



Speech by

**Hon. Andrew Fraser**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA**

Hansard Thursday, 6 September 2007

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## **URBAN LAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BILL**

**Hon. AP FRASER** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport) (4.21 pm): It is my pleasure to speak in support of the Urban Land Development Authority Bill and to follow the member for Ipswich, who is passionate about principles of good urban design and for appropriate planning systems and controls to facilitate development—not to stop development but to ensure that development occurs in this prosperous state—to the long-term benefit of the communities that that development seeks to serve.

I wanted to make a few short remarks in support of the bill, given the extensive amendments that it makes to the Integrated Planning Act. As the Deputy Premier outlined in her second reading speech, this bill makes a range of amendments to the Integrated Planning Act that go to the heart of making sure that the original vision of the Integrated Planning Act—to provide for a framework that allowed for an integration of decision making—is, in fact, enhanced. I believe that what we see with the Integrated Planning Act is a principle of integration and a principle of systemic decision making that remains as sound today as it was in 1997. The execution of that fundamentally requires assistance and fundamentally requires our attention. That is being dealt with in large part by the amendments that are before the House today and certainly in further amendments to the way in which the Integrated Planning Act will operate into the future that I also foreshadowed in this House during the last sitting of parliament.

I want to make a couple of remarks about this bill and the amendments that it makes to the Integrated Planning Act. It is, in fact, the case that Australia is one of the most urbanised countries in the world. About three-quarters of the people live in an urban environment. The mythology of the wide brown land is known to us all, but the reality of life in modern Australia is that three-quarters of us live in an urban context. To that extent we should always be concerned—I think quite properly, as the member for Ipswich pointed out—that our urban environments are the best that they can be.

This bill does a number of things to assist with ensuring that not only is development appropriate but also that development occurs in an appropriate time frame. In providing for the ability to issue directions to not only make a particular decision but also actually make a decision in the first place, I believe that those intervention powers that are introduced by this bill will help drive and reinstate a culture of decision making within the IDAS process. In terms of the feedback that we are provided with about the IDAS process, it is the case that we need to refocus those efforts towards actual decision making rather than process in the first place.

Out of a set of circumstances that industry would require—or anyone would require—of a development system, the three options are that the answer is, yes, no, and then finally, maybe. Out of those the maybe option is the worst option. What everyone prefers is that it is actually a decision in the first place that is either yes or no. In that regard, the direction powers to get on and make a decision, I hope, will not have to be exercised every day of the week, because I hope that they will, in fact, build a culture of proper decision making among agencies. I readily acknowledge the role that state agencies have to play in that regard.

The state planning regulatory provisions do a number of things. Most notably, they provide for a framework for the rollout of the regional plans in other parts of the state. The member for Barron River, who is in the chair at the moment, spoke earlier about the FNQ 2025 Statutory Regional Plan. I share his enthusiasm for it. I also share the utter need to roll out statutory regional plans in those parts of the state that are experiencing the sort of growth that is occurring in the far north. We can look at the census data that was released during the last sitting of the parliament as backing up the sort of statistics that the member for Barron River provided in his address to the parliament in support of this bill. I, too, believe that the far north Queensland regional plan will represent the best practice planning that the South East Queensland Regional Plan represents, and that is statutory planning on a regional basis with the force of law, ultimately underpinned by an infrastructure rollout that ensures that we get well-planned and well-ordered development that protects the amenity and the environment that, in fact, is attracting the investment and the people to that area in the first place. When it comes to the far north, there is much to protect, there is much to enhance, there is much to savour and there is much growth to guide. The growth and the prosperity that is occurring in that area requires our attention. I think that the rollout of statutory regional plans in other parts of the state will form a key part of the way in which our planning system will evolve.

They also, underneath the state government planning regulatory provisions, provide for the ability for master planning in areas. In essence, that will ensure that the time between the making of a plan and when construction can start on site can be reduced, that it can be done in an orderly way that drives the identification and the incorporation of state interests to the front end of that planning process, and that can only assist in making sure that the plans that are put in place are master planned areas that ensure that the land supply pipeline flows as smoothly as possible. In that regard, I believe ultimately the provision of master planning within the IDAS framework will ensure that land supply can be sequenced into the market in a timely manner to ensure that, to the extent that land supply affects housing affordability, we can drive that issue at its core.

Furthermore, there is a key election commitment in relation to infrastructure charges. Infrastructure charges could form a debate in themselves that would be of the same length of the debate that we have had on this bill today and yesterday. In that regard, it is worth pointing out that we are implementing our election commitment to ensure that there is an ability to review the way in which an infrastructure charging schedule or an infrastructure charges regime under a prior infrastructure plan can be reviewed to ensure that the competition authority, with set time limits, can oversee and overlook any particular infrastructure charges regime. That is an appropriate and welcome innovation in this bill.

Furthermore, the application in an individual circumstance will be reviewed by the Building and Development Tribunal, which is another important reform that goes to one of the other aspects that was identified through the consultation on the IPA, and that is that it is an all-or-nothing dispute resolution process. You are either in the Planning and Environment Court with QCs at 10 paces or you are not. There needs to be access to a different level of dispute resolution before reaching that stage. We achieve that access for infrastructure charges through the Building and Development Tribunal.

I believe that the Urban Land Development Authority Bill will lead to significant development opportunities in many urban parts of Queensland. As we witness the sea change and tree change phenomenon, as we witness the sort of growth and prosperity in this state that we have, and as we witness demographic change, as a government we need to ensure that we have a planning system that is able to pick up those challenges, that is able to ensure that those planning challenges are factored quickly into decision making and that the sort of growth and prosperity that we have enjoyed because of the nature of Queensland is, in fact, protected and guided well into the future. I commend the bill to the House.