



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

Hansard Wednesday, 9 November 2005

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, MORANBAH

Mr KNUTH (Charters Towers—NPA) (10.20 pm): At the last sitting of parliament I tabled a petition from 2,000 residents of Moranbah requesting the government to support the proposed 350-lot Nev Tan residential development that the minister for local government and planning used her powers to call in. The Belyando Shire Council's planning scheme for the town of Moranbah was gazetted by the state government on 23 February 1995. This document and the underlying planning study identified the necessity to freeze coal reserves to allow for residential development. It was also noted that in areas designated as future residential there was a coal reserve present.

Three years following that, in 1998, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy issued a mining development licence over the future residential areas identified in the town plan. Without any regard for the town plan, the MDL was issued. The Department of Natural Resources and Mines would have seen that the area proposed to be covered by the MDL had already been approved as future residential. Why then would it have issued the MDL?

In August 2005 the minister called in the 350-lot residential development approved by the council because there was a mining lease over the area. However, the mining lease was approved after the town plan was gazetted. I raise these issues again because there are grave concerns at the moment. Families want an assurance that they can live in Moranbah and enjoy the quality of life that Moranbah has to offer without them being subjected to contaminated dust, airborne silicon, excess noise, lights and other health risks associated with 24-hour open-cut mining operations on their doorstep. Local residents will leave the town in droves if the proposed open-cut mine in the vicinity of the township goes ahead.

I call on the minister to assure Moranbah residents that they will be able to build their homes on the land that her department once approved and gazetted as future residential. The minister must investigate the reasons the Department of Natural Resources and Mines issued an MDL over an area that was already designated as future residential in the town planning scheme. The minister must give the Belyando Shire Council and every other local council in this state a guarantee that their town plans, which have been approved and gazetted by the state government, are valid documents which effectively manage the future land use in the state of Queensland. Finally, I call on the minister for local government and planning to advise whether the 2,000 residents of Moranbah who signed a petition calling on the minister to honour the council's current town planning scheme will receive a response.