



Speech by

**Hon. R. WELFORD**

**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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Hansard 26 August 1998

### **REVOCATION OF STATE FOREST AREAS**

**Hon. R. J. WELFORD** (Evertton—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Natural Resources) (2.44 p.m.) I move—

- "(1) That this House agrees that the Proposal by the Governor in Council to revoke the setting apart and declaration as State Forest under the Forestry Act of all that part of State forest 571 described as Lot 2 on plan Sp103411 and containing an area of 0.9786 of a hectare, be carried out.
- (2) That Mr Speaker convey a copy of this Resolution to the Minister for submission to His Excellency the Governor in Council."

This proposal makes provision for the revocation of an area of 9,786 square metres from State forest 571, which is located near Nerang. The proposal arises from a request from the Gold Coast City Council, seeking to utilise a small section of the State forest in conjunction with an adjoining park and recreation reserve for a criterium cycling circuit. Council and the community have identified a need for a safe, off-road cycling facility which will meet the training and competitive needs of local cyclists and which, while not in use for events, will satisfy the casual and passive recreational needs of the general public. Council has applied for and received financial support from the Office of Sport and Recreation to progress this development. The balance of the cost will be met from council funds.

The circuit is located generally within the council's park and recreation reserve R1214. Use of a small section of the adjoining State forest will improve the design of the facility. The council commissioned a fauna and flora study of the affected area prior to commencing development, and the track design was modified to accommodate the findings. The council has agreed that part of park and recreation reserve R1214 which is not required for the velodrome and which contains open eucalypt forest will be made available for inclusion in State forest 571. Consequently, there will be no reduction in the final area of either reserve.

The velodrome will be a significant regional facility for competitive cycling and will be used during the Asia-Pacific Masters Games, which are scheduled to be held biennially on the Gold Coast for the next 10 years. The primary benefit, however, will be to the local community for recreational purposes.

The proposed land exchange has been carefully considered. The action will have no adverse effect on the management of State forest 571 and will be in the broader public interest. Any surviving native title rights and interests in relation to the land have been acquired by the council, and the council will meet all costs associated with the proposal.

This proposal needs to be expedited because the council is anxious to commence construction of the velodrome. As has been indicated already, council in fact undertook some minor clearing of the site without approval, and I have had some contact with it in respect of that oversight on its part. In any event, we believe that this is an appropriate exchange of land for the facility to be prepared in readiness for the Masters Games later this year. As it stands, there is very limited time in which to complete the facility. Hopefully, with this matter being resolved today the council will be able to proceed in time for the facility to be available.

With the exchange of land being provided, the State forest resource is protected and the conservation values of the area are not inappropriately diminished. More particularly, outside the times of its use either for the Masters Games or for cycling purposes generally, the passive recreational needs

of the community of the region will be enhanced, or at least preserved, by this arrangement. It is a relatively neutral exercise in that regard.

I understand that this issue was in fact considered by the previous Government and that it was looked upon favourably by it. I am simply carrying forward the necessary processes to see the project brought to fruition for the benefit of all concerned, including the Gold Coast City Council and the State Government. I commend this motion to the House.

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