliance assessment should also be granted 'deemed approved' should the statutory time frames not be met. Again, any speeding up of the process will be lost if compliance assessment drags on at the typical glacial speed of many councils. Larger councils are working at ways to speed up the process and some use external contractors. However, there appears to be a marked reluctance by smaller provisional authorities to divest control of the DA process. Proposed reductions in time frames are only applicable to the applicant control process. An example is that the maximum period for the applicant to respond to an information request is reduced from 12 to six months. This will have little effect on reducing time frames, as applicants generally respond in less than the maximum time, keen to move their application forward and subsequently reduce their holding costs.

The bill allows state agencies to assess applications against all state policies rather than the specific ones for which referral has occurred. On the surface it could be seen as adopting the precautionary principle. However, in practice I believe it will be a disaster as the state agencies will deliberate on all manner of issues that may not be relevant to the application. The real issue is the wasted opportunity to meaningfully improve the legislation and the planning system.

The new bill only addresses issues from the state's point of view. There does not appear to be any real benefit for applicants, local authorities or the general public. The shadow minister and member for Gympie said it eloquently in his speech when he stated—

Whilst local government and developers' responsibilities are clarified and streamlined under this bill, such provisions do not apply to state government agencies. Indeed, under this legislation the matters state agencies must consider when assessing an application have been expanded. To impose such requirements on all other parties while ignoring the need for reform within the state bureaucracy is shortsighted and can be self-defeating.

The planning system has real problems when it takes six to 12 months for the most rudimentary application to get through. The system is bogged down by inadequate local authority resourcing and a state referral or interference process.

The original integrated development assessment system was designed so everyone had the same set of rules. There were few exemptions. It put pressure on both local authorities and the state to perform. However, the state has chosen to create legislation that simply overrides the whole process. One example is the Vegetation Management Act. It also created specific exemptions and I seek leave to include the IDAS checklist as an example of the simplified process. This 44-page document consists mainly of exemptions and additions to the IDAS process. I challenge any honourable member to complete correctly the 44-page checklist. I know people with town-planning backgrounds who would not attempt to fill this out for fear of making a mistake. How can the lay person deal with it? Planning is supposed to be for the people. As an example, a local quarry operator's application was thrown out of court, not due to the appellants but because of a mistake in the IDAS checklist actions. Even professional applicants can make mistakes, which is what that case hung on.

Tabled paper: IDAS Assessment Checklist, version 21.3, 9 May 2008 [896].

Even when the state has to comply with the IDAS provisions, it often abuses the process by requiring irrelevant information, usually to delay having to make a decision, or responding beyond the referral triggers. To further frustrate the process, the state nearly always requests an extension of time; times frames that should be the maximum time needed and used only for complicated applications, rather than the norm for simple applications. Another example is an application lodged in October 2008 that was referred in November to the EPA and natural resources department, as they were then, for assessment. It took the state until July 2009, nine months, to determine who the assessment manager should be. The applicants are still waiting for that actual assessment.

Under 10 years of Labor we have degenerated from having one of the best and most efficient planning systems to one of the worst. Fortunately, in that category we can still beat New South Wales. Nationally, Victoria, Western Australia and other southern states are attracting quality developments and exciting new projects at the expense of Queensland, where our planning processes are not flexible or adequately resourced. The state bureaucracy and the unwieldiness of the system has or is delivering

the following real consequences: our median land prices are approaching Victoria's. Thanks to 10 years of Labor, we now have a dichotomous market for young families: those who can afford their own home and those who cannot—so much for the Smart State—and the divide is growing. This government talks about affordable housing, but unfortunately talk is the only thing that is cheap and, believe me, Queenslanders cannot afford the lip-service of this government any longer.

The Queensland planning process is so unworkable that even the state does not use it for major initiatives. When attempting to produce affordable product in a timely manner through the Urban Development Authority, the state chose to totally bypass the IPA process. The UDA has its own mini planning schemes for each area. What a vote of confidence by the state in its own system! Another fine example of 'do as I say and not as I do' has occurred with the Building the Education Revolution projects, which are designed to deliver libraries, halls et cetera to schools. Because they wanted to start construction within six months, they exempted all buildings from the provisions of IPA. That is another vote of confidence in the planning system of this state! Exempting BER projects means that all BER projects will not be assessed by anyone and, undoubtedly, in some cases that will lead to circumstances where undesirable conflicts and impacts will occur that would have been identified and addressed during a proper planning assessment. This begs the question: what is the point of having a process if the state will not even use it to assess what is arguably one of the largest building expenditures in our history? This is an admission that even with the bottomless purse that this government has and continues to empty, it cannot afford to put applications through even the most rudimentary planning checks and assessments.

Is this Labor government really interested in stimulating the economy, providing employment and reducing the cost of housing? If it was it would have used the opportunity of this legislative review to carry out micro-economic reform and deliver a planning system that is workable, understandable and efficient. This is what the local authorities, development industry and the community expected from a review of IPA. It will not be delivered in this Sustainable Planning Bill. Unfortunately, it is in Labor's DNA to use lobbyists to fast-track applications through an increasing maze of bureaucracy, rather than an open planning system. Only a royal commission will get to the bottom of the alleged cronyism associated with lobbyists and Labor.

It is time Labor removed politics from planning. Let us have planning done by professional experts unfettered by political interference. I would draw the House's attention to the Victoria model where there is an independent planning authority. My own electorate has suffered at the hands of Labor and its knee-jerk decision making in planning. A back-room deal between the Greens and this Labor government resulted in radical changes to the regional plan from the draft that was publicly displayed. Why bother asking for public comment or council submissions when the final document is so radically different? It is to green up Labor's dismal environmental credentials. It has been decided to remove any future land for employment within the Redlands urban footprint.

The Redlands is a fabulous location positioned between Moreton Bay and the Koala Coast environmental area. This has resulted in a constrained urban footprint with few opportunities to manage regional growth and provide services for the community. Today over 60 per cent of Redlands residents leave the city for employment. They take not only their dollars but also their social and cultural activities. That is compounded by the environmental cost of the mass commute by tens of thousands of residents out of the Redlands. The Redlands City Council and government agencies worked together to designate suitable areas of land for population expansion and employment, rather than having dormitory suburbs where residents only slept. We Redlanders wanted somewhere we could live, work and play in the same area. That is best practice planning. With one fell swoop, this was removed.

It is encouraging people to move away from the coast to fill the Labor electorates around Ipswich. Ipswich is a great location. However, more people prefer to live on the coast where it is three degrees cooler in summer and three degrees warmer in winter. That is climate smart living. So to achieve this mass exodus the government is providing incentives, facilities and capital expenditure to the west. This is at the expense of my electorate and many other coastal electorates. The Redland city community has been penalised for being located in an area where people want to live. How is this planning? It failed in Sydney. It failed in Melbourne. How can it possibly succeed in South-East Queensland?

The other piece of nonsense to come out of the regional plan is the blatantly cynical attempt to pacify the environmental lobby under the guise of koala conservation. Redland city is the only city in the world blessed with a koala population. People and koalas share the same living area. It is not unusual in Victoria Point, where I live, to see koalas crossing school grounds and other open spaces. This fantastic situation can only be maintained by a government serious about conservation. As usual, this government's rhetoric and actions are not in sync.

The Redlands regional plan in 2005 called for 17,500 new dwellings of which 8,100 were to be infill. The new politically motivated regional plan calls for 21,000 new dwellings of which 15,000 will be infill. That is an 85 per cent increase in the number of infill dwellings. I hear those opposite say, 'We need more density, more compact urban areas.' At least I expected to hear them say that. Under normal

circumstances that is the way to go. Unfortunately, no-one has told our koala population. Unfortunately, they live in those same urban areas, areas in which this government has increased the infill targets by 85 per cent. For the information of members, I table a *Report on Koala Coast koala surveys 2005-2006*.

Tabled paper: Report on Koala Coast koala surveys 2005-2006, Environmental Protection Agency, August 2007 [897].

Ms Jones: We did it!

Mr DOWLING: It is by the Environmental Protection Agency, dated August 2007.

Ms Jones: That's right—great revelation. The state government did it.

Mr DOWLING: Bring it on. This includes mapping depicting koala populations within the urban areas of Redland city and it talks about the urban koala and the bush koala. With regard to koalas in urban areas between 2000 and 2006—and those opposite should take notes—there was a 48 per cent reduction in koala numbers. This corresponds with an 11 per cent reduction in urban habitat. During the same period, there was a 19 per cent reduction in the number of koalas outside the urban footprint. However, outside the urban footprint there was a 23 per cent increase in habitat. It is also a fact that the bushland koalas cannot survive without the urban koalas. Does this government want to save the koalas?

Given these findings, it makes sense to develop in areas of lesser koala habitat value and leave suburbs like Ormiston, Wellington Point, Birkdale et cetera at similar densities to what they are today. It makes more sense to expand the urban footprint in areas of less environmental significance in a fully planned manner which can lead to environmental benefits. No, not for this government! It removed Redland Bay South, an identified growth area—a master planned development of a new and exciting coastal village where experienced developers were going to provide all services, employment opportunities, public foreshore areas, churches et cetera and all at no cost to the public purse. It is in a degraded area with little environmental significance. How is the removal of this area from the regional plan—to be replaced by massive increases in housing densities in koala habitat—going to help preserve koalas? It is interesting when politics gets involved in planning how quickly outcomes are forgotten. So the regional plan debacle has left Redland city with little area for urban expansion, removed all future employment opportunities and at the same time sounded the death knell for the koala population—a trifecta of disaster. But I digress.

The Redlands story is a compelling example of how poor planning decisions have become under this Labor government. It is claimed that legislative changes are but one-third of the cultural change required. Another third is the much needed role in educating and resourcing all users of the new system and increasing resources for local authorities, not only educating but also resourcing development assessment staff. This obviously runs contrary to current government policy of continually denying resources to local authorities and diminishing their revenue base and powers. If Queensland is ever going to go close to realising the Beattie-Bligh Labor lie of being the Smart State, government needs to sit down and work with local authorities and users of the planning system to improve the process—not more of the same BS that has held Queensland back during the greatest boom in Australia's history. The final third is quite possibly the toughest—to increase efficiencies and to change the culture within government agencies.

With regard to affordability, it is not only the delays in processing which add to the cost but also the increased risk due to the extended time frames and inherent uncertainty in the planning process that is the main factor. This leads to increased margins required from the development industry. Reducing risk and uncertainty could halve margins, which is probably the largest cost factor in land development and a substantial proportion of building costs. Will this new legislation improve the process? No. At the end of the day, this bill will be forced on to Queensland, and Queensland families will ultimately pay the price.

I am not convinced, and neither is industry. For over a decade, the community and the development industry have seen a gradual degradation of the planning system and an increased bureaucratic nightmare. All looked to the sustainable planning legislation to make a significant improvement. Unfortunately, like many other decisions of this Bligh Labor government, the opportunities of this state have been lost, have been squandered and have been sold out.

Mr MALONE (Mirani—LNP) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak briefly on the Sustainable Planning Bill. I congratulate the shadow minister on covering all of the technical details of the legislation. This piece of legislation is a very significant piece of legislation. I can recollect the time when the integrated planning legislation was brought into this House with much detailed debate and concerns were raised at that time. As time rolls forward, there have been numerous issues with the IPA, and hopefully the Sustainable Planning Bill will overcome some of those problems.

I raise as a matter of concern what happened when there was major flooding in Mackay in early 2008. With rainfall in excess of 300 to 400 millimetres in the early hours of a Friday morning, much of the northern and eastern parts of Mackay were inundated with water. A reasonably new development, a prestige development, called Valetta Gardens was one area that was badly hit, with people waking up

early in the morning to find that they had up to four feet of water in their homes and basically nowhere to go. In that new area a lot of the roads were lower than the houses so if they walked outside or tried to get out of their houses they found themselves in very deep water.

Obviously a fair bit of Mackay and a lot of coastal regional towns are built on coastal flood plains. It is appropriate to mention that a lot of the drainage lines and the small creeks that form part of the natural drainage lines have overgrown, silted up and not been maintained because of the Vegetation Management Act. In its natural state fires would regularly go through that country and floods et cetera would clear the small creeks out. One particular creek that caused most of the flooding concerns for Valetta Gardens was James Creek. It has a number of crossings on it—the highway crosses it and the railway crosses it. A number of culverts were blocked up which meant that water backed up into other parts of north Mackay. When James Creek flooded Valetta Gardens, it was a major event and the water came in very quickly. There was very little time to notify Emergency Services and quite often neighbours assisted neighbours. A number of elderly people almost drowned in their homes trying to get out.

Getting back to the planning bill and looking at developing land on coastal flood plains, one of the big issues is making sure that the drainage is right. Even to this day, so long after that flood event, very little has been done in terms of clearing James Creek. My belief is that we should be using an excavator to clear the silt from the creek so that in another major event at least the drainage lines can take the water.

In North Queensland that type of planning and development on coastal plains needs to be carefully considered to make sure that drainage lines—and I heard the member for Hervey Bay talking about natural drainage lines—are preserved and enhanced once housing goes on it. Hopefully, the state government will get involved in making sure that in new developments ample drainage is put in place. Hopefully, this bill will overcome some of those problems.

The damage to houses in not only Valetta Gardens but also all around Mackay was a major event. It was a very traumatic experience for a lot of people. Some people will never get over it. Some people are still trying to get over it. In terms of economic loss, quite a number of people were underinsured or, in some cases, not insured at all. That is an issue that really needs to be brought to the fore.

The other issue I would like to raise quickly is that of rural subdivisions. Currently if you want to subdivide in a rural area, the minimum area that you can subdivide down to is something like 150 acres or in excess of 50 hectares. That is fine, but what you are doing in a lot of cases is taking some fairly useable country and turning it into very unuseable country. Most people do not require that much land. In a lot of cases it is not enough to earn a living on and it is too much to look after. Most people who buy those blocks are buying them for lifestyle and, quite frankly, they are looking to run a couple of cows and perhaps a couple of horses for the kids et cetera. That is fine for a while, and they maintain the block. But time comes and goes and suddenly in the middle of a very dry season there is an excess of foliage on it. The people are away for a weekend et cetera and a fire breaks out and you have all sorts of problems.

Quite frankly, I believe the minimum size should be reduced so that people can reasonably look after the area they have. In subdivisions in smaller country areas at least you can get a significant extra number of people on a smaller area of land that can support the smaller rural communities. It has to be done sensitively obviously, because rural subdivisions are not provided with infrastructure. You have to bring your own power, water et cetera on deck. It is really up to the person who buys the land to make that happen. It is an issue, particularly in our rural communities. I think there should be a little more common sense and flexibility built into the subdivision of rural blocks.

As I said, one of the big issues in respect of that matter is the provision of fire services. In many cases houses have almost been lost because the rural fire brigade is unable to either access the properties or there is a build-up of material and no fire breaks put around it. In most cases, as I have said, people have had horses or cattle there that will normally eat the vegetation and therefore reduce the fuel load. But through neglect or other circumstances the properties are left to run down. With those few words, I support the bill.

Mr JOHNSON (Gregory—LNP) (6.14 pm): I rise to speak to the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. As the shadow minister has rightfully said, the opposition will be supporting this piece of legislation. With continued high population growth, as the minister says in his second reading speech, we need to ensure Queensland's planning and development legislation establishes a quick and efficient process which stimulates our economy while protecting the lifestyle for which our state is renowned.

I know of many cases in my electorate of Gregory where there are outstanding issues in relation to planning. I will go back to the Integrated Planning Act 1997 and the vision that the then minister, the Hon. Di McCauley, had for planning in Queensland in conjunction with local government and other bodies. It was a very responsible piece of legislation.

When we look at planning today and the meaning of the word 'sustainable', I question some of the aspects of this legislation, particularly areas of development and future development in my electorate. In the *Oxford Dictionary* the word 'sustain' means to hold up, to bear, to support, to provide for, to maintain,

to sanction, to keep going, to keep up, to support the life of, and to prolong. There are many different meanings of the word 'sustain', 'sustainability' and 'sustainable'. I believe it all comes back to the responsible management of the exercise in question.

I remember when I was minister for transport and main roads in this state in the Borbidge-Sheldon government. One of the areas that came under my area of responsibility at the time was Mango Hill on the north side, of which the minister is very understanding and about which he knows full well, as it is not far from his electorate of Stafford. At that time it was about putting in place infrastructure—roads, water, communication links and electricity—to make certain that once those communities were built there was not going to be interruption to them because of other infrastructure that may come along 20, 30, 40 or 50 years later. That is what I believe the Integrated Planning Act was all about and the Sustainable Planning Bill is about today.

I would like to touch on Theresa Creek, which is north of Emerald and is now part of the Central Highlands Regional Council. The Theresa Creek area is up for grabs from a large mining company for the mining of coal. That beautiful black alluvial soil there, which is the most magnificent farming land probably in the world, is going to be turned into a coalmine. I say to the responsible minister with his powers to call in, and in conjunction with the Minister for Natural Resources: I believe that we need to look long and hard at some of these issues because they do not make that sort of land anymore. That soil is soil that will grow anything. As someone said to me one day, if you plant a feather in it it will grow a chook. That is how good it is, and that is for real. You might laugh about it, but the point I make here is that they do not make it anymore. You go to Europe and those places and you will see where towns cut off, cities cut off and the farming land starts. That is all about sustainable planning, responsible planning and making certain that future generations have that magnificent farming land to grow food and allow generations to prosper.

