Speech by

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Hansard Wednesday, 5 September 2007

URBAN LAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BILL

Dr FLEGG (Moggill—Lib) (12.01 pm): I rise to speak to the Urban Land Development Authority Bill. I note that the minister is not in the House. I think the fact that the minister is not in the House is symptomatic of something that is of great concern, and that is that this bill has been done with undue haste—with quite disgraceful haste, in my view.

This bill will fundamentally affect the lives and businesses of tens of thousands of Queenslanders. It encompasses changes that take power away from local communities. It encompasses changes that override local authorities. It encompasses changes that override well-established local planning procedures. It imposes a whole new structure on communities throughout Queensland. Yet the government has introduced it with ridiculous haste.

In the few days since we have had briefings on the bill and have had an opportunity to try to consult with the community, there has been an enormous amount of interest and concern and an enormous number of submissions in relation to this bill, some of which were still coming in this morning, because of the undue haste with which these measures have been brought to the parliament. I note that the minister's response to the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee was circulated only this morning.

This bill affects fundamentally the planning for communities and the rules that apply to what can be built in communities. It contains a number of measures that generate enormous power and create enormous difficulties within communities in Queensland. Yet the communities, the local governments, the landowners, the developers, the environmental groups and the community groups have had a minimal opportunity to consult or have input.

This bill is a power grab. It takes power away from local communities, local authorities and preprepared local planning. At the end of the day, all of that power will rest with the minister. We have moved the wrong way in this state. We have moved from a situation in which communities made their own decisions and communities were empowered to have an input into what happens to a situation in which the government, or even worse in many cases one minister, dictates what will happen in communities.

The government's version of the stated objectives and purposes of this bill are to improve housing affordability, to introduce regional planning, to introduce master planning for particular areas of state interest, and to establish state infrastructure agreements. The main purposes of the legislation for these urban areas is to facilitate the availability of land for urban purposes, to facilitate the provision of a range of options to address diverse community needs, to plan for and facilitate the provision of infrastructure for urban purposes, to facilitate planning principles that give effect to ecological sustainability and best practice urban design and to facilitate the provision of the ongoing availability of affordable housing options for low to moderate income households. They are the government's stated purposes. I think we in this parliament, those in the community and the stakeholders are quite entitled to use those stated purposes as a yardstick for this legislation.

Will this legislation deliver on those lofty ideals? There are some problems in relation to development in this state. There are definitely some problems in relation to housing affordability in this

state. The questions are whether the measures contained in this bill will deliver more affordable housing, whether they will overcome the problems that have made development difficult to deliver and, if they achieve some of these objectives, at what cost? Make no mistake about it, there is a cost in this bill and the cost is the removal of power and say from communities, local authorities, individuals and community groups and the vesting of that power and say and decision making effectively within the hands of the government.

This bill is saying to us in this House and to the people of Queensland that the present planning scheme in this state is not working. The planning scheme—the IPA legislation—has been tinkered with by this government for years. This bill introduces overarching powers that sweep aside existing planning requirements. It says categorically without a shadow of a doubt that the present arrangements have failed. This bill also reflects on the ability of the South East Queensland Regional Plan to deliver. There is reference to that plan in many of the documents.

Certainly, I would be the first to concede that there are significant issues for young people in particular in this state around housing affordability. In fact, young people in this state have been faced with a property market that has basically doubled over the past five years—way in excess of any ability they may have to save. That has generated a housing affordability crisis. But there are two things that are not clear. One is whether this bill will improve housing affordability. Many of the contacts that I have made have cast considerable doubt over whether this bill will deal with housing affordability. The other issue that is not dealt with by this bill is the other factors that impact on housing affordability.

Housing affordability has been influenced by delays in local councils and by the difficulty of getting large developments. But it has also been influenced by excessive charges and a range of other impacts. Planning alone should not be seen as a panacea for housing affordability. If the government is serious about housing affordability, it needs to consider the other measures.

Principally, this bill sets up an authority. The composition of that nine-man authority is a chairperson appointed by the government, the Chief Executive of the Department of Infrastructure, the Chief Executive of Queensland Treasury and six other appointed members with the following skills: extensive knowledge and experience in areas of local government, architecture, urban design or planning, social policy or community development, law, economics or accounting, the construction or development industry, or natural resource and environmental management. Members may be appointed by the Governor in Council for a period up to five years. Therefore, a pretty broad-ranging group of people can be appointed to the council.

The problem that the opposition has with the proposal is that, at the end of the day, these are all government appointees. As we have seen with government appointees in a whole range of other areas, it is an unhealthy and potentially dangerous situation when a commission with this power—and this will be one of the most powerful commissions in the state and it will certainly have more power than any local government authority—is completely manned by government appointees.

