



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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INTEGRATED RESORT DEVELOPMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Mr CUMMINS (Kawana—ALP) (11.25 a.m.): The Integrated Resort Development Act 1987 was introduced to meet a need for planning and development and management mechanisms for large-scale resort developments, similar to things such as Sanctuary Cove, which has its own act. I believe five resorts have been developed using the IRDA. It has become obvious that there is a need to amend the IRDA to allow greater flexibility in the way future development of resorts under the IRDA can occur.

Members should realise that the processes for planning and development applications and approvals have changed dramatically over the years, and I believe for the better. I have no doubt that this parliament will continue to see amendments from time to time come before it to improve the systems for the greater benefit of our communities. Planning documents and approval processes should be regarded as growing or evolving documents or guidelines, that is, they need to have the ability to adapt and change if a better outcome can be achieved, whether it be for the environment, the community or both.

The state has a broad range of statutory and jurisdictional obligations with respect to promoting the planning and appropriate management of communities, including providing an environment conducive to sustainable and ongoing development. The Integrated Resort Development Amendment Bill 2002 seeks to address technical problems and allow greater flexibility in the subdivision approval process.

I was very lucky to be part of the Caloundra City Council development approval process that saw—

Mrs Carryn Sullivan: Council's loss.

Mr CUMMINS:—I thank the member—the Kawana Waters Development Control Plan signed off in the late nineties. For years we had seen questionable councillor antics in fighting with the state government and fighting with the developer.

Mr Shine: You don't see it up here.

Mr CUMMINS: We had to get over that because it was slowing up the entire Sunshine Coast and especially the region that I represent, Kawana and Kawana Waters. It does not impact on the community in a positive way when people out of their own small-mindedness want to hold up good progress. Kawana Waters was to be developed in the late or early sixties when the state government entered into an agreement with a developer to build the Nicklin Way from Caloundra to Mooloolaba and develop the land. I am not being critical of that deal. Hindsight is a wonderful thing. I think about a half a dozen different developers have had a go at this. Some have gone broke and some have on-sold it. At that time we had to recognise that the Sunshine Coast needed to grow in the best possible way for the community, both in terms of sustainable development and room for growth. We sought to get positives out of it. The state government of the day sat down with the developer and the local government and in a tripartite agreement came up with the Kawana Waters Development Control Plan.

In my opinion, master planned communities are ideal for bureaucrats and elected representatives to work with because at the end of the day we know what we are setting out to achieve because it is a blueprint for the entire area. In a lot of areas we have smaller developers who develop

smaller parcels of land. More often than not they are trying to achieve a good outcome because a good product will sell better than a poor product. Developers realise that in a very competitive market a good product will attract a good premium, a good price and a good return if it is done properly.

The Kawana Waters area is being developed under a master plan and I commend all those who were involved. It was a very lengthy process with lots of threats of court action. I believe the majority of councillors, the state government and the developers were looking to achieve an outcome that was good for the entire community. The master plan includes construction of a 2.5 metre man-made lake which will, I believe, be called Lake Kawana. This project will boost the range of recreational opportunities available to all residents on the Sunshine Coast. This bill will improve the outcomes and the end result for the communities. I believe that both sides of this House will always set out to achieve what is best for the community both in the short term and in the long term.

Ms Keech: After all, that is what it is all about.

Mr CUMMINS: I fully agree. There will always be differences of opinion on the way things should be done, but the minister has a good grasp of the planning process, coming as she does from a very distinguished career in local government. Local government is a very important area. We need to set down guidelines to make sure that developers work within the boundaries. We need to give them autonomy to make necessary decisions.

As I said earlier, planning documents are growing documents because what could be a town plan in 2002 may not be adaptable in 2005 or 2010. I always refer back to a town plan for, I think, Caloundra in the mid-1990s which did not have a designation for Internet cafes because we did not have such a thing as Internet cafes. That is just a small item but things grow, evolve and change. As we all know, in the old days a high street was a place in town where people of my grandmother's age would go to pay the bills. These days the planning arrangements for communities have changed because bills can be paid via the phone or via the Internet. It is not necessary for people to go to town as much and, as a result, the high street has changed and it has become more of a focal point where people meet. Planning has to adapt to make sure that these issues are addressed.