That brings me to another aspect of planning. The minister in his second reading speech mentioned that the IPA has served its purpose by bringing together more than 30 separate pieces of planning and development legislative arrangements into one act. He also mentions challenges like climate change. I will question that in a moment. I think the most important aspect of this piece of legislation is planning for a prosperous Queensland. The minister says that, and I support him in saying that. I think previous speakers have said here today that it is about identifying with issues relevant to where they are. I know there are many planning issues in the development of the south-east corner of Queensland.

The Leader of the Opposition made reference this afternoon to development on the Gold Coast and what that means to that region. Yes, I know it means a lot to that region. As a minister for transport and main roads in the Borbidge government, I know the heartache and hurt that people along the Pacific Motorway suffered when we had to put that road through. I door knocked every house in the Eagleby area to tell the people what our intention was and how we planned to relocate them to other homes. After we faced the issue and helped the people there was a different outcome.

I believe in some cases we are not seeing full and proper consultation. That brings me to the issue in Blackwater. We have a real issue on our hands in Blackwater. This is a very sensitive issue for many people in Blackwater. Some of the mining companies have said there was so much growth overnight and they did not see it coming.

Mining camps have been closed at mine sites and moved into the towns. Blackwater is a prime example of that. People are saying that the old Duarina shire council gave consent. Yes, it may have given consent for this, but just spare a thought for the people, for the families, for those people who own their own homes in Blackwater and those businesses in Blackwater that are now intertwined with camp sites. Those camp sites weave in and out of residential estates in Blackwater.

There are sites throughout that community. There are large camp sites at Ardurad Road, Blain Street and Rosewood Street. I say to the minister tonight that I wish he would go to Blackwater and have a look at the situation there because it is grave. I spoke this morning with the Deputy Mayor of Central Highlands Regional Council, Councillor Paul Bell, who is also the chairman of the Local Government Association of Queensland. He has concerns, as I do, about what has happened in Blackwater.

It is all very well to say, 'Blame the last council'. We do not blame anybody. There is only one bloke that had it anywhere near right and that was Jesus Christ, and they nailed him to a cross. At the end of the day, we have to start looking at the mistakes we make. Mistakes have been made in the past. Let us press on and fix them.

There are people in Blackwater who have bought their own homes in good faith and now find themselves in a situation where they have been enveloped by these camp sites. Blackwater is going to become a ghetto made up mainly of men who are working in the mining industry and live a long way away from their families and go home on their days off. The only other occupation they have is maybe going to the local pub or the local club. That is how they spend their recreation time. The 12-hours on and 12-hours off shift arrangement is good in some ways but bad in others.

We should make certain that families can move back into these towns and purchase property. I know the Central Highlands Regional Council auctioned 15 blocks there last week. I hope these blocks are being bought by people so they can build their residential homes and plant their feet and rear their families there.

I travelled around Blackwater last week and saw firsthand the issue at Rosewood Street. It is on the eastern side of town and adjacent to a residential estate. There were supposed to be 200 units built there but more like 400 units have been built. The one on Blain Street is the same. Projects like Curragh North and Manna overran. The overland conveyor project overran. All these operations have created a sad and sorry saga in Blackwater.

I urge the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning in this state to work closely with the Central Highlands Regional Council to achieve an outcome that will be advantageous to these people who have their homes and businesses in this town. We do not want to see this town become a day by night place where workers come in and work their shift and go again and do not have any meaningful input into the town. Their wives and kiddies are not there. Their kids do not go to the school. They do not support the social and recreational needs of the community.

I believe that is what sustainable planning is all about. These men and women who work in the coalmining industry are generating wealth for this state. Some \$3.6 billion in royalties comes out of the mining industry every year. A lot of that money comes back to the south-east corner. I have to echo the words of Andrew Vickers, the General Secretary of the CFMEU, when he says it is about time we saw some of that money go back to the regions for roads and other infrastructure.

Another thing that needs to be addressed in Blackwater is the railway line on the southern side of town. It needs to be revisited. The slip lanes off the Capricorn Highway across the railway line into Ardurad Road are dangerous. If there is a B-double or a type 1 road train trying to negotiate that crossing with coal trains crossing on a regular basis, both day and night—and they are large trains; it takes a long time—there is a bank up of traffic. These are the issues that the Central Highlands Regional Council has to work out with the state government and the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

The sad fact is that there is plenty of beautiful land in Blackwater to build homes. There are lots of areas where there are wide roads. There are estates right along the central road in town that goes around the back of town. Some of that could be cut off and made into housing estates. There are tens of acres of parkland and we could cut some of that up and make parks in the middle of residential estates.

I really believe that we have a precedent on our hands with this town. We talk about the south-east and other places but these inland towns have been forgotten. Because we do not have the population, because we do not have many voices like there are with members of parliament in the south-east—my colleague the member for Mount Isa would probably have a similar situation in her electorate; it is a mining area where the wealth of this state is generated—we get lip-service and a pittance from the Treasury coffers of this state.

The real fact of the matter is that people have had enough. If they invest wherever they live then they deserve the right to live in an environment where their asset can gain value and where kids can grow up and go to school and hopefully gain employment when they leave school. If they want to go away to uni or TAFE, so be it, but if they want to find gainful employment in these towns, that is great.

We have real issues right throughout Western Queensland after the forced amalgamation of local authorities. On a regular basis councils are finding themselves in a situation where the dollars are shy. Those dollars are shy because of the poor management and poor planning of this government. We have to look at ways of addressing the issue.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: The Minister for Child Safety can scream all he likes. He lives in Brisbane. If he were subjected to this type of planning in his electorate of Mansfield I bet he would be trotting a path to the door of this minister, the Minister for Local Government or the Minister for Main Roads. This is about a fair go for people regardless of where they live. We have to make certain these people are heard.

There is much uncertainty in Blackwater. There are people there from the mining industry and every other industry who just want to be heard.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport.

Mr JOHNSON: They just want to be heard. There is an opportunity for this town to grow, prosper and develop as a magnificent centre. I remind people of Broken Hill. Because the mines closed in Broken Hill a lot of their worth has gone. Unfortunately, many of the people who live in Broken Hill today are retirees. They have put years in at the mines and they now find themselves in retirement mode in a town where there is not a lot of industry. We have to have a vision. This is part of sustainable planning.

Places like Emerald have a vision in terms of planning and the associated infrastructure for the mining and agricultural industries. We have to see secondary industries in places like Blackwater and other coalmining areas like Clermont, Tieri, Moranbah, Middlemount and Dysart. They are good towns. They are family towns. They are towns where the workers are and where the wealth generators of this state are. They are the people who do the hard yards.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: The member for Bundamba is putting her hand up. She is a coalminer's daughter. She knows full well what I am talking about.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

Mr JOHNSON: In the few minutes remaining I wish to tell members of a conversation I had with the Deputy Mayor of the Central Highlands Regional Council, Councillor Paul Bell, this morning. He informed me that the Central Highlands Regional Council will be meeting the Urban Land Development Authority on 5 October to discuss issues relevant to Blackwater and other areas of concern within that council jurisdiction. I know full well that the objections to the Curragh settlement close on 15 September and Blain Street on 25 September, so they are very close to the day of reckoning as far as objections go and also as far as the meeting with the Central Highlands Regional Council goes.

If we are going to have flexibility and understanding in a piece of legislation of this magnitude, it is absolutely paramount that we recognise the needs and concerns of the residents of these communities. We also have to negotiate with the mining companies, the local authorities and the businesspeople. There are people who have invested in these places, and Blackwater is no exception. The point I make this evening about Blackwater is this: why can these camps not be built adjacent to the town—just out of town—to let those areas in question be developed for urban settlement in a way that any normal town or community would be developed? At the same time, why can it not be recognised that these people who do invest in these places want a community where P&Cs run their school and care about the children at the school, where sporting clubs want to be part of that community and where other service clubs and organisations want to be part of that community? It is about the mums and dads, the single men and women and the businesspeople who make up these communities.

I urge the minister this evening to look very closely at the road that the people of Blackwater are carrying. This can be made into a great little community. The mining area there is thriving. It is an area that has a lot of potential in terms of the wealth generation of Queensland. It is located adjacent to both Emerald and Rockhampton and it is a place where people can invest and create a life for themselves. Government has to look at initiatives to create secondary industries to move into places like Blackwater and those other mining communities so that we can sustain the population with other ways and means. The mining companies have to look at their contributions towards making these places the great little places that they are. I can assure the people in Blackwater who have concerns that their voices will be heard whilst I am a member. I hope—and I know it will—that the Central Highlands Regional Council will carry that momentum in making certain we achieve the outcome that the people of Blackwater and other concerned people of Queensland need. I trust that the minister, in his deliberations, is hearing their cries for help.

Ms FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (7.34 pm): I rise today to speak in favour of the Sustainable Planning Bill and the benefits it will bring to our planning and development system in Queensland. Queensland is a fast-growing state with around 2,000 people now moving here every week. This influx of new residents has provided our government with a variety of unprecedented challenges. Our growth has required upgrades to our electricity network and large investments in necessary water infrastructure, particularly in South-East Queensland, which has been heavily impacted by drought. Our growth means a need for new and upgraded roads and more capacity on our public transport system in Queensland. We are building more new schools, investing more in social housing and increasing capacity in our hospitals to accommodate that growth.

While our economy welcomes the fantastic population growth that we are experiencing, with it comes an increased risk of urban sprawl and inappropriate development. In July this year the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, the Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, released the new South East Queensland Regional Plan to guide the expansion and settlement of our fast-growing population. This award-winning plan provides an urban footprint to manage growth and development and ensures protection of our environment and the lifestyle we enjoy here in South-East Queensland.

The Sustainable Planning Bill is the next step in our government's reform of planning and development in Queensland. This bill replaces the Integrated Planning Act to provide a stronger, more sustainable and modern framework for Queensland development. The object of the bill is to seek to achieve ecological sustainability by managing the process by which development happens; managing the effects of development on the environment, including managing the use of premises; and coordinating and integrating planning at the local, regional and state levels. This evolutionary bill will make a multitude of specific changes to meet these goals.

I want to speak to two important outcomes of this legislation in more detail, the first of which is accountability—firstly, the bill's improved framework that I am confident will deliver accountability throughout the development process. This legislation creates a clear definition of the role and responsibilities of relevant parties and provides the planning framework to foster cooperation among stakeholders by holding each of them accountable for their actions. This bill also legislates public reporting throughout the process. The requirements placed on applicants, assessment managers, the state government and the community are a key element in ensuring that the development is occurring in an open, honest and sustainable manner. Key among these is the requirement placed on applicants to provide all information that will enable efficient and effective assessment of applications. Furthermore, this legislation endows the community with avenues for efficient community engagement at all appropriate stages of development.

My electorate of Bulimba is a growing, inner-urban community. We feel the impact of the rapid population growth occurring in South-East Queensland—the demands on our public transport system, the challenges of traffic congestion, the capacity to provide affordable housing, the keen knowledge that once we give away our open space we will never get it back again. These are but a few of the issues facing communities like ours, and we need to ensure there is legislation which ensures a coordinated approach around the planning for these. However, it is the strong sense of community in the electorate which prevails, and local residents in my area rate this highly. They wish to defend it. They want to have a strong say in how their community looks and feels, both now and in the future. This bill allows for their further community participation in the development process, and I commend it for that reason alone.

Under this legislation, new local government planning schemes will now need to take a visionary approach with a 10- to 20-year outlook for future development and infrastructure. This will make it easier for the community to become involved in making plans for future developments. Local government planning schemes will also need to be linked to the regional plan, if applicable, and integrate with identified areas for development and those for protection. This provides more certainty for the community about where development is intended to occur in the future and which areas are 'off limits' for development.

The other important outcome of this legislation for me is the shifted focus towards sustainability. I want to take this opportunity to applaud the minister for presenting a bill that will make significant changes to ensure sustainable outcomes. The environmental impacts of development need to be a key consideration in our planning. Climate change presents a very great threat to our future. As legislators, we must pay careful consideration to this issue and pass into law those bills that will best guide our state to sustainable outcomes. This bill ensures that climate change will become a specific matter that must be considered throughout the development process. Developers formulating development applications, assessment managers making considerations and local governments when making and amending planning schemes will each be required to consider climate change. The bill allows for management of ongoing effects on the environment after development occurs.

The legislation also focuses on the environment by allowing greater discretion for councils to proceed directly to enforcement notices without having to first issue a show-cause notice to stop inappropriate development. This provision, together with the recent introduction of penalty infringement notices, means tighter enforcement of breaches.

A new 'green' door will be established to help fast-track the most sustainable development applications, further reinforcing the government's commitment to sustainability in Queensland development. By reducing cost, streamlining plan making and introducing a user-friendly fast-track system for appropriate, low-risk development, local governments will be able to focus planning investment on important planning issues such as sustainability, housing affordability, climate change and population growth.

This bill will bring together concurrence agencies, such as the departments of transport and main roads and environment and natural resources, at the beginning of the plan-making process and help local councils to achieve better, more certain planning outcomes for their communities. Bringing together these agencies at the front of the process and incorporating input into local planning schemes will significantly reduce the time taken to assess individual development applications.

I echo the comments of other speakers on this topic in noting that this legislation is an important milestone in implementing significant reform in Queensland's land use planning and development framework. I know that the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning has had a strong personal commitment to ensuring that that occurs. With the focus on sustainability and accountability, I am confident that this bill will deliver important outcomes for Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms DAVIS (Aspley—LNP) (7.40 pm): I rise to add to the debate on the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. Firstly, I believe that it must be acknowledged that reform of the Integrated Planning Act has been an arduous challenge and that the departmental staff who have pursued the consultations and policy work that have led to the proposed changes are to be congratulated on the challenging task that they

have undertaken. The need to reform IPA was well recognised. In the review process and the report, titled *Planning for a prosperous Queensland: a reform agenda for planning and development in the Smart State*, the then minister noted in his foreword—

As Australia's fastest growing State, Queensland needs a system of planning and development that is responsive to its rapidly changing needs, while delivering high-quality outcomes.

The then minister also noted—

The feedback from the review indicated quite clearly that many issues of concern related to fundamental engineering elements of Queensland's planning legislative framework.

Other speakers have noted the oft-quoted figures of 85 reprints and 69 amending acts, but they are worth repeating to emphasise the task of streamlining that was required. However, the bill remains a very complex piece of legislation and I am concerned about the costs and risks in its implementation, a point to which I will return. As Wendy Evans from Deacons Lawyers put it so well—

It is indeed a curious name change for the planning legislation in Queensland, moving from an 'integrated' system to a 'sustainable' system. One might be excused for asking whether this means planning law in Queensland is now fully integrated, or have we given up on that being a realistic target.

Streamlining and simplifying were the first objectives listed in the then minister's foreword to the review report, but they seem to be missing from the outcomes in respect of state government agencies. Actions to address the responsibilities of local governments and developers are welcome, but the absence of actions within the bill to address the reform needed of processes applying to state government agencies is an oversight. Many agencies have a reputation for dragging out the processes of assessment on referral with inconsequential information requests and for taking lines of assessments that are at odds with the direction being taken by other agencies. The amendments in the name of the member for Gympie to limit the number of information requests by agencies and to promote coordination through the minister's department are welcome responses to this weakness in the bill.

Overall, the stated purpose of the legislation, as set out in the bill, is to seek to achieve ecological sustainability by managing the development process, managing the effects of development and coordinating and integrating the planning process. Notably, in managing the process by which development takes place the bill seeks to ensure that it is accountable, effective and efficient and delivers sustainable outcomes.

It is of some concern to me that in merely titling the bill and setting out its purposes, the focus appears to be shifted immediately to a limited angle on sustainability, and that of ecological sustainability. Given that it is a bill addressing the fundamentals of planning for the state, I would have thought that sustainable development was more appropriate as its key target rather than simply ecological sustainability. The concept of sustainable development is far more widely known and understood, the commonly accepted definition being economic development designed to meet present needs while also taking into account future costs, including costs to the environment and the depletion of natural resources.

We are a state whose predominant wealth remains that which is derived from natural resources. Although I recognise that some natural resources require ecological protection, including actions to mitigate the effects of climate change, such as the Great Barrier Reef and our rainforests, we must also recognise that our mineral and agricultural wealth is a fundamental foundation of a healthy Queensland economy. What we must give in parallel with streamlined and integrated processes under the bill is as much transparency as can be achieved in development planning and a process that balances all factors, including community concerns in a development assessment process that is targeted at sustainable development, not just ecological sustainability.

As an example of the risks of a narrower objective, I note the inclusion of the precautionary principle to the legislation's purpose—that is, the principle that lack of scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing a measure to prevent degradation of the environment if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage. The bill then obliges entities exercising functions or powers under the legislation to follow that principle, which, by the nature of the precautionary principle, introduces a very wide discretion to those entities and one that must be exercised cautiously.

