



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

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NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (9.58 pm): On 20 June 2010 the Premier announced a long-term plan for North Stradbroke Island and its residents without warning and without consultation with the community. Since then, my office and the office of the federal member for Bowman, Andrew Laming, received many requests for more information. I wrote to the Premier and asked the Minister for Mines and Energy during estimates to release all impact assessments—job, economic, environment, tourism et cetera—to the public, but nothing looking like a proper study or report has been provided thus far.

Yesterday, the Minister for Sustainability incorrectly stated that the LNP accepted the Premier's decision. To correct the minister, the LNP did not accept it, but we did welcome the news that the Premier had finally agreed to the LNP's call to make 50 per cent national park available in 2011. But that is where our similarities and support ends.

Straddie is not only an island of great beauty, natural wonder, beautiful beaches and a native koala population, among other features, but it also has a sizeable permanent population of more than 2,000 people. It has three main townships, police stations, a primary and a secondary school and during holidays has tens of thousands of visitors. So Straddie is a unique island in many respects and needs to be treated that way. In terms of its population and economy, it is at a difficult juncture.

In reference to Straddie, for her endorsement of the Premier's rushed and imposed plan, the Minister for Sustainability should be called the 'minister for unsustainability' as Labor's plan will only produce an unsustainable island. Labor's plan will produce an unsustainable island population. Since 2001, the permanent population has been slowly shrinking. If the Premier shuts down sandmining, it will likely shrink further and faster. Labor's plan will produce an unsustainable island economy with a loss of \$130 million of economic benefit. The Premier is in dream land if she thinks that ecotourism is just suddenly going to fill that gap. In fact, Labor cannot even keep the ferries at Toondah Harbour, the gateway channel to Straddie, from running aground at low tide as they do now.

The Premier's plan will produce an unsustainable job situation, with more than 600 jobs to go and with a replacement guarantee of no more than 12 ranger jobs in the national park. The 'minister for unsustainability' needs to leave her George Street bunker and listen to island residents as I have done. After the minister and Premier flew in to talk to the TV cameras and a few select locals, I sent a survey to every residential home—636 people, almost half the adult population, responded. To start with, 95 per cent of residents surveyed said they had not been consulted by the Premier. They thanked me for asking and caring. This makes a joke of the unsustainability minister's claim they are consulting the people. A telling 88 per cent of residents outright rejected the Premier's plan and there is more detail yet to follow.

The island residents who I represent live in hope that Queensland Labor in any shape or form will start listening to them. But they have stopped listening. They are sending Straddie backward, not forward, and the only way to make them listen is to move them out.

(Time expired)