Under the Kawana Waters control plan I believe the end result will be a very positive one for the community. The planning legislation that is before the House sets out to achieve a better outcome in the short term and in the long term.

At Lake Kawana we are seeing the erection of three-storey buildings which will be creating jobs. One of the new companies coming to the area is Insurers Hotline. This company expects to employ 100 staff within six months and the number is expected to double to more than 200 when fully established. This is part of the planning process. In the old days we could not see our way clear to allowing the developer to sell off another 50 to 100 residential lots. We needed to ensure that we had commercial development, retail development, residential development and recreation areas. This is all about good planning.

Insurers Hotline is the first of many companies that are expected to create thousands of jobs in the Kawana area in the coming years. As we all realise, the Sunshine Coast is one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. The present population of 250,000 could increase by about a further 200,000 over the next 20 years. I think all members should realise that when Queensland becomes the second most populous state in Australia a lot of people will live in regional areas but a lot will live in the south-east corner.

Planning has come ahead in leaps and bounds in the last decade. Anyone can be critical in hindsight and say, 'If only we had better planning mechanisms 20 years ago!' I believe they were trying to do their best in those days, but these days under the IPA legislation and other government regulations it is vital that development is sustainable and that we achieve the best outcomes. It must not be a quick hit and miss where people are in and gone. With a significantly increased population in south-east Queensland we are going to face some very big issues. I have no doubt that the minister and the cabinet recognise this.

People from all over Australia are going to relocate here and they will need jobs. A lot of people come here to retire and they encourage their children or their friends to accompany them. The Sunshine Coast is a classic area in this regard. People go there and, if the kids do not have a job, they are well into their twenties and thirties and are still living at home. As we all know, unemployment is a terrible cycle that it is difficult to escape.

Jobs, infrastructure and a variety of recreational facilities are all part of master planned developments. The development of Kawana Waters commenced in 1960 with the majority of activity focused on the eastern side, or the beach side, of the Nicklin Way that had to be built under the contract. Since then, Kawana Waters has been progressively developed by a different range of owners. Kawana Waters has been developed under a development agreement, a transport infrastructure agreement and a structure plan approved by the Caloundra City Council. It had to be approved by the

Department of Natural Resources and the Departments of Main Roads and Transport. As I said, that went through in September 1999.

I am not going to bell the cat about councils combining, but the Hideaway Waters and Mountain Creek areas just over the river in Maroochy Shire are also part of the development of Kawana Waters. Because two councils had to deal with what is basically one parcel of land which is divided by a river, the parcel of land on the other side of the river did not become part of the Kawana Waters DCP that was signed off by the Caloundra City Council. There were little things such as whether the school should go on the Maroochy side of the river or on the Caloundra side. I did not have an issue with that because the experts in the Department of Education will tell us where it should go. Some small-minded, parochial councillors would say, 'No, it has to go on our side.' That is absolutely ludicrous. It has to go in the best place for the entire community. We must think regionally.

We are facing a lot of infrastructure issues. Sunshine Coast residents are extremely grateful to the Beattie Labor government for putting in money for road infrastructure, including the Kawana arterial. That road is being constructed under the infrastructure agreement. The developers are putting in bridges in certain sections of the road. The government has contributed either \$11 million or \$13 million. This road will comprise a major link to the Sunshine Motorway. This connection is badly needed and is very much appreciated. The developers need to talk to various state departments and the Maroochy Shire Council in order to ensure that the northern area of the development complements the southern area because, at the end of the day, it is one big region. We have arranged meetings and hopefully we will progress it. I cannot be critical of Maroochy Shire Council at this point because we want to make sure that they come on board and that we achieve a very good outcome.

As a direct result of the master plan initiative, over the next 13 years—that could be reduced to five or 10 years because of the growth in the area and the fact that the product is selling fast; there is a waiting list of people wanting to buy into the area—it is expected that the population of Kawana Waters will grow from about 22,000 or 23,000 to close to 40,000.