The precautionary principle is of itself an inherently sound environmental planning principle that is encouraged and its inclusion is welcomed. However, there is a note of caution to be added when such a broad principle is included in such a high-level context with such potentially wide application. It might be argued that my concerns in this regard are arguing a hypothetical line that would not be taken by the government, but the fact remains that the bill reintroduces prohibited development to the planning legislation, which will be able to be determined by regulation. It retains ministerial call-ins and gives very wide powers of discretion by the minister, under clause 126, to direct the outcomes of local government planning schemes.

The government will be faced with challenging decisions that may go to the heart of economic development in this state and, as such, the challenge of securing a future for our children and grandchildren. Opportunities for economic development must be dealt with in a way that ensures sustainability, but they must not be squandered. Such challenges are always just around the corner, as the Western Australian government has found with the Gorgon gas fields and the development of Barrow Island. The powers given under clause 20 of the bill for the declaration of prohibited development by regulation could easily be applied to the detriment of a sustainable economic future of Queensland. The government is looking to be trusted with these interpretations but, as some of my colleagues have noted in their remarks in the debate on this bill, in this regard the government has had some bad form.

There remain critics of the government's wild rivers limitations on development, now being integrated in this bill as a prohibited development, and the Premier is known for her views on uranium mining and for the arbitrary manner in which a moratorium on development of the McFarlane oil shale deposit was implemented in August last year. Whatever the government's spin on oil shale projects might be, \$14 billion projects are not the sorts of investments to be tossing aside on whims to secure seats. Given this government's form—that is, of acting without regard to the detailed environmental merit of any particular development proposal but rather on very broadly espoused philosophies—the potential for inappropriate use of the powers as directed under clause 4 is of concern to me. However, in that respect I acknowledge that I am not arguing against the wording in the bill, merely highlighting that such widely defined terms are open to equally wide interpretation.

Nonetheless, as I indicated at the start of my remarks, reform of the Integrated Planning Act was a very significant task. The objective to move from a focus on the planning process to delivering sustainable outcomes is welcomed but, as I have noted, it will be in the interpretation and application of the principles where the potential for economic harm to take a balance over environmental good arises through misguided interpretation, and it is in that challenge that good guidance and oversight will be most critical.

However, those matters are at what one may call 'the big end of town' in development terms. This bill will also address development planning and assessment across all levels of such activities in Queensland. In the department's summary of the changes proposed by the bill, I note that one of the five critical parts of the reform was that the bill provides improved opportunities for the community to understand and participate in the planning system.

However, as noted by the member for Gympie in his remarks, one view of the effect of the tiered hierarchy of planning controls is an absolute shift of planning controls away from the local level to the state government level. There is a risk that at this level planning controls become dictatorial, inflexible and out of touch with local communities. That last risk is one at odds with one of the critical espoused objectives of the reform and frankly, from the experience in the Aspley electorate of the performance of the state government in this area, once again it has bad form.

In this case I refer to my specific experience with the behaviours of the Urban Land Development Authority and the planning outcomes it has effectively imposed on the residents of Carseldine. Whilst the government has praised the release of affordable housing within the Fitzgibbon part of that same ULDA development, the outcomes at the Carseldine end have been less worthy of praise. I struggle to see how covering existing bushland and recreational green space with stepped three-, five- and eight-storey high-density urban development immediately overlooking an existing suburb of single-storey development against the wishes of the local community fits into any definition of ecologically sustainable development with genuine local planning input. If that level of planning implementation defines the type of outcome to be expected under a sustainable planning bill then many communities will have much to fear from the aggregation of planning powers into standardised planning scheme rules set at a state level.

The last point I wish to make is in regard to the proposed implementation time line. I understand that it is the stated intention of the government to have this act in place at the end of this year. People I have consulted with in the project development sector advise me that long delays in project assessment are already the norm due primarily to resource constraints in local governments. With the amalgamations and coincident changes and staff reorganisations, and the introduction of a significant change to the planning process, which most local governments have now processed geared around IPA, perhaps a longer lead time should be considered to alleviate the burden of the changed management process on local governments and their staff.

In summary, I am supportive of the overall principles espoused in the bill and welcome the broad objectives of the bill as directed at sustainable outcomes and as directed at streamlining the planning assessment process. There are genuine long-term benefits for Queensland to be achieved by getting it right. However, as with many things, centralising and standardising can be a two-edged sword and the potential for adverse outcomes is real if more detailed guiding principles to be established in the regulations are not widely consulted on before implementation.

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (7.51 pm): I rise to participate in the debate on the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. I commence my contribution by advising members that I contacted the Sunshine Coast Regional Council to ask if its councillors had a view on this bill and I will read the response—

Sunshine Coast Council is commencing the process of preparing a new planning scheme under the Integrated Planning Act but the scheme will be finalised under the new legislation. It is important the department completes the standard planning scheme provisions and the regulatory guidelines for preparing a scheme as a high priority after the Act has commenced so our planning scheme is fully compliant with the new act.

Deemed approvals for certain code assessable applications—the bill allows for applicants to 'declare' their applications to be approved if Council does not meet the IDAS timelines. The applicant issues Council with a notice to this effect. Code assessable applications require a wider assessment under the new bill and can involve substantial applications especially for master planned developments. The bill assumes all applications can be processed in the same timeframe. Council would prefer this approach was not included in the new act. However, an alternative approach is for the applicant to provide a notice to the Council that if the application is not finalised within 10 business days, the application is then assumed to be approved.

The third issue on which the council responded to me was infrastructure charging. The council stated—

Council's letter does not cover this matter in detail but the bill proposes that Council policies for imposing infrastructure charges on development approvals will end by 1 July 2010 unless the Minister agrees extension. Councils are expected to complete their Priority Infrastructure Plans by that date, which will replace the policies. However that is an unreasonable expectation given the extensive time taken for the development of these plans due to the government not providing adequate guidelines in a timely manner. It is simply not possible for the PIPs to be completed by mid-2010.

I ask that the minister take that response on board and comment in his reply as to whether he is prepared to grant reasonable extensions if councils are able to put forward a reasonable case that despite their best endeavours they have simply not been able to meet the time frames contained within this bill.

I note that this bill is almost 800 pages. It is a massive document. The reason we have such a massive document is that we have had to see changes to the way development is approved in Queensland and, from my perspective, on the Sunshine Coast. I am very pleased the state government is taking over some of these powers from councils. In state parliament we have a forum of 89 elected representatives. I believe there is better transparency and better opportunity for scrutiny to ensure that proper processes are followed. I make those comments after being involved with the former Maroochy shire council and seeing how some of the council's decisions were made. Quite frankly, the former council could have done much better, but the reality was that there was not the opportunity for scrutiny that I believe this bill imposes on the minister and the parties involved in the planning process. I believe this is a forward step. I believe it has happened simply because we have needed to lift our game in Queensland as leaders of the community, be it from a local government or state perspective.

There are certainly more expectations and pressures on our communities than there ever were before. If we go back to when our communities were initially developed and were being progressively developed, who would have thought of asking developers to make the contributions that we ask them to make today? The reason developers are asked to make those contributions is the significant cost to the wider community. I recall when residential estate developments were approved and the basis on which they were approved was so that housing would be more affordable for families. Some of those developments had no kerb and guttering, no sealed roads and no sewerage infrastructure. After a few years those properties were eventually on sold and the next minute the new residents were demanding and putting pressure on the local councils for proper infrastructure. The developers had left after making a handsome profit and the ratepayers of my area, the Sunshine Coast, had to foot the bill. The new owners had certain expectations, and rightly so. Those roads should have been sealed and the proper infrastructure put in place. I am very pleased that at long last we are able to get the proper contributions from developers and, more importantly, I am very pleased that we are seeing a more consistent approach in those charges.

A number of members have commented on the minister's call-in powers. I will use the former Maroochy shire council by way of an example as to the reason I support the minister having those call-in powers. The former council, contrary to all advice, made the decision to approve a controversial development. Fortunately the former Premier of the day, Peter Beattie, called it in and the government supported that call-in. The reason it was called in was that the councillors did not do the right thing. They did not follow their own planning policies and they did not comply with the requirements of their own planning schemes. That is why I believe it is important for there to be better accountability and transparency than we have seen from local government. I do not cast aspersions on other councils but I certainly make my comments from my previous involvement and experience with the former Maroochy shire council.

I am pleased that the minister has call-in powers. A member earlier spoke about questioning the state interest. I am pleased that we have defined 'state interest' because in my view that makes it more difficult for a minister to abuse the call-in powers. If 'state interest' is defined and sets out very clearly the parameters that the minister can rely on ministers cannot, as a result of some request, simply say, 'I am going to call this application in because I want to change the decision that the council made.' The minister has to justify that there is a designated and approved state interest.

That is what happened with the decision involving the former Maroochy council. My colleague the member for Buderim is very much aware of that. The member for Kawana might like to ask our colleague the member for Buderim for clarification as to the reason I speak with a bit of passion about the need for a defined state interest and the need for ministers to have call-in powers. I believe it is imperative that there is proper transparency and accountability in relation to ministers when they exercise their call-in powers. I believe that will continue to apply. I believe there will be better opportunities for the accountability of ministers when they exercise their call-in powers and the powers our former councillors exercise. Again I make those comments in light of my time on the Maroochy council and my involvement with that council after I moved on to represent the area in state parliament.

Another point I wish to make relates to the need for support for councillors. For some time councillors have been making decisions that have cost taxpayers and ratepayers a lot of money. I use the example of the Chancellor Park estate on the Sunshine Coast. According to the master plan, the estate developers were going to offer the world. Many people purchased in the Chancellor Park estate because they were buying a dream. However, the lakes were a jolly disgrace. Developers on sold and then moved on. They made handsome profits, but what about the residents who spent a lot of money buying into the estate and building houses? The so-called wonderful lakes were a disgrace and the ratepayers and the residents of that area of the Sunshine Coast council had to foot the bill to try to restore the lakes to a safe condition. I use that example to illustrate why I believe this legislation will provide better opportunities for making sure that the right decisions are made and that there is proper compliance with the required planning schemes and that councillors or elected representatives will be unable to make decisions willy-nilly without being accountable for those decisions.

I note that the bill we are debating tonight provides opportunities for state planning policies, and that is a continuation of what we have at the moment. We have state planning policies and the capacity for those planning policies to override local council planning schemes. I make this comment in relation to the Traveston Crossing Dam proposal. When that application is finally rejected, I would call on the minister and the government to implement a state planning policy for the Mary Valley area to override the council planning schemes. Only this morning in the House—on the very day we are debating the Sustainable Planning Bill—the Premier acknowledged state interests in the Mary Valley. This morning, when talking about the Traveston Crossing Dam, the Premier spoke about the need for a suitable habitat for endangered species such as the lungfish, the Mary River cod and the turtle. Therefore, today our state government acknowledged that there are endangered species in the Mary Valley and it acknowledged state interests.

When the application for the Traveston Dam is finally knocked back, the question will be asked: what is the government going to do with all of the land it has purchased in the Mary Valley? People will say that developers will have a great opportunity to balance the budget. Let us not offer it up to the developers; let us make sure there is a proper state planning policy to protect the Mary Valley and the endangered species living in it. I hope that when the next election comes around the opposition will make similar commitments to a proper state planning policy to protect our Mary Valley. It is imperative that we have a planning policy to override local council planning issues. That is the only way forward. Through this bill, we have the opportunity to protect the valley.

I urge members from the government and the opposition to join me in taking a strong stand to make sure that councils cannot abuse the powers that they have and that we use the powers contained in the Sustainable Planning Bill when it becomes an act. I believe that the bill is well intended. It is certainly needed because we can never go back to the systems we have had in the past where councils were able to arbitrarily approve developments without proper planning schemes and proper accountability.

Mr Lawlor: And ignore the town plan.

Mr WELLINGTON: And ignore the town plan.

Ms JARRATT (Whitsunday—ALP) (8.04 pm): It is now more than a decade since the concept of integrated planning was first introduced into Queensland law. While the purpose and processes of the Integrated Planning Act 1997 have served us well by moving the state away from a system of largely ad hoc arrangements that were open to inappropriate political interference towards a process that is hugely more consistent and predictable, it must be said that the time is right for the legislative overhaul that this bill represents. The lengthy and thorough consultation process that underpins the development of the Sustainable Planning Bill unearthed a range of issues with the IPA, not the least of which were accusations that it was and had become unnecessarily complex to navigate and did not contain the flexibility needed to meet the challenges of a modern-day Queensland.

I have no doubt that if you put 10 developers, councillors, planners, Main Roads staff, environmental crusaders and community members into a room and asked them to design a planning act they would come out with 20 different versions of how it could and should be done. There is and always will be tension between those who make a living by developing real estate, those who simply want to live and work in a functioning community, those who put environmental integrity above social sustainability and those whose job it is to put people's needs into some kind of written document.

Nowhere is this more true than in my own electorate where I am continually confronted by the opposing yet equally legitimate views of the broad spectrum of the community when it comes to planning and development. The tension can be between development that caters to the tourism market and that which responds to the needs of locals, or between those who put the preservation of the natural landscape before development that creates jobs while reconstructing the landscape.

The Whitsunday Regional Council was one of the last in Queensland to complete its duty of having its IPA compliant planning scheme in place. That is partly because of this very tension between opposing views about how the shire should go forward and what values needed to be protected under the scheme. In the end it probably pleased most of the people, but already I am receiving a constant flow of complaints from disaffected developers and community members who believe that they have been disadvantaged or duped by the scheme. I am not sure we can create a single planning scheme that will satisfy everyone, but I take my hat off to the various ministers who have turned their minds to this task and I commend them for listening to a huge number of stakeholders who demanded a better way.

In the words of our current minister, Minister Hinchliffe, this bill is evolutionary rather than revolutionary as it seeks to increase accountability, coordination and integration, effectiveness, efficiency and capacity to deliver sustainable outcomes. Much of the detail of the bill has already been discussed during this extensive debate, so I will use the time of the House to draw attention to a few of the measures that I believe will be instrumental in streamlining the development assessment process and giving the community an enhanced opportunity to participate in the process.

I applaud the measures taken to raise the bar on the quality of applications that can be accepted for assessment. I have great sympathy for council officers whose time is constantly wasted dealing with development applications that are almost literally conceptual documents created on the back of a postage stamp. The bill prescribes conditions for applications to an assessment manager, which importantly includes the provision of mandatory supporting information as required. Should an application not be properly made, the assessment manager must notify the applicant of this fact within 10 business days, giving reasons for rejection and advice as to how to overcome the shortfall. There is no longer a discretion that enables applications that do not meet the test of being properly made to be accepted. Once advised of the shortfall, the applicant has a further 20 business days to satisfy the requirements of a properly made application or else it will lapse. This time can be extended by agreement. On the other hand, the assessment manager has a responsibility to make a timely report to the applicant of a properly made application outlining relevant details, including whether any referral agencies are triggered and, if so, whether they be concurrence or advice agencies. The tightening of the process and time frames has the potential to save both the applicant and the assessor money and time and will certainly encourage a greater level of attention to detail and awareness of responsibilities by all parties involved.

I am also heartened to note the changes to the processes and time lines for referral agencies, including a provision for an applicant to be able to seek information as to the agency's position on a matter prior to making an application. Referral agencies, which are usually state government agencies, have a responsibility to ensure state interests are expressed in an appropriate state planning instrument and avoid overregulation that unduly delays the assessment time frame.

I believe the bill creates an appropriate set of responsibilities and time lines on all parties in the assessment process, and this can only lead to greater efficiencies and accountability in all areas. The community also has new responsibilities under the legislation to get involved in plan making and not leave their issues and interest to the development assessment phase. This will of course require a greater intensity of stakeholder involvement in the planning stage than has often been the case in the past. It will also require a more thoughtful approach to zoning and other planning fundamentals so that there is not a constant merry-go-round of material-change-of-use applications that often light a fire under community values.

We are of course a rapidly expanding population, and no-one has a crystal ball to say where the next minerals will be discovered or what the next trend in urban planning might throw up, but I think we do much better at planning for the future by making some medium-term commitments to land use that we can all abide by. I certainly welcome the level of attention that regional planning has been receiving in the Mackay-Whitsunday area, and I say to the minister that I look forward to the possibility of a statutory regional plan being implemented. It is not a magic wand but it will, I hope, bring a new level of certainty and rigour to relationships between all parties with a vested interest in the future development of our region.

There is so much more that could be said and even needs to be said in relation to this bill, but I will conclude by placing on record my acknowledgement of the many stakeholders who helped shape this new planning guideline and pay tribute to the minister, his staff, the department and all those who went before for bringing the Sustainable Planning Bill before the House. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms STONE (Springwood—ALP) (8.11 pm): This bill introduces a vastly improved system through a number of initiatives that will simplify the integrated development assessment system—IDAS, as it is known—process and shift the focus of development assessment from processes to achieving sustainable outcomes. These initiatives include a simpler application stage, providing an easier process for changing applications and approvals, modifications to lapsing provisions and new provisions to deal with missed referrals.