We have circulated an amendment to this aspect of the bill as we believe that the commission should have some people appointed independent of government. In the short time that we have had to prepare amendments to the bill, we have proposed that a number of the members of the committee should, in fact, be appointed by local government. Local government has expertise in planning. It is local government whose power is being taken away by the bill. In Queensland, local government has put in place planning instruments after rigorous community consultation. Therefore, it is appropriate that some members of the commission are independently appointed, not by the government but by other stakeholders.

The powers of the authority are extensive and, in fact, virtually unfettered. The authority will have the power to acquire and consolidate land in urban areas. It will undertake planning, management and delivery of strategic urban development sites. The initial sites that the government is referring to its commission—and it is its commission—are sites in Fitzgibbon, Northshore at Hamilton, Bowen Hills, Woolloongabba and the Mackay Showgrounds.

Those are only seed capital, as it were. The reality is that once the government uses its numbers in this place to pass the bill, effectively it can refer anywhere in the state to its own commission, whose members the government has appointed, and override almost any planning that has ever been done in that community. This is a centralisation of power in the hands of the government. Really, it is a power grab by the government that is unhealthy and will deprive local communities of a say in what happens to their communities. Under the bill we are starting off with five communities, but effectively wherever one lives in Queensland one's community can be referred to the authority. The authority can override whatever the community has done in terms of the local plan devised by the local council. It will take away any power that the locally elected councillors may have in relation to development in that area. It would be hard to imagine a power that could have a greater impact on the welfare of communities throughout the length and breadth of Queensland than the power that this bill confers.

The opposition has had very limited time to consult in order to amend aspects of the legislation. We have circulated a number of amendments to try to restore a bit of balance in a commission that has so much power and so little accountability. In particular, our amendments deal with two areas. One is when a member of the authority has a conflict of interest. The conflict of interest provisions that are contained in this bill are not adequate. The bill provides no guarantee that vested interests within a particular area would be totally excluded. While there are some provisions that effectively require a member to walk out of a meeting, as we have seen in this state previously one has to be very vigorous when dealing with conflict of interest matters. It is not acceptable that anyone sit on this authority during the time that their personal vested interest is dealt with by that authority.

Our amendments will also deal with the issue of the right of appeal. The Scrutiny of Legislation Committee and numerous stakeholders from across the state have raised the serious issue that the right of appeal has almost been completely withdrawn. There is only a minimal right of appeal in this legislation. It does not matter whether you are an environmental group concerned about the development of the environment, whether you are a local resident who is concerned about the direction taken with the development of the community, whether you are a landholder or a developer putting forward a proposal: you have very little right of appeal. I notice that one part of the bill states that one can take an appeal in writing to the minister. Talk about Caesar judging Caesar! Under this bill, all the power of the authority derives from the minister. What sort of appeal is it if one can only approach the person who presides over the authority in the first place?

Like many others, I understand that lengthy and frivolous appeals can have a serious impact on development and the ultimate cost of developments. We do not want to see a situation where development is held up by frivolous appeals, and repeated and lengthy legal delays. That has been of serious concern within the state. However, at the end of the day people who are impacted upon have to have some comeback.

I notice that where people's property values are affected because of changes in planning there is no accessibility to compensation. With the possibility of impacting on the value of people's private property combined with the fact that they have no appeal and that the government controls the entire process so that the local council, the authority and the local planning instrument do not mean anything, we have a recipe for something that can be very seriously misused. We have some very serious reservations in relation to that.

The bill also provides for amendments to the Integrated Planning Act. As with the regulatory provisions of the South East Queensland Regional Plan, state planning regulatory provisions will, amongst other things, affect the operation of a planning scheme. They will be able to prohibit development, provide a single overarching planning instrument that can be applied in a range of circumstances and provide a more transparent approach with public consultation included.

The changes also allow for state infrastructure agreements. The bill inserts a new part 3 into chapter 5 of the Integrated Planning Act 1997 that deals with contributions for state infrastructure. The purpose of this amendment is stated to be to ensure funding for state infrastructure is a transparent and equitable process as identified in an existing government election commitment. It formalises the government's intent to collect contributions towards state infrastructure in high-growth areas as signalled in the South East Queensland Regional Plan. It is, however, at the end of the day, another government charge. It is another tax that homeowners and home purchasers will pay. In introducing a bill that is designed to improve housing affordability and lower the cost of housing, we find an amendment to the IPA to allow a new tax on property. Moreover, it is a new tax on what will predominantly be new property, the sort of place where first homebuyers might be looking to acquire their first home.

There is a danger here of extending what has already been seen as an inequitable situation. New homebuyers, who are quite frequently the first homebuyer or the young homebuyer, have been expected to pay in some cases enormous amounts towards contributions for infrastructure and we are now adding another layer of charging for infrastructure. This charge, make no mistake, will fall on the same group of new homebuyers—more likely than not young homebuyers.

