



Speech by

Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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TRAFFIC AND PARKING PROBLEMS, MOOLOOLABA

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (11.08 p.m.): I rise to speak about an issue in my electorate, in particular wonderful Mooloolaba. I know that a number of members are going there for their holidays at Christmas time, and I am sure that they will enjoy themselves. It is a wonderful location. It has had some very attractive landscaping and appropriate development along the esplanade and other areas in recent years. One of the challenges we face now—we have faced it already, but it is an emerging problem for the medium to long term as well—relates to traffic and parking issues. The council is currently attempting to tackle this issue, but I call on the Maroochy Shire Council to not just have a short-term vision with regard to the appropriate parking and transport needs of this wonderful tourist location.

The council needs to do a comprehensive study of medium- to long-term needs in relation to traffic and parking in this area. We know that some areas for potential future parking are being contemplated for development at this time. If land is locked up by signing off on a development today and it cannot be put to the best long-term use, a fundamental mistake will have been made. I believe that the council needs to look at what parking needs will be in 10 or 15 years and have a strategy in place such that when it is making decisions today in relation to immediate needs it does not sign off on the best long-term options.

Currently there is a study under way into the Sunshine Motorway upgrades and interchanges. There is an opportunity for council to work with the state government to look at options such as park-and-ride facilities or some connection with public transport from the Sunshine Motorway and the future CAMCOS public transport system. The CAMCOS corridor connects with the Sunshine Motorway. There are opportunities, but there is a risk of losing those opportunities if the proper planning is not done now.

I can see a future when traffic will be taken off the esplanade and some of the main streets of Mooloolaba when there is appropriate public transport. We are not at that point yet, but if we are to really nurture and look after this beautiful location then appropriate planning needs to be done now. The right decisions need to be made now to ensure the best long-term options are not lost.

It is a wonderful location. I commend those who have a heart and a vision for the best tourism outcomes for this area. The growth in jobs and investment in this particular area has been phenomenal, but we need to make sure that the beauty and attractiveness of the area is preserved. Managing the traffic issues and making sure they do not become a frustration that turns people away in the future are critically important.