Feedback from stakeholders as part of the Integrated Planning Act review indicated that a key concern with the practical application of IDAS was that the system was focused on process and time frames rather than good development outcomes. I had many representations from developers, from workers in the building industry and from the BLF on these matters. The more these applications were held up in backlogs the less work for workers in the building industry—less work for BLF members—and it was having a major impact on the financial situation of developers. So I am very pleased that as a government we have listened to their concerns and have acted upon their wishes.

The bill responds to these concerns by modifying key stages in the process to minimise applications being unnecessarily caught up in the process and to enable the focus of the assessment process to be directed to the delivery of good planning outcomes. That is where this bill is balanced. It is not just all about developers. It is not just all about development applications by councils and what they think we need. The bill provides a good balance for good outcomes.

The new provisions also clarify and simplify processes for changing applications, as well as allow for greater flexibility in changing applications by specifying a broader category of minor changes which can be made without having to stop the IDAS clock. Once again, this was raised with me several times. So I am very pleased that we have listened and we are acting on this.

The bill also provides for changes to be made to an application in response to submissions without significantly delaying the IDAS process and a single process for making all other changes. Under the current IPA, generally if an application is changed the IDAS process stops and the application is required to return to the start of the IDAS process—that is, the start of the acknowledgement period. This bill puts in place a new process for changing applications that identifies different categories of changes and clearly specifies their effects on IDAS. For example, the IDAS process will not stop for a minor change to an application. Over and over again I have heard from people who put in building applications about the minor changes that they need to make and how long they have to wait for anything to happen. I know that this will certainly be welcomed by the industry.

In particular, the bill clarifies the types of changes that can be made and the effect of each of these changes on the IDAS process and, importantly, aims to avoid disincentives for responding to submissions and information requests. These may appear to be small procedural changes, but improved applications and better planning outcomes should result, with communities the ultimate beneficiaries.

The bill also reflects a consolidated, simplified and flexible process for changing development approvals and conditions which applies for changing conditions and other aspects of an approval, clearly defines the types of changes which can be made to an approval and sets out clearly the process for making changes, including the responsible entity for deciding a request for change. Currently, separate processes exist for changing a development approval and changing a condition of an approval. The bill consolidates these processes to provide a single process for all changes to approvals. The new process clarifies who is responsible for deciding the request for change. This clarification will certainly smooth the process and make it much more timely.

The overall effect of these changes will be to facilitate changes to a broader range of development approvals without turning back the IDAS clock where the change will not alter the substance of the original development approval. This will avoid any unnecessary duplication in the earlier stages of the application process.

Another way the bill will remove the focus on process to achieving outcomes is by modifying the provisions relating to lapsing of development applications due to inaction by applicants. The changes will ensure applications are not unnecessarily delayed in stages of the IDAS process and that the subject of the application does not become stale and inconsistent with emerging conditions in the planning scheme area. The bill modifies the current arrangements by relocating provisions for lapsing of development applications to correspond with the appropriate stage of the IDAS process and refining the time frames within which applicants are required to undertake these actions. That is a really important change.

The key change includes reducing the period for applicants to provide certain material to a referral agency from three months to 20 business days after the assessment manager gives the acknowledgement to the applicant and reducing the period for an applicant to respond to an information request from 12 months to six months after the applicant receives the request. That issue was raised with me on many occasions—that is, that the information request always took so long. That situation assisted with maintaining the backlog in the Logan City Council.

The purpose of the lapsing provisions is to ensure that the applicant undertakes required actions under IDAS in order to minimise unnecessary delays. However, this needs to be balanced with minimising the occurrence of 'accidental' lapses due to minor administrative oversights. Applications should only lapse when the inaction affects the proper and timely assessment of the application. This bill provides for the balance by retaining the provisions relating to automatic lapsing of applications. But it also affords applicants a greater opportunity to apply for an extension of these time frames and enable the assessment manager to 'revive' the application within a reasonable time frame if the lapsing is due to a minor administrative oversight. To complement this, the bill also provides a default lapsing period of five years for preliminary approvals that affect a planning scheme. This aims to ensure that preliminary approvals do not become entrenched over time and inconsistent with emergent social, environmental or economic issues.

In the case of missed referrals, the bill also allows a missed referral agency to exercise its referral agency powers without significantly delaying the progress of development applications through IDAS. Currently, a change to an application to include a missed referral would require the IDAS process to stop and start again from the start of the acknowledgement period. The provisions in this bill include a simpler process for 'picking up' a missed referral to prevent the entire application being required to return to an earlier stage of the process. However, this will not affect the quality of the assessment, as the application cannot be decided by the assessment manager until the missed referral agency has had the opportunity to assess the application. This is another way the bill avoids duplication of processes and unnecessary administrative procedures to ensure that the application is assessed using a performance based rather than a prescriptive approach. While these changes are procedural in nature, they combine to offer a more outcomes focused and streamlined system. That is something I heard over and over again from the building industry, from developers and from the BLF. All users of the system will benefit and the community will be the ultimate beneficiary.

I have heard other members talk about their electorates. I hope that in the future we see Logan City develop with a wide range of housing choices. Not everyone wants to live on acreage, not everyone wants a small apartment, not everyone wants a small allotment or a house in a secure estate. People want a choice of housing for a variety of reasons. It is usually to do with the stage of life that they are in. I hope that Logan City develops with a variety of housing choices to meet people's needs.

My electorate has quite a number of estates now with by-laws that do not allow dogs in the estate. They have koala-friendly fencing. I believe these by-laws are very necessary and I support them 100 per cent. I think that, as we look at new areas developing, we should look at their unique features and see what other by-laws can be put onto those estates to make sure those unique features are not lost.

With regard to infrastructure planning, I want to raise the M1. Hopefully in October, weather permitting, we will see construction start on the upgrade of the Winnetts Road overpass, which is the No. 1 priority upgrade of the M1. I cannot wait for that to start and neither can the community. We certainly need that done now. After that, I just want to put on record that I hope we will have the funding and planning finalised for the next section from Eight Mile Plains through to Springwood. That is the next priority section. I want to bring to the attention of the ministers that we need to secure that funding and that planning now so that we will be ready to start after that priority No. 1 section is finished. With that, I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (8.21 pm): I rise to speak to the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. I want to place on the record my support and commendation of local councils in my electorate. I believe that the two councils that previously existed—the Gladstone city council and the Calliope shire council—have overwhelmingly worked for the betterment of our community. That is not to say that everybody in the electorate would be happy with the decisions that were made and the costs that were imposed. However, I believe that both of those former councils and now the aggregated Gladstone Regional Council endeavour to represent the best interests of the community.

While some speakers here have risen and clarified criticism, perhaps, of their councils, I think that in the majority of instances councils endeavour to work towards a responsible and positive outcome for the community. Having said that, planning is essential for any regional or South-East Queensland area. For many, many years councils have worked in close cooperation, and sometimes in conflict, with the state government in trying to achieve a planned, reasonable and acceptable outcome. The previous legislation—IPA, IDAS and all of those processes—have presented to councils, in particular, sometimes significant complexity in implementation, but I do believe that the state government, local council and, to a lesser degree in terms of on-the-ground planning, the federal government have endeavoured to reach a conclusion that is positive for the community.

A previous speaker—the member for Bundamba—in her contribution talked about building styles and the orientation of buildings appropriate to the location, the climate and its geographical orientation. I think that is very important. I think we go through cycles of building styles, some of which are totally inappropriate for our hot and often tropical climate. There are buildings in my electorate—and I am south of the Tropic of Capricorn—that are better suited to Melbourne or the southern Victorian areas

where there are no surfeits and no shade from the summer sun. I think there is some positive input that can be achieved with not only local councils but also state government intervening in the building styles that are acceptable to our regions.

In my electorate we have an issue with a small number of residents in the former Calliope shire area where subdividers have been approved for a subdivision. The blocks have been built up and battered in such a way that water run-off from the newly established blocks will create a run-off problem for the long-established blocks. Whilst we have had council officers out on the site and they have acknowledged that there could be some problems, subdivision approval was given under existing approval processes and is therefore legal. But everybody involved in the meetings has acknowledged that the style of the blocks that have been created are unacceptable, unfortunate and will create tension between incoming residents and established residents in terms of run-off. I think bills like the Sustainable Planning Bill have to look at the minutiae of some of those development issues to ensure that short-, medium- and long-term impacts are avoided whenever possible.

Other speakers have talked about planned subdivisions where there has been an absence of things like bus services in the south-east corner, park-and-ride services at train stations and a lack of bike and footpaths. In rural and regional Queensland we would love there to be planning decisions made that included things like bus connections, park-and-ride to commuter services—

Mrs Pratt interjected.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I take that interjection. We would just like community services, and bike and footpaths. It is really easy if you look south of Caloundra and east of Toowoomba to accept that things like train services and bus services, which are integrated to a great extent, are an as-of-right issue. If you live outside of those areas, you are lucky to have a bus service let alone an integrated train service. We would love to have some of that included in the planning schemes of some of our rural and regional subdivisions.

I think in the community that we live in now, with the knowledge that we have now and the challenges that we have now, things as detailed as how bat colonies will interact with residential subdivisions have to be taken into account. I can remember dealing with a former minister for health, Minister Wendy Edmond, who refused to accept there was any risk from bat colonies of lyssavirus. As time has transpired, it is very clear that lyssavirus and other serious infections are carried by bat colonies. Whilst I respect the bat colony's right to exist, I think if we are going to be going down the path of sustainable development and subdivision approvals those sorts of issues have to be taken into account in terms of safe habitation.

There has also been a number of comments in relation to deemed approvals versus deemed refusals. I have always felt there is some value in a deemed approval in that, if an approving entity fails to consider and determine a decision on an application within a predetermined period of time, a deemed approval will require action on the part of that approval entity. A deemed refusal means that they can sit there and do nothing and it is okay because it will all just be refused. Pardon the colloquialism, but a deemed approval jerks the slack out of everybody in that circumstance. Whilst I am sure there will be some concerns about deemed approval, I think there are some benefits in relation to responding to a time frame and an application process where, if you fail to take action, if you fail to respond to the applicant, the application will be approved—albeit I recognise that some of those approvals could create difficulties for adjoining landowners.

The bill also deals with injurious affection. My experience with injurious affection has been in relation to industrial development and industrial operation. I would have to say that overwhelmingly the difficulty that landowners have in proving and proceeding with injurious affection claims is proving. The onus of proof is usually on the landowner, and therefore it is critical that if you are going to deal with injurious affection that effect is able to be achieved, is reasonable and is affordable.

Other speakers have talked about the call-in powers. I do not have a problem with the call-in powers, provided they are used objectively and not politically. I remember being in this chamber when we debated the redevelopment of Lang Park, the Cauldron. There were a number of landowners up there who were significantly aggrieved by the minister's call-in powers because they felt that their concerns, their aspirations for their neighbourhood and their quality of life were compromised. I think there always has to be an overriding factor considered by the minister in relation to the exercise of those call-in powers.

One of the issues in relation to sustainable planning is the exercise of the resumption power. I would like to bring to the attention of the parliament an issue in my electorate. It is not an issue raised by a single person; several landowners who have been subject to government resumptions have come to me. Their properties have been resumed. They have been rural properties, either horticultural or grazing properties. There is a crossover of impact. The Queensland government has resumed their properties for government purposes, whether that is an extension of an industrial area or for corridor purposes. These people have been happily under the impression that they would be on those properties right up to their retirement and beyond and that their ownership of those properties would have implications in relation to their eligibility for a pension.

I have one constituent at the moment whose property was resumed in the Yarwun-Targinnie area. They were of a pension age and their property was resumed. There is a period of time for ownership of a property under federal legislation. I think it is 20 years. This is a very important issue for those who have owned their properties for maybe 16 or 18 years and then the property is resumed. Because they have not owned it for the designated period to qualify under federal legislation, they cease to be eligible for the pension under the deeming provision because the property was their primary place of residence and also income. The current owners have gone through all of the appeal opportunities, including the tribunal, and have been knocked back.

The sad part is that they would have stayed on the property had the government not resumed it. The fact that the government resumed the property of those landowners, without any ability for them to effect a change in that decision, means they lose their eligibility for a significant part of their pension. They are disadvantaged because of the government resumption. I think some attention has to be given to this not only in the Sustainable Planning Bill but also in other legislation that is exercised by the state government in conjunction with the federal government. We need to take into account and recognise the impact of compulsory acquisition or even negotiated acquisition, which is a pseudonym for, 'We will not take you to court. We are going to get your land. You might as well sit down and talk to us now to ensure you are not disadvantaged in terms of your pension.'

The only other issue I wanted to raise is the issue of government entities and their compliance with sustainable planning. The issue of government compliance has to be dealt with on a couple of levels, both of which are valid. The government develops infrastructure for the benefit of the community presumably and therefore one could argue that on that basis it may not be answerable for all of the conditions that local governments may ordinarily apply to commercial subdivisions or commercial developers. However, that noncompliance can set in place disadvantage to the development at a later time.

I will give an example. It is certainly not a criticism. We have had housing developments in my electorate where the state government has developed perhaps singles accommodation and has not complied with the local government requirement for, say, car parking. It is well within its purview not to comply because that is legislatively appropriate. However, occupiers of those units at a future time do have difficulties in being able to safely and appropriately park vehicles. Whilst government noncompliance is acceptable in the overall plan of providing infrastructure, there needs to be a recognition by government that there could be long-term implications and those long-term implications need to be taken into account.

My final comment is in relation to infrastructure planning in terms of sustainability. As we develop our regions—and my electorate is certainly one that has been identified for a great deal of development—it is incredibly important that infrastructure planning and sustainable planning of built infrastructure and 'soft infrastructure'—by that I mean social and welfare infrastructure—is done in great detail and that it is funded and provided for the community in a timely manner. That is fundamental to this piece of legislation called sustainable planning. I support the bill.

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—LNP) (8.36 pm): In rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. I indicate that the LNP will be supporting the bill's passage through the House; however, there are some concerns about the bill in its current state. In his second reading speech the minister stated that new legislation will ensure that state and local governments are responsive to the rapidly changing needs of the community and there is implementation of streamlined processes to achieve clarity for the community, industry and government.

The minister said that the improved framework would offer accountability. It will make all stakeholders accountable for their actions with a no-nonsense planning framework that drives a culture of working together within a specified time period. I cannot see that being a problem. I think this is a good proposition.

At this point I would like to bring to the attention of the House an issue that I was hoping this sustainable planning legislation would resolve. A development in my electorate has been delayed for nearly five years. I hope this debate enlightens the minister to the impediments community members deal with when applying for mineral development leases.

On 10 June 2005 the then Land and Resources Tribunal recommended the application by SiSoil technologies be granted at Ravenshoe. Since then this application has been gathering dust in the department of natural resources, mines and energy. Despite numerous calls to the department and the minister himself, the company has been told repeatedly that the application would be granted shortly. They have committed a large amount of money—millions of dollars—and time based on the assumption that the lease would be granted. But contracts, orders and expressions of interest have expired. This has resulted in lost potential benefits to the local economy, local employment and business profits.

There has been no accountability from the department on this issue. Its continual concern about ownership of a couple of rusted out pieces of machinery and dongas on the lease have cost the company and the state millions in lost revenue. In other words, this company has put in for a mineral

development lease and because a company that had previously worked that lease had left an old broken down dozer and a donga this applicant has been held up for four years. I encourage the minister to investigate that issue so that we get the ball rolling.

I think it would be a great idea for the implementation of these clear, streamlined processes to begin right here within the government's own departments to clear the backlogs of applications that are limiting the potential of business growth and investment in Queensland. I ask the minister to show some common sense and step in and solve this problem.

The member for Gympie said in his contribution that he hoped that the planning remained in touch with local communities, that it reflects the needs of communities and adapts to local issues unique to differing communities across the state. For this to occur there needs to be less state involvement and more community involvement.

Of concern when it was first put forward was the 2025 Far North Queensland plan. Across the area many people felt that this was an imposition on them by bureaucrats from the south-east corner who are so removed from their reality they could not possibly understand the issues and were not in a position to attempt to address them. There is a general mistrust of government in the Far North, and it is easy to understand why the people think like this—forced council amalgamations, the closing or the downgrading of our rural hospitals, the ignorance of the government with regard to ongoing problems as a result of flood devastation and neglect of state roads. People are adamant that government thinks it knows best about what is good for these communities, but the government does not know. Hopefully, this legislation will give local governments more control and less dictatorship from Brisbane based bureaucrats.

The minister said that, with continual high population growth, it is imperative that a quick, efficient process for planning and development is operational which stimulates the economy while protecting our iconic lifestyle. I would like to see this reflected in the government's response to the issue of the flying foxes at Yungaburra. Since Cyclone Larry, tens of thousands of flying foxes have flocked to the residential area of Yungaburra. I received an email from concerned residents pleading for my assistance. I mention this because the bill is also about protecting our iconic lifestyle. I really believe we need to protect the iconic lifestyle of residents.

