



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 30 March 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cairns CBD Revitalisation

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.44 am): I recently joined the Cairns City Council Mayor, Kevin Byrne, and the Cairns Port Authority CEO, Brad Geatches, to officially open the \$3.3 million redevelopment of Wharf Street and celebrate the completion of the Cairns CBD Revitalisation Strategy. I was joined by the local members and ministers. I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my ministerial statement in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

In 1999 my Government promised the people of Cairns we would develop and implement a revitalisation strategy to integrate the CBD with the \$70 million Cityport development and \$44 million Esplanade transformation, to which the State contributed \$11.5 million.

The Queensland Government has invested almost \$10 million in the Cairns CBD Revitalisation Strategy and we've worked very closely with Cairns City Council and Cairns Port Authority on the many individual projects—projects including the Forgarty Park Amphitheatre, the new-look City Place and the redevelopment of Shields and Spence streets.

The completion of the newly-rejuvenated Wharf Street, to which we contributed \$1.1 million, was the final piece of that puzzle; the last stretch that links together the world-class facilities Cairns CBD has to offer its residents and its visitors.

The Cairns CBD Revitalisation Strategy is already achieving its goal of attracting new investment in order for the city to remain a competitive and world-class tourism destination.

A report released by the Northern Industry Development Association in December highlights almost \$1 billion worth of new investment that is planned or already under construction in Cairns, including projects such as the \$90 million Trilogy on the Esplanade and the \$160 million Cairns Harbour Lights development.

There's no doubt the revitalisation strategy will entice new holiday makers to the region and keep the regulars coming back.

More than that, this revitalisation strategy will benefit the local community—not just the 30,000 Tropical North Queenslanders directly and indirectly employed by the tourism industry—but also the local residents.

Speaking of tourism in North Queensland, I know that there have been concerns raised about the impact of Cyclone Larry.

Despite the devastation that has been caused to parts of our beautiful north, the tourism industry is continuing to operate and it's important that the travelling public understand this.

The message I have for anyone considering coming to Queensland and, in particular, north Queensland is that we are still open for tourism business.