



Speech by

Mike Horan

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

Hansard Thursday, 2 March 2006

PROPOSED FEEDLOT, WESTBROOK

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (5.35 pm): There has been an application for a feedlot just near a booming outer suburban area of Toowoomba, at Westbrook. The feedlot, for 400 head of class 1 cattle on two acres, will be located in Macauley Road. This feedlot would be three-quarters of a kilometre from the Bunkers Hill school, a rapidly growing school on the outskirts of the rapidly growing area of Westbrook. Westbrook has a new tavern and a new shopping centre. It has become not only a suburban area but also an area to which people are moving for lifestyle.

An experienced cattleman who lives in the area—one of the most experienced cattlemen of central Queensland—states that there is a real risk of Q fever, which is airborne as flies carry the disease. The real concern is particularly for the schoolchildren. Nearly 200 kids attend the rapidly growing school at Bunkers Hill which is just three-quarters of a kilometre down the road from the proposed feedlot.

The feedlot would include ponds that are in a watercourse area. That watercourse often floods into Westbrook Creek and into the Condamine system. It is almost astounding that there does not seem to be a town plan covering this area by the Jondaryan Shire Council, particularly considering the ongoing problems it has had with other intensive industries in the area, and particularly considering this is one of the fastest growing areas of the Jondaryan shire. Many, many young families live in the new subdivisions in this area, in their nice brick veneer homes. Also, of course, many horse studs are being constructed in the area and many lifestyle blocks are located in the immediate vicinity. There are some houses within 500 metres of this proposed 400-head feedlot. International visitors come to the horse studs in the area. However, the main concern is for the families and relate to the smell and the health effects on children.

I will write to the Minister for Health, the Minister for Education, the Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women, the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries and the Jondaryan Shire Council in an endeavour to stop this planned feedlot. It is very important to have feedlots, but not just on the outskirts of major subdivisions and growing towns and villages.

I implore those ministers to stand up for these kids and for the residents. I particularly ask the Jondaryan Shire Council to support the endeavours to have this feedlot application cancelled to allow the people to live in a reasonable state in this community—without the smell, without the stink, without the flies, without the disease risk, without the trucks and traffic and without the problems that will occur, particularly for the children of the Bunkers Hill school.