



Speech by

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INTEGRATED PLANNING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (7.50 pm): I rise this evening to speak very briefly to the Integrated Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2006. As has been indicated, the bill proposes to make a number of amendments to the Integrated Planning Act 1997 as well as amending a dozen other pieces of legislation. I know that the shadow minister, the member for Warrego, has made a lengthy speech about this, as have many members of the opposition. Among the amendments the one that I want to speak to is one that amends the definition of 'National Trust' in the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary Act 1976 to include any wholly owned subsidiary of the National Trust. The amendment to clause 91 of the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary Act 1976 is to provide the option for the National Trust to establish a separate company to run the sanctuary as a wholly owned subsidiary.

The Currumbin sanctuary has a special place in the hearts and minds of Gold Coasters and indeed all Queenslanders and any interstate and international visitors who have fed the wallabies, had the sanctuary's mascot rainbow lorikeet land on their head, had a python draped over their shoulders, looked in the distorting mirrors that I remember looking in when I was a kid, enjoyed a snow cone or ridden the train around the bird sanctuary. The sanctuary is truly a Gold Coast institution. What began with Alex Griffiths feeding the local lorikeets when he first gifted the sanctuary in 1947 has grown to become one of Queensland's most loved and eye opening attractions. Millions have enjoyed Currumbin's wildlife experiences. This Easter holidays I look forward to taking my youngest son to see the all-new Rockin' Ranger show featuring Rockin' Ranger Matt, who has built a legion of young fans with his combination of music and shows that give the chance to find out more about our amazing wildlife through entertaining and informative close encounters. All of my kids have had kindy and school trips there, as I did in the 1960s.

Gold Coasters love the bird sanctuary. We have fond memories of its original days and have always taken a keen interest in its development. It is because of this that Gold Coasters have also taken much interest in any suspected pressure placed on the sanctuary. As a Gold Coaster, I am concerned about the mechanism that is being introduced by this bill as it seems that the Currumbin sanctuary may once again be under threat. Indeed, the bill may be evidence of actual pressure on the sanctuary. This threat was almost admitted by the Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women when we read between the lines of the reason behind the bill that, 'The current management structure limits the National Trust's ability to run a successful tourist park.' I note the comments of the member for Currumbin, who of course is more au fait with this issue than I, that this advisory board was set up as an interim measure to help the sanctuary through testing financial times 16 months ago and that this bill now gives formalisation to the process of that board running it. I think it would be a great concern if the board were to find that it cannot run it as an ongoing facility and it may be disposed of in some way. As I say, Gold Coasters would have great concerns if it were to be disposed of.

I think it is worth while to point out that the government does not assist the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary in any way by way of funding, but does give money to that other very worthwhile institution, David Fleay's Wildlife Park. I just hope that the resulting Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary board—which will consist of business, tourism, financial and conservation leaders from the region—which will provide expert strategic advice and support to management, has all the luck in ensuring that this Gold Coast institution carries on well into the future.