In relation to sustainable planning, I supported the Moranbah pipeline. I think I was a candidate at the time. The first issue I raised was water infrastructure in those mining communities. I could see that if something was not done, there would be a catastrophe. The state government came forward and constructed that pipeline at a cost of \$300 million. However, at the same time we had proposed—and this is where I believe sustainable planning and good management is important—the Urannah Dam at a cost of \$150 million which would have provided 150,000 megalitres as opposed to the Moranbah pipeline which provides 20,000 megalitres each year at a cost of \$300 million.

Recently I was there for the 50-year celebration of the opening of the Tinaroo Dam, which irrigates 9,000 hectares and has 407,000 megalitres, and the Burdekin Dam, which has 1.8 million megalitres. When we look at the Traveston Dam, stage one is proposed to provide 70,000 megalitres and it is a \$1.5 billion process. I believe that will end up providing 180,000 megalitres.

When it comes to sustainable planning—and this is what this bill is about—we need to ensure that decisions are made based on sustainable planning and are not political decisions. That is what this Traveston Dam is all about. This is a political decision; it is not about sustainable planning. As honourable members are aware, Goss developed a 'no new dams' policy, Peter Beattie developed a 'no new dams' policy, but there was a water crisis in the south-east corner. To solve that problem when going to an election, he had to bring about a perception that he was doing something about water infrastructure. I mention this because this dam is costing billions of dollars and it is not about sustainable management or sustainable planning. He chose a site that was neglected by SunWater, neglected by Goss and neglected by Borbidge and he said, 'I will build my dam there.' It did not cost him politically because the MPs in the area were conservative MPs. This is all about a political decision. It is not about sustainable planning or providing water to the south-east corner. It is only 180,000 megalitres with stage one providing 70,000 megalitres, which is a pittance. Even the small dams that have been proposed for the Bowen Basin are bigger than that.

This will come back to haunt Labor, with Kevin Rudd handing out \$900 to eligible taxpayers to solve this global economic crisis. What is needed is infrastructure—good infrastructure. The government should have been upgrading the Gregory Development Road, the Kennedy Development Road and the Peak Downs Highway. If that had happened we would have seen infrastructure, progress and jobs. This will come back to bite Labor. This is September 2009; just watch what happens, because it is easy to hand out money on a credit card but it has to be paid back.

There has been a lot of mining activity over the years. I am very pro mining and I know the state government is very pro mining because it is very supportive of the royalties it receives from the mining companies. There is also a need to protect prime agricultural land because, it must be acknowledged,

the agricultural industry is a \$13 billion industry. When considering the use of that prime agricultural land, we need to ensure that we do not focus on quick royalties from mining which would lead to the destruction of that prime agricultural land for future generations.

This legislation also talks about climate change, rising sea levels et cetera. I fully accept climate change. We have winter, autumn, spring and summer. However, I do not believe we will be alive to see the sea levels rise by a metre. At the time of the first settlement we had the Gibson Desert and the Simpson Desert. That was before the industrial revolution. We will not see sea levels rise by a metre. This has been used as an example of the effect of climate change. If we can use the argument of climate change to fast-track development, I have no problem in supporting that.

In relation to wild rivers, there is a big concern among Aboriginal people.

Mr O'Brien: Why did you vote for it? Why did you come into this House and vote for it? Why did you vote for it? You voted for it twice.

Mr KNUTH: I challenge the member for Cook to have a look at the last debate and see our position on it. We opposed it.

Mr O'Brien: You voted for it twice.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Member for Cook!

Mr KNUTH: Have a look at the last legislation—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Dalrymple, resume your seat. Member for Cook, I am on my feet. I would ask the member for Dalrymple to direct his remarks through the chair.

Mr KNUTH: This is a very big concern amongst Aboriginal people because it is the end of sustainable development in those communities. It is probably the only opportunity they have to progress and develop in those areas. The area that is the most useful resource is the very area that the government is kicking them out of. Those areas are just becoming a breeding ground for feral animals and noxious weeds. Members should go up and have a look at these so-called wild rivers. There is a perception that there are these lovely, beautiful streams with barramundi jumping out of the water and a clean river system where people can walk and picnic. That is not the case. These areas are a breeding ground for feral animals and noxious weeds. You would not be able to walk through them. The very people who look after those river systems are the people the government is kicking out. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House.

Mr O'BRIEN (Cook—ALP) (8.48 pm): In talking about wild rivers, the member for Dalrymple had the opportunity then to explain why he came into this House and voted on two occasions for the very legislation he now criticises. The original wild rivers bill and the amendments that were put before this House in the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Bill were supported by the honourable member who now criticises the bill; he voted for those bills on both occasions.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr O'BRIEN: Well may the member for Toowoomba South interject, because he voted for that legislation on two occasions as well.

Mr GIBSON: I rise to a point of order.

Mr O'BRIEN: So well may—

Mr Knuth interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Member for Cook, please take your seat. We have a point of order. Before I hear that, member for Dalrymple, I have already pulled up the member for Cook for doing the same thing. I ask you to respect the member on his feet.

Mr GIBSON: We are debating the Sustainable Planning Bill, not the wild rivers bill. I do not see the relevance of the member for Cook's comments.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. Everybody has had a fair chance tonight. The chairs have all been rather relaxed in that respect and tolerant.

Mr O'BRIEN: This is a debate. We are not just here reading speeches; we are having a debate. The honourable member raised the issue of wild rivers in terms of the Sustainable Planning Bill that is before the House and we need to debate that issue.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr O'BRIEN: The member raised this issue, even though he voted in support of wild rivers on two occasions in this House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Clayfield!

Mr O'BRIEN: Even though the member has continually come into this House and supported wild rivers—

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr O'BRIEN: I am happy to. I support wild rivers, as the member for Toowoomba South has done on two occasions in this House. He has come into this House—

Mr KNUTH: I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading the House. He said I 'continually' voted for wild rivers. I ask him to withdraw that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry, member for Dalrymple, but you will have to repeat that. It is difficult to hear.

Mr KNUTH: The member said that I have continually voted for wild rivers in this House and that is not the case. I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you saying that you find that offensive?

Mr KNUTH: Yes, I find it offensive and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The advice is that that statement is factual. It is not a personal reflection. As such, there is no point of order.

Mr O'BRIEN: We all know the rules in this place. We have a second reading debate in which we argue the substantives of the bill. We divide on all sorts of things in this House. We divide on substantive matters in the second reading debate, we divide on clauses, we divide on procedural matters—all sorts of different things. But when the wild rivers legislation came to the second reading debate in this House, those opposite, including the member for Dalrymple and the member for Toowoomba South, were silent—not a word. That was their opportunity to show their dissent to that bill and they were silent. When we made amendments to the Wild Rivers Act under the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Bill and we had the second reading debate and those opposite had their opportunity to show their dissent to that legislation, they were silent. The member for Dalrymple was silent, the member for Toowoomba South was silent, the member for Burnett was silent—not a word. That was their opportunity—

Mr Lawlor interjected.

Mr O'BRIEN: A sublime silence! I take that interjection from the member for Southport. That was their opportunity to show their dissent. That was the critical moment when we debated that legislation before the House and those opposite, by their silence, acquiesced and, in this place, that is support.

When the Integrated Planning Act was introduced 12 years ago, it reflected cutting-edge principles of environmental protection and sustainability. I am pleased to say that the government has continued in that tradition by retaining and strengthening the environmental credentials of our planning legislation in this bill. In naming this bill the Sustainable Planning Bill, this government is sending a very strong message to industry, local government and the community at large about its determination to ensure that our planning system produces sustainable environmental outcomes for the whole community.

The current Integrated Planning Act contains objectives that reflected the best practice approach to environmental challenges that faced us in the mid to late 1990s. Those challenges included seeking ecologically sustainable outcomes and a commitment to accepted best practice ecological principles, such as intergenerational equity and the precautionary principle. The Sustainable Planning Bill retains those critical commitments and principles but builds on them to reflect both evolving practice and recognition of emerging environmental issues.

For example, in detailing the measures that are necessary to ensure that its sustainability measures are met, the bill makes explicit reference to evaluating the likely effects of development in contributing to climate change. The bill also makes explicit reference to evaluating the effects of development on human health. That reflects growing public awareness of the importance of healthy communities and expectations that planning and development will at least not compromise and ideally will contribute towards overall community health.

The bill retains the important concept of ecological sustainability, which underpinned the Integrated Planning Act. That concept is expressed as a balance that integrates environmental, economic and social outcomes and recognises that we cannot build truly sustainable communities without protecting the life-supporting capacities of our natural systems, promoting diverse and resilient communities and ensuring that our commitment to environmental stewardship is underpinned by our continued economic prosperity. The bill retains the explicit requirement for decision makers to seek to further the sustainability outcomes in the bill in performing functions or exercising powers under the bill. To achieve the high aspirations that the bill sets for leading-edge environmental outcomes, it is necessary to have the right tools for the job. I am pleased to say that the bill delivers a set of planning and development assessment tools that are second to none in achieving quality environmental outcomes. As with the Integrated Planning Act, local government planning schemes remain the key tool for integrating state, regional and local policies at the local level.

The bill requires planning schemes to deal with a comprehensive range of so-called core matters, and these core matters include—

Resources or areas that are of ecological significance (such as habitats, wildlife corridors, buffer zones, places supporting biological diversity or resilience, and features contributing to the quality of air, water (including catchments or recharge areas) and soil).

These matters must be dealt with by each planning scheme in a way that furthers the sustainability outcomes of the bill. Consequently, sustainable environmental outcomes are the core of the key planning instrument under the bill.

The bill carries forward and improves upon the range of state planning instruments available under the Integrated Planning Act. A look at the range of state planning instruments already implemented under the act, such as state and regional planning policies and regulatory instruments aimed at koala conservation, the conservation of good-quality agricultural land and a range of state and regional coastal management plans, demonstrates a strong focus on environmental protection and effective resource management, which will continue under this bill. We will talk about that a bit more tomorrow when we talk about the FNQ regional plan for 2031.

The bill recognises that it is sometimes necessary to provide infrastructure in an efficient and cost-effective way to meet public expectations for well-serviced and liveable communities. To this end, the bill, like the IPA before it, allows state ministers and local governments to designate land for key infrastructure, thereby making it exempt from assessment under the local planning schemes. However, the bill requires that designated ministers must be satisfied that adequate account has been taken of the environmental effects of the infrastructure. The bill provides a menu of ways that environmental impacts can be adequately assessed, including through a formal EIS process, or in accordance with best practice guidelines made by the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning.

The bill also reflects the continuation and enhancement of the integrated development assessment system—or IDAS—which for the past 12 years has put Queensland at the forefront of efficient and effective development assessment systems. In the past, IDAS has been criticised for being far too developer friendly on account of its comprehensiveness and efficiency, but I say that an efficient and fully integrated development assessment system is a far better way of achieving good environmental outcomes than the piecemeal approach that we used to have and with which other states are still struggling. Piecemeal consideration of the impacts of development means that environmental values suffer the death of a thousand cuts, because the overall effect of the project on the environment cannot be adequately assessed. IDAS also operated squarely within the sustainability objects of the bill. So all aspects of assessment for a particular project must meet the sustainability test.

Under IDAS, many development applications must be referred to a state agency for assessment of their impacts on environmental values. For example, there are referrals for environmentally relevant activities under the Environmental Protection Act; for development close to key areas in Queensland's conservation estate, such as national parks, marine parks and World Heritage areas; in koala conservation areas; for clearing ecologically significant vegetation and within wild river areas and wetlands.

The bill retains arrangements for conducting full environmental impact assessments for particular projects. These processes are consistent with bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and the states aimed at ensuring consistent and high-quality approaches to environmental assessment. The Sustainable Planning Bill ensures that our planning systems produce sustainable environmental outcomes for the whole community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (9.00 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Sustainable Planning Bill. It is very difficult to follow the passionate contribution of the member for Cook. I note the member for Cook's strong and robust argument about silence being acceptance. My contribution will be more on the substantive aspects of the bill and will focus on some of the significant differences between the Integrated Planning Act and improvements contained in the Sustainable Planning Bill.

It is a great honour to speak to this bill because not only did I study and survive planning law under the watchful eye of Associate Professor Donald Gifford from the University of Queensland and undertook work experience with a planning and environment law firm but also the electorate that I represent is experiencing tremendous growth and is accordingly inherently interested in the planning processes and practices of state and local government.

The electorate of Morayfield is a great area with great people. I can understand why people continue to move to the area to live and why the area is experiencing tremendous growth. In response to population growth the area continues to experience building development pressures. Whilst people in my electorate are not antidevelopment and certainly understand that population growth needs to be accommodated, they are keen to ensure that their lifestyles are preserved and that services and support can continue to be provided in their communities.

This bill reinforces the desires of the people of my electorate by enhancing the purpose provisions contained in the previous Integrated Planning Act. The enhancements to the purpose provisions will be contained in sections 1.2.1, 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 of the act. These improvements are to be commended because they promote two distinct but equally critical aspects. The first is by improving the purpose provision to require the development process to be accountable, effective and efficient and deliver sustainable outcomes. The second is by expanding the list which provides the ways in which the purpose of the act can be advanced. The list will now include, among other things, climate change, peak oil issues, urban congestion, human health, housing choice and diversity and economic diversity.

Whilst at first glance the purpose provisions of the act appear to be merely introductory, these provisions are critically instructive and guide the decision making of not only assessment managers but also the Planning and Environment Court in significant legal cases. Despite these provisions constituting only a few clauses in a bill that is over 700 pages, I would like to dedicate some time to consideration of these provisions because it is necessary to highlight the importance that these provisions play in the overall interpretation and operation of the act and, in turn, the overall operation of planning processes and approvals.

That is the key point: the purpose guides planning processes and approvals by the assessment manager. By requiring the development approval process to be accountable, effective and efficient and deliver sustainable outcomes, the process will actually be more accessible, transparent, timely, focused on community outcomes and the principle of building integrated communities and networks.

The people of my electorate want to understand development processes and what proposed developments mean for their communities. By requiring sustainable outcomes this bill provides guidance for the people of my electorate. But a sustainable outcome is not just an environmental outcome. A sustainable outcome is about the longevity and prosperity of the whole of the community. It is about building a community in which community members are able to be active and engaged and able to access transport options, employment and educational opportunities and government services and infrastructure. An active and empowered and connected community is a sustainable community.

This bill contributes to that goal by providing a list of ways that assessment managers are able to advance the purposes of the act. As mentioned earlier, the bill expands the list to include contemporary issues such as climate change, urban congestion, housing choice and diversity and economic diversity. The direct reference to these contemporary challenges is a welcome addition to the planning process and compels assessment managers to think beyond the specific development application in front of them. The list is about integrating new developments with existing communities. New developments should not place strains on existing communities. Rather, new developments should enhance existing communities with improved infrastructure, services and opportunities for community members. The expanded list and the direct focus on sustainable outcomes will be welcome additions to the purposes provisions of the act.

I will now address some of the improvements to the practical application of IDAS by assessment managers. This bill has modified the current application stage under IDAS so that it is simpler, clarifies the role of the applicant and the assessment manager, improves the information provided with an application and prevents assessment managers from accepting incomplete applications. The new provisions now require the submission of identified supporting information as part of the properly made application for assessable development.

Under the Integrated Planning Act it was possible to submit a development application with little or no detail about the proposal other than that required through the approved forms. This has the effect of slowing down the IDAS process as applications are worked up through later stages of IDAS. To ensure a higher standard of applications, the approved forms will now specify mandatory supporting information to be provided with the application. Also, assessment managers will no longer have the discretion to accept an application that is not properly made.

In my view, this is a sensible improvement. If someone is to make an application then the application should be thorough and complete. It should not be up to the assessment manager to complete the application on the applicant's behalf. People need to take responsibility, and this amendment achieves that by raising the standard of applications before they are deemed to be properly made. This provision is consistent with the purpose provisions of the act which ensure that planning processes are accountable, effective and efficient.

These purposes are also supported by the proposed changes to the deemed refusal provisions contained in the Integrated Planning Act. The bill will introduce these provisions to provide deemed approval rather than deemed refusal of certain code assessable applications if the assessment manager has not made a decision within the allocated time. Some members have criticised this new provision. However, in my view it is a sensible improvement that is about fairness, timeliness and accountability. Assessment managers can no longer sit on their hands and make no decision without consequence. The assessment manager must now decide the application or it will be deemed approved. The assessment manager will then have a period of time to appeal the deemed approval or impose conditions on the approval. This is a significant change and provides certainty for applicants, assessment managers and the community. It creates a culture of accountability and timeliness and in turn raises the standard of the planning process and promotes systemic confidence within the community.

Finally, I would like to address the changes to chapter 2 of the Integrated Planning Act. Chapter 2 of the act is all about state planning instruments and how those instruments interact with existing planning schemes. This bill contains a number of improvements that clarify the hierarchy of planning instruments, reduce complexity and ensure that regional and state-wide interests are considered where necessary in the development application and approval process. The new provisions confirm that

respective regional plans are considered the pre-eminent instrument for regional and state-wide interests and override all other planning instruments to the extent of any inconsistency. These new provisions will enhance consistency, accountability and predictability of the decision-making process. This in turn will promote efficiency and effectiveness and encourage sustainable outcomes by ensuring a convergence and coordination of regional and state-wide policy objectives.

