



Speech by

Mark McArdle

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

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INTEGRATED PLANNING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr McARDLE (Caloundra—Lib) (6.06 pm): It is with pleasure that I rise to contribute to the debate on the Integrated Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I will limit my comments to clause 13, entitled 'Minor amendments of SEQ regional plan'.

When the South East Queensland Regional Plan was implemented in June 2005, it set the basic parameters for the changing landscape in south-east Queensland until 2026. As we know, the region is comprised of 18 separate councils, all of which will receive major population growth in the foreseeable future. Of course, the regional plan needs to be seen in conjunction with the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2005-2026. It is against both of those documents that the local government management strategies and structure plans become important.

I note that the second reading speech of the minister highlights clearly that we are currently looking at how to implement the South East Queensland Regional Plan, and the amendments to IPA contained herein deal with 'a framework for implementing the plan in each local government area'. This framework then becomes the catalyst by which detailed technical amendments to planning schemes could later be made.

The local growth management strategies and structure plans are governed by guidelines laid down by the Office of Urban Management and are geared to individual councils identifying those elements that need to be put in place and, I assume, time lines to ensure the regional plan is effective and provides the balance that individual local government authorities wish to strike for their populations.

The Sunshine Coast is no different from the rest of Queensland, and councils will need to be very mindful not just of what the regional plan states is going to occur but also of how the population they serve will react to any strategy that they put on paper, hence the necessity stated in the bill for 'adequate public consultation'. This is a process that will be time consuming and, given the breadth of changes that are going to occur on economic, social, community, infrastructure and other fronts, it will not be an easy task to communicate that to the public. However, what it will do is make councils and council bureaucracies focus on the more detailed picture and will allow the wider community a greater understanding of exactly how the future will impact on them. Importantly, the community will have the option of telling the council they do not want development to the extent or on the time line proposed. This gives a balance to the power of developers by placing in the public's hands a sense of veto.

Bad planning results in bad outcomes and throws all components of the plan into chaos thus compounding the bad outcomes. The amendment to the act that I am speaking to allows local growth management strategies or structure plans to amend the South East Queensland Regional Plan. The section being replaced by new section 2.5A.20 deals with minor amendments as stated in new subsection (1)(a), but in new subsection (1)(b) it would appear that a local growth management strategy or structure plan could amend the South East Queensland Regional Plan in more than a minor way.

As I understand it, when this bill was prepared the consultation draft provided to the Local Government Association of Queensland did not make any reference to the new section I have just referred to in the manner that is now being proposed. Does the new section therefore mean that these local growth management strategies and structure plans allow an amendment to the South East Queensland Regional Plan even if that amendment is not of a minor nature? Of course, I bear in mind that the document must be prepared by a local government and submitted to the minister for approval and also have undergone public consultation. What I am simply trying to ascertain in greater detail from the minister is the degree of variance that local growth management strategies or structure plans can have on the South East Queensland Regional Plan.

One of the greatest needs on the Sunshine Coast, and indeed Caloundra, is affordable housing. The cost of housing throughout the south-east corner makes it very difficult for young people or couples to buy a home. These same people are the lifeblood of our future and we need to ensure we provide them with the opportunity to stay in the area of their choice thus making a contribution to that community and injecting new ideas into the mix of the region allowing the region to develop and evolve. I commend the bill to the House.