



Speech by

**DESLEY BOYLE**

**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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### **MANOORA URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAM**

**Ms BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (11.14 p.m.): Tonight I wish to speak about what has been termed a leading-edge project in Cairns, and that is the Manoora Urban Renewal Program. Honourable members would know that this community renewal project is occurring in a suburb that has 500 public houses—a suburb that, given our current knowledge, was not well designed. In Australia and other western countries it is no longer the fashion to cluster public housing in large areas. In fact, we distribute public housing throughout city areas rather than concentrate it in one area. Nonetheless, in many Australian cities, including Cairns, we have concentrations of public housing.

Unfortunately, within the Manoora community a concentration of public housing has led to social dysfunction, a high rate of unemployment and, at different times, a high rate of juvenile crime. The Manoora Urban Renewal Program, which has been described as leading edge and as setting the benchmark for community renewal projects, deserves to be mentioned in this House. Although it is to the credit of the Beattie Government that we are in this position, I must give credit to the knowledge that has gone before us in other cities around Australia.

We now know that community renewal is not just about upgrading houses or selling off some of the houses and introducing a broader range of residents to the area. It requires us to move into other areas of social and community activity, and that is the edge that the Manoora community renewal program has. It has addressed employment, recreation activities and, of particular importance to the Manoora area, activities for youth.

Last week I was pleased to accompany the Minister for Public Works and Housing, Robert Schwarten, when he officially opened the first batch of 20 public housing dwellings that have been refurbished and that will be offered for sale. Those dwellings have been upgraded at a cost of around \$600,000 and they will contribute to broadening the residential mix of the area, as well as provide new funds to finance other housing projects. The houses represent just one small step in the renewal program that, nonetheless, is reshaping Manoora and the lives of those who live there.

The next stage of the project, which will cost around \$1m, will involve the refurbishment of a further 32 houses and five duplexes by the end of June 1999. It is intended that 11 properties will be offered for home ownership and that 21 will remain occupied by public housing tenants. I am pleased to inform the House that, as this project gathers speed, those who choose to live in the area rather than opt to move out of it to even newer dwellings, are saying, "No, this is our home, our community, our suburb and this is where we wish to stay."

This project has proved excellent in bringing together the community. The community is able to speak to the Minister through a focus group of elected representatives and to indicate quite clearly what the priority projects for that area should be. The one that has brought the greatest pride to me in my short time as the member for Cairns is an employment project through which six long-term unemployed young men from the Manoora area were given employment and horticultural training. It has been a great pleasure to see the pride in their eyes, the way their shoulders have gone back and the way they have turned up for work day after day without missing a day. It has been a pleasure also to see the pride in their mothers' eyes.

This is truly contributing to a better community. This is more than just a street or public housing upgrade; it is community renewal. I recognise the important and strong representation on behalf of the

community's wishes that the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing, Robert Swarten, has given on this project. Both he and the people of Manoora deserve the credit for a project of which we can be proud.

Time expired.

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