The physical size of this bill is indicative of the tremendous work undertaken by the minister's office, Parliamentary Counsel and departmental officers. I commend them on their respective contributions to the bill. I congratulate the minister for bringing this bill before the House and I ask that he convey my thanks to his office and his department for their contributions. This bill continues this Labor state government's proud record of being a government of reform and accountability. This bill means that Queensland remains responsive to the demands of population growth and continues to be a nation leader when it comes to planning and development. Whilst we have heard from other honourable members that this is one of the largest bills that they have seen brought before this House, I do not think we should let the physical size of the bill distract us from the significant improvements that are contained in the bill. This bill promotes a simpler, clearer and better integrated planning process that is more accountable, effective and efficient and looks to a more sustainable, integrated and community focused future for Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—LNP) (9.10 pm): I note in rising that the main objective of the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009 is to seek to achieve ecological sustainability through three management pathways: managing the process by which the development happens; managing the effects of the development on the environment, including the management of the use of premises; and coordinating and integrating planning at the local, regional and state levels. I also note that the Queensland Parliamentary Library research states that although the bill seeks to overhaul and replace the Integrated Planning Act 1997 it does not propose to completely revolutionise planning and development law in Queensland.

This legislation will affect every person, family and business in Queensland. In the coming years this legislation will be responsible for determining the fate of hundreds of billions of dollars of new development in Queensland. Just like the legislation that has been in place for the past 10 years, this legislation will be studied, argued about, consulted, scrutinised and interpreted by everyone, from the person who wants to build a shed in the backyard to local councillors, CEOs and the boards of multimillion dollar international companies that will want to do business in Queensland. This is a piece of legislation that defines and details the process of planning. As one town-planner pointed out to me, this legislation is not a guide for good planning; it is a legislative vehicle for policy planners to use, hopefully to produce great outcomes, wealth creation, job creation, social fairness and equity for our state and future generations of families in Queensland.

However, this legislation does not guarantee that Queensland will have good planning or development, given that the legislation's stated aim is to achieve ecological sustainability. This could be the Ferrari of integrated development legislation. If you put an idiot behind the wheel of a Ferrari, it will crash. Unfortunately, what we have had behind the wheel of government is an idiot. One of the most outrageous examples of idiotic and poor planning and wrong-headed development that is not ecologically sustainable comes from the Burnett region, and it is the Agnes Water desal project. A wicked lie has been told to try to justify this scheme. The lie that is being told around the community is that Agnes Water is about to run out of water. Something in the name 'Agnes Water' suggests that that is a lie. The lie is that there is not enough water to supply the immediate and future water needs of the townships of 1770 and Agnes Water. I have been with the gentleman who checks the freshwater bore levels and seen those levels with my own eyes. A \$70,000 independent study has busted the myth that Agnes Water will run out of water.

That desal development is not wanted or needed by the Discovery Coast community. The site chosen for the project is the closest point on the east coast of Australia to the Great Barrier Reef. I repeat: it is the closest point on the east coast of Australia to the Great Barrier Reef. The discharge from the project will go into the water of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Two officially endangered species of turtles will be affected by this project. One would think that the government and the green groups would be concerned about the damage that this project will cause, but the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability will not even visit the place to see for herself what is happening. I have invited her to come and have a look, to at least do the right thing by the community and speak with the people who are protesting against this project, but the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability has completely ignored that call.

Who cares about the loggerhead turtle? Who cares about the leatherback turtle? Both of those turtles have been classified officially as endangered species. They come up onto the beach to nest. The desal plant and its big pump will be plonked smack bang in the middle of that nesting beach, but this government does not care about that. The Premier goes out with her hand on her heart and says, 'We want to protect the Great Barrier Reef.' Government members say one thing—their lips are moving—but they do the opposite. They do not give a hoot. According to the Conservation Council and the WWF, by its silence the government is encouraging and facilitating gross environmental damage and destruction.

How can the Premier, the environment minister or any other member of this government be trusted or believed when they say that they care about and want to protect the Great Barrier Reef? They do not care. They just want the voting preferences from the south-east corner. They want to pretend that they are green. They have put on a greenwash, but when the rubber hits the road they are environmental vandals.

This project will cost around \$40 million in total and the state government is allocating \$30 million. It is allocating \$30 million to a project that will affect 700 ratepayers. Those ratepayers will have the most expensive water in the whole of Australia. They are already looking at around \$3 to \$4 per kilolitre. In the meantime, this government, all the green groups in Queensland and Garrett, the guy who waves his arms around and sings about the environment and what a good bloke he is, are all turning a blind eye. This is the greatest act of environmental bastardry bar the Traveston Dam. Where is the precautionary principle in this project? Why is this government supporting the building of a desalination plant on a pristine beach at Agnes Water on the edge of the Great Barrier Reef? From bitter experience the only other question that we have to ask about this project is: which Labor mate will get a kickback from this project? Which Labor mate will get a \$500,000 success fee? Given the appalling history of crooked deals and Labor cronyism in this state, that is the only logical conclusion for a project that does not make environmental sense, fiscal sense or social sense.

Obviously the policy of planning for Queensland's future and future infrastructure has been substandard. Yes, the state has had to cope with a massive influx of new residents. We are told that each week 1,700 people who want to settle in and create homes in Queensland cross the border. I do not blame them for wanting to get away from bleak winters and daylight saving. However, as a state over the past two decades what have we done to plan for the needs of those new Queenslanders? It is important to reflect on that issue during this debate. The first thing that we did wrong was try to stuff those 1,700 people who come over the border every week into the south-east corner of Queensland, even though the government has not built enough dams, roads or power infrastructure and has not planned for education and health needs.

A classic example of this dysfunctional planning involves the water supply system of the Burnett. I always like quoting this example, and it is good to see that the Minister for Transport and the former minister for water infrastructure are here. I refer to the Fred Haig Dam at Lake Monduran. The Fred Haig Dam was named after the Queensland water commissioner from 1955 to 1974. For 19 years he was the water commissioner. At the rest area that overlooks Fred Haig Dam, a plaque states that Fred Haig was an engineer. He was not a lawyer; he was a bloke who built things. He knew how to get things done. Twelve major pieces of water infrastructure were built between 1955 and 1974.

As an experiment, I then looked at what water infrastructure was built from 1989, when Wayne Goss got in, and fast-forwarded 19 years. How many pieces of water infrastructure were built? I know it will come as no surprise to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, or members on this side of the House to learn that only one major piece of water infrastructure was built in 19 years. It is no wonder we are worried about turning on the tap and whether water will come out. So the people of Brisbane and the south-east corner have to realise that the water crisis they suffered had built up over 19 years—19 years of inaction.

Mr Watt: And now that we're doing something about it you oppose it.

Mr MESSENGER: I take the interjection. Then the government goes and builds a dam that nobody wants and that is in the wrong place. It is on an alluvial flood plain and the water will evaporate in a very short space of time. Nobody seriously thought about putting a dam there. There were a dozen other plans for providing water infrastructure for the state of Queensland but the government took the one that was designed by the idiot in the corner! It is an absolute travesty.

It is no wonder that when 1,700 people a week, whom the government is trying to cram into the south-east corner, turned on a tap they were living in fear that there would be (a) no water coming out or (b) if it did come out, guess what? It would be recycled sewage water and they and their families would become guinea pigs in a 20-year health experiment to see whether the recycling technology worked as promised by those politicians on the other side or whether the Labor politicians' promises and assurances about the safety of recycled sewage water followed the same fate as the following classic promises. I remind members of the promises that came from the other side of the House: 'I have indicated over and over again that my intention is to run the full term.' 'Oh, we broke that promise, didn't we?' 'We have no intention to sell off the state's assets.' 'I will not take a cushy highly paid government job in America.' Do members remember those promises?

Let us talk about climate change—one of my favourite topics.

Mr Schwarten: It'll be the longest eight minutes anybody in this House has ever sat through.

Mr MESSENGER: I take the interjection of the member for Rockhampton because I think he actually thinks what I think.

Mr Schwarten: I never think what you think.

Mr MESSENGER: I think that the member for Rockhampton—

Mr SCHWARTEN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those words offensive and I demand they be retracted. I would never think what he thinks. Who knows what goes through his mad head?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! The member for Burnett has the call. I ask all members to take their conversations outside. There is far too much audible conversation in the chamber.

Mr MESSENGER: I will withdraw if I have offended him. I believe that people with common sense—sometimes the member for Rockhampton comes out with common sense—believe this and I believe that he believes this: we cannot stop climate change. Climate change is a fact and we cannot stop it. We cannot stop climate change by paying Kevin Rudd large amounts of money. The cost of a carbon tax or an ETS scheme has been estimated by very eminent people to be about \$2,000 per person each year. So for an average Queensland family that is about \$8,000 a year extra that they will be paying in carbon taxes or an ETS scheme. Guess what? After we pay those taxes, which we will pay via the power point in our room or via water infrastructure, will climate change stop? No. Of course not. Climate change will not stop, but I can tell you that Kevin Rudd will have a whole heap of extra money to play with and the men in suits who all related to Al Gore will make a lot of money turning this money round and round in a share-trading scheme that is unproductive. But the climate will continue to change, as the climate has changed for the last 650,000 years, according to Al Gore.

We have to plan properly for climate change. This is what this bill talks about—smart planning. If we are to believe the fanatical alarmists on the other side that the sea levels are going to rise by metres—by the way, I think over the last 20 years they have risen by 1.8 millimetres—what has the other side to offer in the way of planning solutions for that calamitous scenario? Have the members opposite been saying that we need to double the size of the SES, police, ambulance and fire brigades because they will be at the front line of fighting the effects of climate change? They will be there fighting the effects of flood, cyclones, drought, fire. Have members opposite been saying that we need to double the size of our public health system because our doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals will be at the front line of fighting climate change?

If I were going to pay \$2,000 a year in extra taxes, I would not mind doing that and I would entertain the idea if I knew it was going to increase the size of our public health system and create more beds and more medical health professional jobs. I would entertain the idea if I knew that it would increase the size and the resources available to our SES, our ambulance officers, our police officers and our fire officers and would better coordinate disaster management plans between the SES and Surf Life Saving et cetera. I would actually think about it. But I will not pay and I do not want to pay and I do not believe that people should pay via a carbon tax or an ETS scheme money to Kevin Rudd so that he can waste it on growing trees.

There are other initiatives that we can think about—out-of-the-box solutions. If we are to believe what the other side says, that the ocean is going to rise by metres, that will place in danger the infrastructure that we have in those affected areas and that we are going to build in those affected areas. I know that the hospital in Cairns would go under. Many hospitals would be affected by those rising sea levels.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Burnett. We have been very lenient tonight and during the whole day in relation to this bill. I am struggling at the moment to understand your relevance to the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. Would you please come back to the clause of the bill and we will continue from there.

Mr MESSENGER: I refer you to clause 5, Mr Deputy Speaker. It talks about the precautionary principle. In clause 5 it talks about building infrastructure, which is what I am trying to explain. I would like to talk about building infrastructure that is not going to be endangered by rising sea waters. I had a yarn with the head of the Red Cross, Greg Goebel, and he informed me of this project that the Red Cross has called Mercy Ships. Basically, they are floating hospitals. A floating hospital is a vital piece of infrastructure that would not be affected by rising sea levels. So perhaps it is a piece of infrastructure that future generations of Queenslanders might think about. If the sea level does rise by a metre or two metres, the main population centres of Queensland are accessible by sea so we could possibly think about building those mercy ships. A mercy ship operates in Africa now. It is a floating hospital, with operating theatres and staff.

I would also like to talk about the Bundaberg sawmill that has closed down. Forty jobs have been lost and \$7 million has been ripped out of the heart of Bundaberg. It was one of Bundaberg's longest operating businesses. Timber is one of the most ecologically sustainable resources that we have. Unfortunately, timber mills all over Queensland are starting to close down because of this government's policy of 'lock it up and leave it alone'. It is an absolute tragedy. People involved in a sustainable industry are building the future for Queensland. If you believe that carbon is the problem, you have locked up the carbon in the wood in houses; you harvested it. This government, for purely base political reasons, because it is after green preferences in the south-east corner, has choked the life out of the timber

industry. It is completely avoidable. It is unfortunate and it is absolutely horrific that 40 jobs have been taken out of Bundaberg. Forty families in the run-up to Christmas will now be looking for a job. This government has caused it, because of its 'lock it up and leave it alone' policies. Sawmills are not environmentally damaging. They are environmentally sustainable. What is environmentally damaging is the timber which is imported from overseas to replace the timber that is lost from our industry.

Mrs PRATT (Nanango—Ind) (9.30 pm): I rise to speak to the Sustainable Planning Bill 2009. I must say that in all the time I have been here this would have to be the biggest bill I have ever seen. The bill itself is 745 pages, and the explanatory notes are 502 pages. I will have to confess here and now that I did not read every page. For all those who did the work, I really apologise. It just was not as riveting as I had hoped. I hope that with all the work that has been put into it the government has achieved its objectives. Time alone will tell us that.

As each and every one of us knows, Queensland is the most liveable state. It is the best state in Australia, and that is evidenced by the number of people who keep moving here. I have to agree with other speakers that piling all these new people into the south-east corner is really defeating the purpose of spreading out the strain on the state's resources. I can understand why most people are encouraged to live in cities, because it is a lot easier and a lot cheaper to supply a mass of people than it is to supply a few people in small towns here, there and everywhere.

I want to refer back to the explanatory notes. I did read some of them, as you will see. The objectives of the bill are to manage the process by which development happens. It is for managing the effect of development on the environment including managing the use of premises; and coordinating and integrating planning at the local, regional and state levels. That is the particular line that I will speak to tonight, because I do not think that has been happening very effectively over the last few years, if not for some considerable time.

There is one other part that I did want to refer to, and that is the sustainability factor. Just as an example, sustainability has not been a high priority over the last 20 years or so. I will use the Cressbrook Dam as an example. Most honourable members will know about Cressbrook Dam: it supplies water to Toowoomba. At the time of its construction, people downstream were given an allocation. Water releases were supposed to occur, but very few did. The water eventually has been stopped. If you go down to Cressbrook Creek now, you will see the greatest disaster in a creek you will ever see. I hope to God we never see that kind of decimation of an ecosystem ever again. It is an absolute disgrace. On Monday I was looking at photos that showed the creek running. It was quite deep in places. As far as I am aware there was no period at all that it did in fact stop, but it is a dry dust bowl now—almost all of the length of the creek. There is very little water in it.

It has had a huge social, financial and ecological impact. I think anyone who has a green bone in their body would be brought to tears to see the waste along that river. But I know it has a financial impact on the people who used to be on the river. Their land was very valuable because they had a permanent water supply which they could rely on, but the performance on their properties is no longer viable for some of them. Their properties have been devalued because there is no possibility of selling the property as having a reliable water supply.

There was absolutely no compensation for these people—none at all. I think that was an absolute disgrace. When it happened there was no real compensation. When the release of water did not happen, there was no compensation. To date, there is no compensation. I have sat across from people telling me how their lifestyle, their ability to supply a good lifestyle for their family, just deteriorated—just dwindled away without a care—and it was because of the building of a dam. I think to a certain degree we are going to see the same sorts of things happen if dams are built in inappropriate places.

I have to agree with people in this House: the Traveston Dam will be a long-term disaster that is waiting to happen if it goes ahead. I would like to think that the federal government has more sense and will look at it appropriately and can it, because it needs to be canned. It is inappropriate. I can take the government through valleys in my area that are steep and that will hold water. They were looked at once before. They would be feeder dams into the Wivenhoe and they are very appropriate. But, as we know, that was not a decision. It was offered years ago and they had a look at them and perhaps took them into consideration but it did not happen.

There are lots of other things I would like to talk about. Most people realise that mining is eating up all of our good, viable agricultural land. I will be the first to admit that I have fought for a mine in my area. I have actually fought for it and weighed it up very carefully, and it hurt me to have to do that. But there is another mine—Cougar Energy's coal gasification program—which is coming along. I have great concerns about that, because it is a pilot program. It will be something I will mention in my adjournment speech tonight rather than go into a lot of detail now, but it has the potential to be quite devastating. The EPA will be monitoring it, of course, but it will make rulings after the fact. That has been a big concern for me and a big concern for a lot of people in the area. It is good to see that mining areas will be considered very carefully, especially in regard to how close they are to areas of human habitation, because their effects can be devastating to surrounding towns. In one way the money comes in, but in other ways the lifestyle is lost. It can be devastating for some areas.

The other issue is feedlots. Feedlots are a major issue in my area. I am having a meeting in the next couple of days with regard to feedlots. There are at least four or five feedlots in my area. One causes a problem for its neighbours—one. This particular feedlot has made application for an extension. What horrified me was that this applicant appears to be a recidivist flouter of the rules, but the past history does not come into account when they apply for an extension of their feedlot. I have to ask: why is this so? There are three or four other feedlots in the area and there are no problems with them. There is just this one problem. I would ask the minister: is there anything in this bill that requires the past history of this type of facility to be taken into account?

