



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Tuesday, 29 November 2005

MOOLOOLABA SPIT

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (10.12 pm): Members of the public must have their say about the future of the Mooloolaba Spit so that it is protected in accordance with their vision. I urge the public to get involved in the current Mooloolaba Spit Futures Study, which is looking at the land use issues around this beautiful and strategically important piece of the Sunshine Coast. The upcoming public workshop is one way of doing that, but I also urge members of the public to lodge their submissions about what they wish to see in this area.

I believe that a lot of people would not be aware that the land at the end of the Mooloolaba Spit is currently held by the state government in freehold title. That means that it would be worth millions of dollars if the state government gave in to the temptation of making a quick buck and sold it on the open market to developers. Currently, that land houses government services such as Queensland Transport and the traffic control signals centre for the Sunshine Coast. Although some of those services can and should be located elsewhere because they have no inherent connection to the water, I believe that it would be a detrimental step if the state government considered flogging off this land for commercial profit. It is vital that the state Labor government resists the temptation to sell out this land in order to receive a quick buck as this land should be retained in public ownership for the public good.

I would like to see this land used for educational facilities such as marine TAFE facilities, water police and other water related uses that add value to the public interest rather than the private purse. I also believe that it is time for renewed flood studies to be undertaken within the Mooloolah River to ensure that more berths, marinas or other structures are not approved without taking into account the potential future impact in the event of a large flood. The Mooloolah River is a jewel and the land around it is highly prized. It is vital that the public interest is maintained for future generations and not squandered because of short-term, poor planning on the land and in the water. I believe that the Mooloolaba Spit Futures Study, which is a joint planning project between the Maroochy shire and the state government, is an important process but it will succeed only if the community is aware of all of the issues that are currently being considered and which could radically change the future of this fragile area.

I do not support the selling off of public land on the Mooloolaba Spit as I believe that it is too strategically important and too fragile. The traffic issues alone mean that putting higher density development on the end of the Spit, if the government does sell a part of it off, would go down like a lead balloon publicly. Thus we need to be vigilant that this does not gain currency with the decision makers. Once again, I urge the public to be involved with this public consultation process to understand some of the issues that are being floated that potentially affect the future of the Spit. We must protect the Spit and keep it in public ownership.