



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR GAVEN

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INTEGRATED PLANNING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr POOLE (Gaven—ALP) (12.36 p.m.): I take this opportunity to speak in support of the changes in the bill to the Integrated Development Assessment System, or IDAS as it is known. Any development assessment process must strike a balance between industry's expectations of an appropriate and efficient assessment of development proposals on the one hand and the community's expectations of an accountable and transparent environmentally responsible decision-making process on the other. I am pleased to say that the reforms in this bill serve to address both sets of expectations.

From an industry perspective, there are many proposals that will further streamline the IDAS process and deliver timely development approvals. However, public accountability has also been enhanced in many respects. For example, removing the requirements for assessment managers to give application acknowledgment notices responds to industry representations that acknowledgment notices were consuming valuable time and resources and adding little value to the process. Indeed, they were serving to muddy the responsibilities of applicants and assessment managers for ensuring applications were competent and legible.

At the same time, the new and simpler procedures that replace acknowledgment notices make the responsibilities of applicants and assessment managers clearer and will result in more properly made applications that are legible to the community at large. The numerous reforms in the bill aimed at supporting the assessment of conceptual development applications will clarify and streamline processes for approving large-scale, staged, master planned communities while at the same time establishing benchmarks for assessment managers considering such proposals to ensure that the rights of the community to comment on them at the appropriate stages are not compromised. The relationship between applicants' rights to change an application, renotifying the application, and returning to an earlier stage of IDAS have also changed to respond to industry calls for greater flexibility, but also in a way that ensures the public has a right to comment further if the change is significant.

Environmental assessment under IDAS has been greatly enhanced, primarily by expanding the role of advice agencies and introducing specific processes for preparing environmental impact statements. This responds to community calls for enhancing the environmental credentials of IDAS but also serves the need of industry by removing potential duplication of assessments under the Commonwealth legislation.

Public notification may now start at any time after the application is properly made. This will assist in reducing delays for the more routine and less complex development proposals. However, requiring notification to be carried out again if the application is later changed significantly also protects the rights of the public to comment on complete proposals.

The bill explains more clearly the responsibilities of the assessment manager in the decision stage, and in particular the considerations they must have for community rights when an application seeks to vary the effects of a planning scheme, and their obligations to apply the precautionary principle in the absence of complete information. This will serve to enhance the community's confidence in the decision-making process while also making clear applicants' responsibilities to provide appropriate information in support of their proposals.

The new compliance assessment arrangement in the bill responds not only to the industry concerns over red tape for technical work approvals but also provides a basis for clarifying the roles and responsibilities of private certifiers in IDAS, which has been causing community concern due to the

potential for building approvals to be given before appropriate planning assessments are being carried out. The bill also contains a host of refinements designed to assist the community and industry alike by simplifying and clarifying IDAS requirements.

Before I commend the bill to the House, I compliment the minister for the way in which she has gone about her task. It has been an enormous, almost overwhelming task to get everybody to sing off the same sheet of music, especially on the Gold Coast with the problems we have had there, where we have heard comments by certain outspoken councillors who certainly do not seem to want to work with us.

The staff involved in supporting the minister, too, must be complimented. In my electorate of Gaven, and especially with the problems we have had with the Helensvale town centre, maybe now that we have a clearer set of guidelines to work from these things will not be anticipated in the future. I commend the bill to the House.