This bill seeks to have ecologically sustainable planning. The mining industry often ignores the issue of ecology. Sometimes feedlots ignore the issue. We sometimes get effluent spills and if they are not reported and they go unnoticed the effluent goes into our waterways. There has to be a tightening up of the rules surrounding where these things are located.

I noticed that a couple of members talked about the clearing of coastal trees by developers. This is something that those of us over the range get really furious about. The government makes the laws and it says that the developers can willy-nilly clear trees on the coast. The trees are ripped out willy-nilly. A departmental officer told me that all of the trees that get ripped out on the coastal strip are made up for where there are trees. The rural sector then pays a price. We bring in legislation that puts people's properties in the moratorium area which means that they cannot cut down any trees or do what they like with their trees because they are told that we are running out of trees. The trees that are being pulled out are on the coast and not where we are, and especially not in my area because people are very concerned about this. The people on these properties have found that their properties are no longer viable. People do not want to buy their land because they cannot clear the trees to grow crops or anything. They cannot even harvest the trees that were grown to obtain retirement funds. They lose financially. Who cares? The government does not care. It just says what it is going to do and does not compensate people appropriately. People in rural areas are hit financially, which impacts on their future. It becomes a real ordeal for them.

I will move on to the issue of council amalgamations. I know the council in my area is struggling. The costs have escalated. I know that our council made up its budget and then the government came out and said that it was not going to subsidise councils for this, that and the other. Councils had to redo their budgets. People will pay the price again. Supplying infrastructure is becoming very difficult in rural areas as well. We have not got much of it, I can assure members. I hear people down here talk about transport, hospitals and everything else. People should come out where we are. Do not tell me that we pay for where we live, because it is one thing we really get sick of hearing. A lot of people cannot afford to live in cities and have to move west. We do get sick and we do have difficulties with transport.

Our hospitals are ageing. The government comes along and says, 'That little hospital can close. We will convert that one to an aged-care facility.' But that aged-care facility may not be in our town but in another town. So there is no transport for aged people to get there. The government continually makes life difficult in our area but it does not offer to build the infrastructure. I do realise it is costly to build infrastructure in rural areas because we cover greater distances and have fewer people. While talking about hospitals, I would point out that I really would like a new hospital in my area. With this planning, if the government would like to build a new hospital it is needed. I was told that my area is in a group of four that are up for a hospital. I hope that comes about in the near future.

Members know that in areas like Kingaroy we have the Flying Doctor Service all the time. The infrastructure planning that is going on at the moment really has to take into consideration that type of thing for rural areas. There should be a transport system to take people to hospitals perhaps in Toowoomba or Caboolture. Transport infrastructure, whether it is roads or other such infrastructure, is a huge issue.

The other thing I want to mention is the subdivision of land. Not long ago a subdivision was proposed in the middle of a rural area. This is land that is ploughed up every year whether for peanuts or crops of some other description. There were also cattle in the area. For quite some time it was considered appropriate to put a development of 80 or 90 houses in a rural setting. They would have tanks. There would be continual ploughing and aerial spraying. Most members would know, but I note here that my husband is an aerial sprayer. They were planning to build 80 to 90 houses in this subdivision. They would have tanks so that they would be self-sufficient in terms of water. There is 24 hours of dust at periods during the year and also aerial spraying. It is totally inappropriate. The farming community was up in arms and it was kiboshed. I hope that type of thing will be eliminated in the future.

I now want to talk about climate change. It does not really matter whether members believe in it or not. I will be talking about it in terms of housing development rather than whether it has been going on for a million years or whatever. Housing styles in Queensland were very appropriate a long time ago. It has become very fashionable to own one of the old Queenslanders. They were light and made of wood. They had big halls so that air flowed through them. They had big verandahs to ensure that there was cool air around the house.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mrs PRATT: A bit of water keeps you cool. One of the most interesting things about old Queenslanders—and I admit that I adore them—is that the ceilings were very high. Some members may have noticed the ceiling in the middle of the house at the highest point of the roof. There was a four- to six-foot square in the ceiling that was raised about three to four inches. It was free air conditioning. It kept the air moving. It was flow-through air conditioning. We hear about that all of the time. It was most appropriate. I cannot understand why when we build houses now we do not do something similar.

Mr Hinchliffe: We have a sustainable housing policy to encourage people to do that now.

Mrs PRATT: It does not happen. Everybody goes for brick and tile because it is cheap. It is totally inadequate. I know a lot of people in this House do not like tanks, but in rural areas we know the value of water. People in the city do not drink water unless it is laden with chemicals, which tastes like poison. People do not seem to think tank water is any good. Every house has a pool. Many rural homes have a tank for the house, a tank for the pool and a tank for the garden. If people want a pool, perhaps it is appropriate that it be mandatory that they have a tank just for the pool. They should not be allowed to put town water in their pool. They should not be allowed to water their gardens except with water that they collect from the roof.

There are many other ways that we could collect water. I noticed that the Premier mentioned that if the Traveston Dam did not go ahead then there would be a necessity to build two more desalination plants. There are other ways of harvesting water. I believe there are many alternatives that should be looked at. I would encourage people to look for alternatives. It is not very ecologically sustainable to be pumping desalinated water back into the sea and other places because we would decimate wildlife. We always talk about how fragile our reef and our river systems are. We should not be pumping concentrated brine into these areas. There will be effects.

The main point in relation to sustainability is that the government should actually talk to the people who live in these areas. The people who have lived there for 100 years know what is best for their areas better than people who have primarily lived in the city. Just communicate. It is the noncommunication that causes the angst in any community. A lot of people will have concerns. However, I think this is a good bill. I think it deserves to be supported. If it achieves its aims, all power to you. I support the bill.

Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (9.50 pm): There have been a lot of interesting things said tonight about the Sustainable Planning Bill as I have been listening to the debate in this House.

Mr O'Brien: Nothing as interesting as what we are about to hear!

Mr NICHOLLS: The member for Cook is dead right. He was so impassioned when he was telling us about the rules of this place. This is the member who is a Deputy Speaker but could not actually ask a question properly, despite being given two chances. I am very keen to hear the member for Cook extol the virtues of his understanding of the rules of this place to members on this side. Unfortunately for members on that side, the mistake was repeated again this morning when the minister for sustainability handed the question over to the poor old member for Mount Isa and it contained all the same mistakes that the member for Cook made twice, after being given an explicit ruling. It was quite an embarrassing situation. My heart goes out to the member for Mount Isa. I know that her good friend the member for Ashgrove did not really mean to set her up with that question and was mortified that she had done so. Member for Cook: I am sorry, but my sympathy does not extend that far.

On the basis that the member for Cook tells us that this is a house of debate and that we should enjoy a brisk and vigorous debate—something that I support—I would like to make a contribution to the Sustainable Planning Bill in the few minutes—

Mr O'Brien interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Unlike the member for Cook, we on this side work on quality, not quantity. Unfortunately, he also works on volume and none of it is any good.

We have been debating aspects of the Sustainable Planning Bill. Of course, the member for Gympie has already said that the opposition will be supporting this legislation and proposing some amendments. Considering that the Integrated Planning Act has been amended by six core IPA amending acts and 63 other acts and has been reprinted in the order of 85 times, one might feel that this legislation is long overdue.

It has been predicted that there will be around 2.4 million households in Queensland by 2026, and local authorities are charged with providing housing for those people who come here. Here in Brisbane I think something north of 150,000 dwellings have to be provided by 2026. That is an enormous rate of growth that has to be accommodated. Predominantly, that growth is in the south-east corner. That is where people want to move to and that is where they see that services are provided.

I also take into account the comments that have been made by members from outside the south-east corner. There should be a plan to encourage regional development to ensure that people moving here are not consistently bundled into the south-east corner. There needs to be a proper plan for regionalisation and dispersing the population to make it attractive for people to move to places and establish families in, as the member for Gregory said, Blackwater. As the member for Nanango said, we

need to provide the services that people look for when they move to Queensland to enjoy the benefits of our lifestyle. An effective planning regime is going to be vital for dealing with that growth. We cannot leave it to chance. That is part of the reason the opposition will be supporting the bill.

The bill does not seek to overhaul and effectively start from day 1 with a big bang takeover of planning, but seeks to be evolutionary of the Integrated Planning Act, which was introduced in 1997. That big bang change occurred when IPA was introduced in 1997 and replaced the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act 1990 and 30 other related pieces of legislation. It was, quite simply, a dog's breakfast for those involved in the development industry, for those representing developers and for councils and community members who had to navigate their way through that complex legislation.

This bill attempts to address the issues facing planning and development assessment in the state by standardising planning scheme provisions; addressing shortcomings in the development assessment process—and there are plenty of those; introducing deemed approvals for certain types of development applications such as code assessable—and I will comment on those in a little while; giving courts increased powers to deal with development applications notwithstanding procedural errors; and, importantly, introducing the capacity to make costs orders a vital part in terms of providing both an incentive and a deterrent to court applications that might only be made on the basis of commercial grounds, not on planning grounds; and also dealing with other aspects of the development assessment process.

It may be that the bill we are debating successfully puts in place a planning regime that leads to better sustainable development outcomes. That is the hope. However, it is my very firm belief—in fact my prediction—that within 12 months we will be back in this House moving amendments to this legislation. When we look at the fact that we already have some amendments being introduced to this place, I believe we will be back here refining it, finding out what has gone wrong and trying to put in place actions to fix those mistakes—and that is not a bad thing. We do not want an unworkable piece of legislation. If something does arise that needs to be fixed, it ought to be fixed. There is no point standing still and saying, 'This was not included in the first round, therefore we are not going to change it.'

When we look at this bill we need to ask one fundamental question: will this bill, when it is passed, actually deliver better planning outcomes for Queenslanders? If we do not ask that, we are wasting our time. That is the vital question that we need to ask when we consider this legislation and when we look at this monstrosity of a bill. Will it deliver better planning outcomes for Queenslanders? It is a bill containing 872 clauses over 568 pages. It contains three schedules over 134 pages. Is a bill of that size really going to make life cheaper, easier and faster for people and lead to better planning outcomes?

I recall the introduction of the Integrated Planning Act 1997. It was then thought to be the answer to all the ills that ailed the development industry in Queensland. We mentioned the Local Government Act and the 30 disparate acts that had to be brought together. We know the stories about development applications being lost in councils. We know the problems about not having an integrated assessment process, about the continual requests for information. These were all part and parcel of developments that occurred prior to that time. It was, if you like, a panacea to the problems that the development industry faced, and it is bad for Queensland that those problems existed. It was not just a response to the developers; it was a response to the entire industry—councils, planners, lawyers, interest groups, lobbyists—the whole lot. When I say 'lobbyists' I mean people in organisations like the Environmental Defenders Office, those people who had other issues there and the wider interested public.

The bill introduced new concepts and got rid of many old ones. No longer were people rezoning or subdividing their land; they were requesting a material change of use. One well-known word was replaced with a five-letter phrase that meant the same thing. Such is progress. When we look at the type of terminology that is used in this legislation, is it any wonder people cannot cope with the legislative jungle that we continually foist on them day after day? Is it any wonder that they have to go and see planners and talk to lawyers? Is it any wonder that those of us who have looked into this bill have been deluged with pages and pages from town-planners, legal firms and all those who are involved in what is one of the state's largest industries? Is it any wonder that we have this mass of information and there are still masses and masses of questions being asked about the detail of this bill, its interpretation, the explanatory notes and the comments that have been made all the way through?

Over and above the bastardisation of our English language, which all sides of politics get caught up in—the use of corporatese in legislation—the Integrated Planning Bill was, however, a significant—

Mr Hinchliffe: The workplace relations bill.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes. I am quite comfortable to say that. The education act in this state was the one that the speechwriter for Paul Keating chose to use as an example of something that was completely unintelligible to anyone, even those with a tertiary education. I am just saying that the language that we use in our legislation is increasingly incomprehensible to the people we legislate for. The Integrated Planning Bill was a significant achievement in planning law in Queensland. It brought those 30 pieces of legislation together. I think it was an appropriate start to the process that we now find ourselves in.

Debate, on motion of Mr Nicholls, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (10.00 pm): I move—
That the House do now adjourn.

Fraser Island, Tag-along Tours

Mr SORENSEN (Hervey Bay—LNP) (10.01 pm): I want to bring to the attention of the House the importance of the tag-along tours on Fraser Island. Although the transport minister, Rachel Nolan, says that tag-along tours are legal and can go ahead, the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability says that they cannot. What a joke! Such incompetence cannot be allowed to continue. Surely common sense must prevail and the tag-along tours be approved now, even on a trial basis. These tours are a safe way for tourists to see Fraser Island and enjoy what it has to offer. I table a news article, dated 3 September, which states—

But while Transport Minister Rachel Nolan says tag-along is legal and can go ahead, Climate Change and Sustainability Minister Kate Jones says it isn't and it can't.

Tabled paper: Copy of article from the Fraser Coast Chronicle, dated 3 September 2009, titled Fraser Island 4WD tours cause government grief [898].

For 10 years the Fraser Coast Four Wheel Drive Association has seriously considered tag-along tours to increase the safety of tourists who visit Fraser Island. The association has been bewildered by the lack of consideration shown. The sands of Fraser Island are forever shifting and with the tag-along tours tourists will have confidence in the lead car driver being trained for all circumstances, thus providing safety for all.

I wish to thank the House for the opportunity to make this request on behalf of the four-wheel drive association. I support tag-along tours because a couple of fatal accidents occurred when people were going from Hervey Bay to River Heads.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Minister, if you have a point of order—

Ms JONES: I rise to a point of order. The member said that I had told people that they could not have a tag-along tour. I have never said that anywhere. It is offensive and it is untrue and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister finds the statement offensive.

Mr SORENSEN: It was in an article in the paper.

Ms JONES: And I draw the member's attention to the letter to the editor in which I said quite clearly that that was not my position. I articulated to everybody, like I told the member, that that is not the case. I have never said that anywhere.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you have made your point. Member for Hervey Bay, the minister finds the statement offensive. Under the standing orders you must withdraw.

Mr SORENSEN: I withdraw. I support the tag-along tours simply because there were two fatal accidents on the way to River Heads from Hervey Bay. After that, some of the operators actually led the four-wheel drive vehicles out to River Heads. Since then, touch wood, there have been no accidents and no serious injuries to any of those four-wheel drive operators. So hopefully in the future we can have those tag-along tours able to operate—

Government members interjected.

Mr SORENSEN: I want to thank the House for the opportunity.

Kendall, Ms J

Mrs SMITH (Burleigh—ALP) (10.04 pm): Disability Action Week encourages positive attitudes towards people with a disability and promotes the abilities of people with a disability by creating greater community awareness and acceptance. I was pleased to attend the awards ceremony today. This year, a new category of Outstanding Young Achiever was included and the winner was Jessica Kendall from the Burleigh electorate. Jessica has been working as a news journalist for Radio 4CRB for nearly two years. Jessica, who is 25 years old and who has been blind from birth, began as a volunteer at 4CRB after completing a degree in journalism at Griffith University. She has since become a full-time staff member. Radio 4CRB covers an area from south of the Brisbane River to Byron Bay and west to Beaudesert and Jessica is the sole provider of local news each weekday—a vital service and source of information to listeners. Jessica has impressed her work colleagues at 4CRB with her abilities, enthusiasm and motivation to overcome any obstacle. By being part of a community radio station, Jessica has been able to prove to countless numbers of people that having a disability need not prevent someone from following their passion and chosen career.

Volunteers at the radio station are fascinated by Jessica's work ethic and abilities. From time to time the station updates listeners on her achievements and progress, for example when she successfully completed her training to receive a guide-dog. Astra, Jessica's guide-dog, has now become part of her family and allows her to broaden her horizons. Jessica has assisted many other university journalism students when they have come to 4CRB for work experience as part of their studies. She has access to a computer program called JAWS, which is a screen reader that allows her to work with a computer and monitor websites, emails, faxes and media releases. This allows her to write news stories throughout the day. Staff and volunteers at the station are continually amazed at what Jessica can achieve. There seems to be no limit to her abilities and skills.

I host a radio program once a month at 4CRB and have the opportunity to work with Jessica, as well as Hilton and Dulcie Redding, Anne Thornton, Janine Bartlett, Chantal Hargreaves and Steve Stuttle, who nominated Jessica for the award, and a host of volunteers. Jessica has become an important addition to the staff. She is an equal part of the great team who contribute to produce quality programs for the Gold Coast community.

Under-age Drinking

Mr EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (10.06 pm): Daily we are confronted by media reports of alcohol-fuelled violence in our community, including among our young. Any campaign to stop this requires appropriate laws and the monitoring of those laws to make sure that they are effective. Sadly—and disturbingly—the Bligh government has failed to do this.

About a year ago the Bligh government introduced changes to the Liquor Act aimed at helping curtail under-age drinking. The laws, with fines ranging up to \$6,000, were aimed at stopping situations like schoolies celebrations, where adults supply minors with large quantities of alcohol on private premises. Previously, liquor laws had no specific measures for supply of alcohol to minors in private places and allowed authorities only to police licensed premises and public areas. At the time it introduced the amendments to the Liquor Act, the Bligh government claimed that it was part of its get tough campaign on the abuse of alcohol.

