



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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MOOLOOLABA SPIT

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (8.47 pm): Mooloolaba is a jewel in the Sunshine Coast crown of tourism destinations. It is a great place for tourists but the locals love it, too. We love its beaches, restaurants and other attractions.

Currently, the Mooloolaba Spit is undergoing a master planning process called the Mooloolaba Spit Futures Study. It is a joint project between state and local government to look at the best long-term planning options for this area, which involves considerable crown land reserves. I support the need for good planning but reserve my judgement on the final recommendations until I see them and can weigh up how well they serve the public interest and preserve this area's natural assets.

I need to flag a number of issues in this limited time that I have here tonight. Firstly, the wharf area does need appropriate redevelopment. However, I caution against the higher density options which have been flagged in the current consultation process. While the leases in this area have a long time to run, I believe that the option of redesigning the western side of the wharf to become a true riverside pedestrian esplanade with better public access must be canvassed as part of this area's future. To date, I do not believe that is a formal option. I believe this does need to come into the process and be part of good planning, consultation and negotiation.

To rejuvenate this area, there is a need for more creative options than simply putting high-rises on part of the council's existing car park or the other crown car park behind the wharf. Thus, it is somewhat disappointing that despite the push for more open space and public access on the spit, the options as to what happens with this section of the wharf have not really been properly canvassed.

With regard to another part of the spit, the caravan part on the eastern side, I table a non-conforming petition of about 3,000 signatories including signatures from about 100 local workers or business owners and more than 500 children calling for the majority of the caravan park to be kept in operation. One option proposes that it be closed down. Another option is that it be partially closed down and a final option is that it remain 90 per cent open.

The petitioners acknowledge that a better connection between the beach side and the western side of the spit could be achieved by losing 10 per cent of caravan sites but they strongly implore decision makers to keep the majority of the Parkyn Parade Caravan Park on the Mooloolaba spit open and available. I have always said that I have a preference for public caravan parks to be maintained particularly near safe beaches where families can enjoy this wonderful, affordable Australian experience. It brings a good mixture of accommodation options to Mooloolaba. However, I have also said in regard to the Mooloolaba park that if the public wanted the caravan park to go to public space in this area I would respect that. However, I do not believe that is the majority feeling at this time from the public. I believe there is still strong support for keeping this very iconic caravan park operating in our local area.