Ms Keech: Over what time period?

Mr CUMMINS: It is said 13 years, but it could be as short as five or eight, because as quick as the land can be sold there is a waiting list of people wanting to buy it. They are developing a very good product at a very good price. With a master planned community, what is there at the end of the day is guaranteed. It is planned to have jobs in a certain area, a commercial area, an industrial area and recreational areas. People like to see that, not hollow promises. It is set in stone. It is part of an agreement that the state government signed off on, the local government signed off on and the developers signed off on. So it is a very positive way to go. We should be encouraging as many master plan communities as we can to address the growth in our areas. Lake Kawana, which is part of this area, will provide a major sport and leisure facility for non-motorised water based activities. It will act as a hub for surrounding land uses, including the sport and recreation reserve known as Quad Park.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Mickel): Order! I welcome to the public gallery students and teachers from the year 10 history class of the Beerwah State High School.

Mr CUMMINS: Again, the Beerwah school is another great Sunshine Coast school that all members should be very proud of.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr CUMMINS: There are some excellent schools on the Sunshine Coast, especially in the hinterland. We should be very proud of them. They put in some good work.

The Kawana Waters master plan will also see a Kawana Business Village, which has been endorsed by the state government; a Smart State Business Park, which the Minister for State Development launched; the Kawana Waters town centre; and a recreational precinct known as Eastbank. Eastbank is again part of the master plan and will be like South Bank but on a much smaller scale. It will be recreational. It cannot just be one big long park. It will have a mix of community activities, community halls, bridges, restaurants, beaches, et cetera. It is a first for the Sunshine Coast and will assist Rowing Queensland in its bid to form a Sunshine Coast schools program which will culminate in a head-of-the-river style regatta. The lake will be available for use by the broader Sunshine Coast community as well as elite athletes in training.

As I said, Quad Park is part of the Kawana Waters master plan and lies at the north-eastern end of Lake Kawana. It is a regional sport and recreation precinct that has recently received significant state government and Caloundra City Council funding for a development program and an upgrade of existing fields. Eastbank will comprise 12 hectares of land and one kilometre of absolute lake frontage to be developed along similar lines to other famous banks in Australia such as South Bank. Eastbank will comprise public parkland, open space, community buildings, cafes, kiosks and other commercial activities. It will be developed in multiple stages between now and 2009 and is very close to a major release at this stage which is looking very good. Upon the completion of the development of Kawana

Waters, it is estimated that 10,000 jobs will be created. This is part of the master plan when we said that we would not just allow land to be cut up and sold off for houses; we need jobs and areas to be zoned for job creation. It is anticipated that upon completion over 6,000 people will be employed within the business village and town centre alone.

Ms Keech: That's a lot of jobs.

Mr CUMMINS: It certainly is. As I said, the population could grow from 250,000-odd to 400,000 on the Sunshine Coast. This is one area which needs to grow in terms of jobs. There are also areas to the west, to the north and to the south. Job opportunities are also expected to be generated through home based businesses, schools and similar services.

The Sunshine Coast is one of Queensland's most diverse and growing regions covering an area of 3,100 square kilometres. The Sunshine Coast comprises three local governments—Caloundra, Maroochy and Noosa shires. Maroochy is by far the largest shire with over 50 per cent of the population residing in the area. In 2001 the estimated resident population of the region was 250,000 with an annual growth rate of 3.3 per cent—far outstripping Queensland's average growth of 1.8 per cent and south-east Queensland growth of 2.2 per cent. That is why I am constantly in contact with the minister to ensure that we are planning well for the future. The region has an age profile reflecting a large concentration of young families. The most populated age groups in the region are five to nine, 10 to 14, 35 to 39 and 40 to 44 years. By 2016 the population will reach 382,000. In closing, the bill provides for greater flexibility and clarity for the process within existing integrated resorts under the Integrated Resort Development Act. I commend the minister and her department in commending the bill to the House.