The Bligh government has now admitted that it does not know whether anyone has been convicted under its year-old laws aimed at stopping the reckless supply of alcohol to minors. In a question in parliament, I asked the Bligh government how many people had been charged with contravening section 156A of the Liquor Act 1992 and how many people charged had been convicted for contravening this section. In his answer, the police minister, Neil Roberts, could not say whether anyone had been convicted under the new laws.

When the laws were introduced, Treasurer Andrew Fraser said that they were particularly timely ahead of the annual schoolies festival. The Treasurer said that the liquor reforms were part of a determined effort to address alcohol related harm. He said further that it would target those parents and those older friends who knowingly and recklessly supply minors. The Treasurer said further that there was no excuse and that everyone should now be aware of the very real and very serious ramifications of secondary supply of alcohol, and that included fines ranging up to \$6,000.

Given the numerous media reports of crates of beer and other alcohol being supplied by parents and other adults to schoolies gatherings, it seems amazing that the government cannot say whether anyone has been convicted. Last year's schoolies festival has come and gone, and another is just months away. If the Bligh government were serious about stopping binge drinking by youths and the related violence, it should be monitoring closely the effectiveness of its laws. All the police minister can say is there have been five prosecutions started since the laws were introduced but there was no indication as to whether anyone had been convicted or what fines were imposed. For all we know, no-one has been convicted under these laws. The Bligh government needs to be serious about dealing with alcohol and youth, and monitoring the effectiveness of its own laws is an important part of that.

Social Housing

Ms van LITSENBURG (Redcliffe—ALP) (10.09 pm): Last week the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women was in Redcliffe to open 32 studio social housing units. Residents were happy to have new, comfortably furnished units with balconies that give them a quality of life they would otherwise not have. These attractive units, only two blocks from Margate shopping village, bus stops and the beach, go a long way to giving more local people affordable housing. These studio units house many young people who would otherwise be homeless.

This complex is part of around \$525,000 spent in Redcliffe on social housing by the state government this year and a small part of over 13,000 social housing units on the peninsula. The same process of delivering affordable housing is continuing to be rolled out right across the state. In the 2009-10 budget \$371 million was set aside to build new social housing on top of the \$155 million spent in the last year on repairs and maintenance. Over the last year the state government has funded community housing organisations to the tune of \$128 million. The state government has put up \$200 million as our

part of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness with the federal government. The federal government has funded social housing to the tune of \$947 million through its economic stimulus package.

Ensuring people have affordable homes is a priority for the Bligh government. That means many young people, families, people on pensions or with mental illness who otherwise would be living rough have the comfort and security of quality and centrally located housing, giving us a stronger and more supportive community in which a higher number of its members can freely use and develop their skills and talents to everyone's benefit.

The Bligh government is standing up for a better lifestyle for all Queenslanders to make the fabric of our society strong. This is in line with our Toward Q2 ambitions to have a healthy, strong community. We deliver on our promises with jobs, infrastructure and affordable social housing right across the state. The Bligh government is delivering on its plans and promises because this is the core business of a good government. The Bligh government wants a better future for all Queenslanders.

Defence Housing

Mrs MENKENS (Burdekin—LNP) (10.12 pm): Housing has never been less affordable than at the moment. Let me refer members to the Defence Housing Australia rental purchase plan. The government runs the DHA's rental purchase plan with the alleged aim of helping low-income earners purchase their own home. But the management of the program in practice, however, looks more like an additional income stream for the government. By buying a house and selling a share of it to their client, the Department of Housing collects funds from the client to cover repayment on the loan for the share the client owns, interest on the loan and rent for the remaining portion of the property. In the meantime, the client is responsible for all council rates and maintenance. In addition, any improvements the client makes to the property at their own expense can backfire on the client because this adds to the value of the property.

Which is where the next stage, the buy-out of the whole property, comes in. I have been contacted by a lady who bought a 25 per cent share in a house under this scheme in 1992 at an initial value of \$95,000, the price the department paid for the property. This is a very small and basic two bedroom kit home in a rural area. Since 1992 the department has not had rates or maintenance expenses. Taking that value as a given, a repayment process should now involve borrowing about \$56,000. But the current valuation of the property is market value, which is \$300,000. So from that figure this lady will now need to borrow around \$175,000 to pay for one half of a house that she signed up to at \$95,000.

Through this transaction the department has made the total interest on the repayment of the house—17 years of interest; the increase in the capital total of \$200,000; 17 years of rent paid on a 50 per cent share; and profit from the client's improvements to the property. How fair is that? How can we say that the low-income earner has been granted a benefit? We see here a situation where this poor woman has been caught as a victim in an escalating debt per kind favour of this Labor government in its money-making scheme.

Housing affordability also applies to sections of our society such as pensioners. In today's *Courier-Mail*, an article titled 'Elderly struggle to find rentals' sums up the problems facing many of our older Queenslanders who do not own their own property. Their already low income is eaten up by high rents. With more than 185,000 pensioners renting accommodation this is a very real area of need where the government has not kept up with the demand. Over the years the government has failed to ensure that housing stock remained relevant to housing demand. As yet unidentified cuts in the promised supply of housing stock to suit the needs of pensioners and other seniors—

(Time expired)

Thomas, Sgt L

Hon. DM WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (10.15 pm): If members were at any time in the last 12 years to list the main community builders in Deception Bay, somewhere near the top of that list would be Sergeant Len Thomas of the Deception Bay PCYC. He spent 12 years at the Deception Bay PCYC and before that six years at the Redcliffe PCYC. He has now retired but not gone. He might even turn up at this week's annual general meeting of the Deception Bay PCYC and it may be that he will be able to receive the honours there that he duly deserves and recognition for what he has achieved, some of which I would like to mention tonight.

Back in the 1980s as community liaison officer in the Redcliffe police district, Len actually started the first Neighbourhood Watch in Queensland. He also set up the first Adopt a Cop program on the Redcliffe peninsula. He has always been drawn to the proactive and preventive side of policing. He was the first officer in charge of the Deception Bay PCYC when it opened its doors in October 1997. Len's hallmark at the Deception Bay PCYC was, of course, proactivity. He wanted to run a PCYC that met the

needs of youth in the area. The sites where incidents involving young people most frequently occurred were well known in the community. Len went out to those places and talked to the kids and then he set up activities that he knew that those kids would be interested in being involved in. By giving them a say in what was going to happen Len's philosophy was that he empowered them and gave them ownership of the local PCYC and thus achieved engagement with young people who might otherwise have been marginalised.

Among the friends who assisted him over the years Len, I am sure, would want to list Mary Otto, who for a long time has led the guides and played a significant role in many community activities; Uncle Allan Gill, an elder of the Aboriginal community in our area; and Chief Hanamen Hunt of the Samoan community. Among the achievements of which Len is most proud is the fact that the PCYC has successfully engaged with the Aboriginal and Samoan communities in our region. Over the years Len has changed the lives of thousands of my young constituents, always for the better. On behalf of a grateful community, Len, thanks for all that you have done.

Southern Moreton Bay Islands, Parking

Mr DOWLING (Redlands—LNP) (10.18 pm): Tonight I rise to talk about the plight of residents of the Southern Moreton Bay islands, or SMBI as they are known: Russell, Lamb, Macleay and Karragarra. These residents will be persecuted by Redland City Council. This community is being asked to pay for parking. Is paying for parking discriminatory? Is it discriminatory when other park and rides are free to encourage the use of public transport? Yes, park and rides are seen as an investment in a viable transport system, but not in Redlands and not at Wienam Creek. Residents of SMBI are a parochial lot, many of them Labor voters, battlers, hardworking, decent people who just want to be treated fairly and respectfully. They have suffered 40 years of neglect from both sides of the House. The issues have never properly been considered. I believe SMBI needs to be removed from the planning scheme and treated as a special planning area to address the issues specific to island communities.

This community was conceived and predicated on a bridge being the primary transport link. When the bridge option was removed back in the early days, the islands were heading for a train wreck. Subsequent governments failed to recognise the issues. In my previous role as councillor and deputy mayor I met with ministers to discuss the issue and see what plan they had for SMBI. The plan was no plan and still is. There is no plan to roll out TransLink for the island ferry service. There is no plan to link the islands to each other. There is no plan for parking. There is just no plan. Twenty thousand to 25,000 people will be isolated in a puddle not 40 kilometres from this building in Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland. Maintaining the transport route by dredging is not occurring and the jetty offers little or no protection from the elements.

This is a debacle in planning of biblical proportions. It cannot be allowed to continue. The Redland City Council is ill equipped and unable to fund the considerable infrastructure required. It is also beyond its purview to approve or consider what are rightly state government responsibilities. I ask that this government look at the issues of the bay islands and set in place a policy that will allow the islands to prosper. I ask the state government to intervene and prevent the council from discriminating against SMBI residents by charging for parking. I ask the state government to consider what transport infrastructure it sees servicing SMBI in 20 years. Is it water based with ferries and barges? Is it bridges? Is it tunnels? Is it rail? Is it more of the same three-wise-monkeys policy that we have had for 20 years: see no islands, hear no islands, speak no islands?

Eleven thousand properties can be developed in Moreton Bay. What is the Bligh government doing about it? There is no plan. The Redland City Council cannot afford the bay islands' needs and neither can the residents of Redlands. The solution is a mature, intelligent, bipartisan approach. Local, state and federal governments have a role to play. Denying the problem or buck-passing does not resolve it.

Child Protection

Ms JARRATT (Whitsunday—ALP) (10.21 pm): Tonight I focus on the topic of children. Of course, last week was Child Protection Week and I was pleased to play my part in the launch of this important week in the Mackay-Whitsunday region. Protecting children from harm, abuse and neglect is everyone's business, and Child Protection Week afforded an opportunity to remind the broader community that it takes a village to raise a child, so the wellbeing of our children is the responsibility of all of us.

Many families in our communities and probably in our own streets will at one time or another face the unbearable pressures of life, be it through relentless poverty, addiction to drugs or gambling, unhappy or abusive relationships, depression or any number of other life conditions that result in a downward spiral in which it is the children who are most defenceless and most susceptible to neglect and abuse. Many government and non-government agencies dedicate their existence to supporting families at risk, but despite this effort the dam continues to break and it is our dedicated child safety officers who are at the front line.

In 2007-08 in Queensland there were more than 25,000 notifications of child abuse and/or neglect, of which 44.5 per cent were substantiated. That is an alarming figure and, despite the ever-increasing Child Safety budget and the hard work of a dedicated workforce, children continue to suffer. There is so much that could and perhaps should be said, but tonight I simply want to say thank you to our child safety officers and community service workers, who do a tough job on our behalf. I also pass on my thanks to the many foster carers without whom our child protection system would be like a body without a heart. Finally on this topic, I think we all need to be a little more vigilant about what is happening in our own families, our own streets and our own communities just in case we can circumvent the insidious spiral in which children are always the losers.

While I was at the Mackay PCYC for the launch of Child Protection Week I was delighted to witness a playgroup in action. Almost 100 children took advantage of the vast array of colourful toys and equipment on offer at the PCYC, including junior jumping castles and trampolines, Fred Flinstone cars and motorbikes, slides and even Mr Balloon, who had the youngsters entranced with his delicate arts. Well done to the PCYC, which plays such an important role and does such a fantastic job in engaging our youth and providing them with age-appropriate activity.

Finally, I want to mention three particular children who played a very important role in a special event last Saturday. Sasha, Aiden and Taylor were part of the bridal party for their mum and dad, Bronwyn and Darin Taha, who, after 12 years of sussing it out, finally tied the knot. Bronwyn is my assistant electorate officer and I was delighted to witness her marriage to Darin, who made a very proud and handsome groom. Ziggy and I wish them every happiness for their future together and hope that they are enjoying their honeymoon in Townsville.

Underground Coal Gasification

Mrs PRATT (Nanango—Ind) (10.24 pm): Underground coal gasification is an experimental technology and one of two pilot programs with the opportunity to demonstrate the technical, environmental and commercial viability of the technology being undertaken by Cougar Energy MDLA 385. The Underground Coal Gasification Policy of 2009 states at point 6—

During the pilot phase it will be the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Agency to monitor and report on the UCG pilot project and this will include the development of environmental management strategies and requirements.

Let us concentrate on that sentence for a minute: the EPA will develop environmental management strategies and requirements after the project has gone ahead—that is, after any damage, which is really an unknown quantity at this point, will be done. That is not good enough for the people of Kingaroy when the town is so close, located on flat terrain and in the path of prevailing winds.

Cougar Energy has made an application to add mineral (f) to a tenure under the Mineral Resources Act 1989. Section 208 of the act states—

(3A) If the mineral to be added to the licence is mineral (f), the Minister may only approve the application if the Minister is satisfied the public interest will not be adversely affected by the addition.

Cougar Energy is undertaking a pilot experimental project and the EPA will develop environmental management strategies and requirements after the project has gone ahead. How can the minister be satisfied that the public interest will not be adversely affected by the addition of mineral (f)? The minister cannot say that there will be no adverse effects to the community of Kingaroy. The Minister cannot know if there will be any contamination to the underground water that it is believed currently supplies water to communities as far afield as Peranga. Dr Cliff Mallet of CSIRO, in *Earthmatters* of September 2004, states—

Underground coal gasification should be carried out where groundwater can be controlled or where there is no usable groundwater.

There is high-quality potable groundwater at the MDL site. The minister cannot be satisfied that ground subsidence, once the coal is burnt, will not alter the flow of the underground water. He cannot be satisfied there will be no contamination. He cannot be satisfied there will be no structural damage to local government and individual infrastructure. He cannot be satisfied there will be no adverse effects on the community by the addition of mineral (f).

I ask the minister to use the power invested in him to halt the project and the use of mineral (f) until he and the people in the south can be satisfied there will be no adverse effects on the community. The more I investigate this process, the more I question it. My initial support is waning. When landholders from the surrounding communities are unsure of long-term impacts and fail to get answers, they will object very loudly and do everything in their power to stop this proposal.

Narangba Valley State High School; Morayfield State High School

Mr RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (10.27 pm): All the schools in my electorate are outstanding educational institutions, and I am very privileged to represent those school communities in the Queensland parliament. In the past few weeks I have been able to attend a number of local events hosted by schools in my electorate. One such event was the Narangba Valley State High School 2009-10 student leader investiture. This ceremony acknowledges the strong and committed leadership of the outgoing student leaders and celebrates the trust and great honour bestowed upon the incoming student leaders. Accordingly, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and dedication consistently displayed by the outgoing school captains, Karla Van Grinsven and Michael Anstey, and the house captains and members of the student council executive during the past executive year.

Also, I congratulate the incoming student leaders: school captains Nathan Newton and Kristiane Fox; house captains Stacey Martin, Sheridan Budd, Nathaniel Edwards, Sara Moffett, Kharla Jones, Katelyn Roberts, Rachel Roth and Meg Thompson; and members of the student council executive Lauren Darben, Caitlin Fitzgerald, Jessica Barr and Trent Clark. A common saying around Narangba Valley State High School is 'respect, integrity and commitment'. I have no doubt that the incoming student leaders will consistently exhibit those qualities in their role of serving the needs of their school community.

It would be remiss of me not to comment on the actual student investiture ceremony. The solo violin performance by Jennifer Thomsen, the singing of the national anthem by Amy Bryant and the musical pieces performed by the Narangba Valley State High School Symphonic Wind Ensemble and Aleisha Edwards were, as always, impressive and emphasised the amazing resident talent at the Narangba Valley State High School. Cameron McRae, who was the first co-captain of Narangba Valley State High School in 2003, was the keynote speaker for the ceremony. Cameron is to be commended for his instructive words and insights about the demands and expectations of leadership.

Also, I was fortunate to participate in the National Schools Tree Day at Morayfield State High School. Participation in this year's National Schools Tree Day by the Morayfield State High School grew from an idea of the year 9 Green Team. The year 9 Green Team is to be commended on their vision and their commitment to our environment and our future. Along with the year 9 Green Team, some year 11 students and school principal Sharyn Donald, I was pleased to contribute to the green space at the Morayfield State High School by planting trees at various locations around the school.

I was also pleased to be able to spend some time chatting with some of the year 11 students. If you ever want an example of young people who are role models, who are people of integrity, who have a positive view to the future and who are outstanding advocates for their school and community, then you need look no further than the students of Morayfield State High School. I congratulate the teachers and students of Morayfield State High School on the outstanding results in the NAPLAN tests. I am particularly proud of their placement among the top 20 improvers.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Attwood, Bates, Bleijie, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Darling, Davis, Dempsey, Dick, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Farmer, Finn, Flegg, Foley, Fraser, Gibson, Grace, Hincliffe, Hobbs, Hoolihan, Hopper, Horan, Jarratt, Johnson, Johnstone, Jones, Keech, Kiernan, Kilburn, Knuth, Langbroek, Lawlor, Lucas, McArdle, McLindon, Male, Malone, Menkens, Messenger, Mickel, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nicholls, Nolan, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pratt, Reeves, Rickuss, Roberts, Robinson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Seeney, Shine, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Spence, Springborg, Stevens, Stone, Struthers, Stuckey, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson