



Speech by

Mr M. ROWELL

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

Hansard 19 November 1998

MOURILYAN HARBOUR

Mr ROWELL (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (8.27 p.m.): Mourilyan Harbour was identified in the Far North Queensland 2010 Strategic Development Plan as an opportunity to expand vital trade in the north of the State. In the past, the port has been used for the movement of sugar products, which involved vessels leaving the harbour with a full cargo. At present, the harbour is not suited to fully laden vessels bringing cargo into the harbour.

It has been estimated that, to cope with an application now being processed by the Ports Corporation, an amount of \$4.2m would be required to bring in vessels of 40,000 dead weight tonnage to Mourilyan. The applicant wants to bring shipments of fertiliser into Mourilyan, which could have a positive impact on the cost of production and availability to the sugar and horticultural industries in this section of Queensland. The redemption of debt on borrowings required by the Ports Corporation makes the proposal unattractive to the applicant. It would not be an unreasonable request that the Government consider such a proposal as a community service obligation for the people and industry in north Queensland.

Mourilyan Harbour is strategically located to service the coastal region and the Palmerston Highway to the tablelands would be an ideal route for heavy industry road transport usage. That would reduce the pressure on the Kuranda Range access to the tablelands and beyond. Now that there is a major player interested in providing an industry that would provide jobs and opportunity, it is incumbent on the State Government to support the initiative to ensure the harbour at Mourilyan reaches its potential. Although this may be an application for a particular company to create an industry, based on the availability of access to Mourilyan Harbour, it would provide a facility for other heavy industries to come to the area.