The stated reasons behind the bill are that legislation is required to establish the Urban Land Development Authority—the ULDA or the authority, as I have been referring to it—to plan, undertake, promote, coordinate and control the development of certain areas of land in Queensland for urban purposes. Amendments to the Integrated Planning Act are required and there is a range of reasons explaining why we need to amend the IPA, such as to enable the minister responsible for the administration of the IPA—the planning minister—to consider and decide conflicts among state referral agencies, local government and applicants in respect of the Integrated Development Assessment System—IDAS. It is also stated that it is required to provide for the planning minister to refer infrastructure charges to the Queensland Competition Authority for advice and comment. I think this is a measure in the bill that would generally be well received. Infrastructure charges have been a bone of contention. As

members would be aware, they vary enormously between different local government areas and some review of those charges is certainly timely and in order. Another reason the amendment is required, it is said, is to provide appeals to the Building and Development Tribunal in relation to the calculation of infrastructure charges for specific developments. At least we have left one small area under which there is some appeal, but it is a very small area and appeal mechanisms in this legislation are few and far between.

It is argued that the changes to the IPA are needed to enable the planning minister, the regional planning minister or a designated person to introduce state planning instruments to be referred to as state planning regulatory provisions—SPRPs—that will affect the operation of planning schemes. There is a pattern emerging here. Not only do we have the authority taking away all planning in certain areas, but also we have these state planning instruments taking away many of the existing rights of local communities to participate and have their own local plan.

It is said that we need these changes to provide for the implementation of regional plans across Queensland. This in itself is a major provision. As members are aware, we have had the South East Queensland Regional Plan for two or three years in the south-east. This legislation will facilitate the introduction of those sorts of urban planning instruments throughout the rest of the state. In fact, rather than urban planning instruments they will be regional plans across the rest of the state. Queenslanders outside the south-east corner should be pricking up their ears in relation to this because these are fundamental changes that will affect how they operate, particularly in relation to their properties.

The government has argued that these changes are needed to extend the use of the major development area designations under the South East Queensland Regional Plan, to identify areas proposed for urban development to be renamed master planned areas—again we have another major change designating areas of south-east Queensland for intensive urban development under the name of master planned areas—and to provide for a more efficient planning process for these areas involving the preparation of structure plans and master plans. This is a whole brave new world, if you like, for the way planning, approvals and development is undertaken in this state. These are major changes to what has gone before.

It has been argued by the government that changes to the IPA are needed to provide regulatory support for structure plans and the master plans through state planning regulatory provisions, including provision to regulate development in a manner that affects the operation of planning schemes and provides for state infrastructure charges. Again we have seen the government centralising control of planning in this state into the hands of the minister. I think this is a debate that the people of Queensland should have been allowed to have. These are enormous and fundamental changes that will affect most Queenslanders. The power for planning and development approval is being shifted from local councils elected at the local community level to state government. Centralisation to this extent has to be treated with great caution. What I object to most of all is that communities have barely, if at all, been consulted. The indecent haste with which these proposals have been brought in has robbed Queenslanders again of the opportunity of having an input into the future direction of their local community. It really is a contempt on the part of the government towards not local councils but local communities who have had a say in planning and development approval. Without any consultation with those communities much of that power, and in some cases all of that power, is being swept up into the hands of one minister. I think Queenslanders should be very, very cautious about that development.

When the minister comes to deliver her summing up, there are a range of issues that we would like to hear her response to. I would like to hear the minister's justification for introducing a new level of taxes—a new level of infrastructure charges—on new developments in this state.

I would like to see the minister give us some guidelines on how much these charges will be. How much will the state government take in infrastructure charges for each block of land in a master planned community? If the minister cannot answer that question, if she cannot tell this House and Queenslanders how much her new tax is going to cost on each affected block of land, then these provisions should not be introduced. We are attempting to have a discussion on the serious issue of housing affordability that has emerged rapidly in this state, but how can the minister pretend she is dealing with housing affordability by putting a new tax on new houses? It is a nonsense.

So at the end of the day, this is not an acceptable measure to bring in unless, at the very least, some assurances are given to the community of Queensland about how much these charges will be per block of land and what safeguards there will be to protect homebuyers. There has been a lot of talk in this state about certain local authorities which have repeatedly jacked up infrastructure charges virtually as a source of revenue. We have here a cash-strapped government which is introducing a new tax but it does not want to tell us how much the new tax will be. I see these charges as being a backdoor way of generating more state government revenue that can be jacked up and jacked up. This government has always found it comfortable to tax property and development. We all know who pays those taxes at the end of the day—it

is the homebuyer. This is an issue that Queenslanders understand. It is a backdoor tax and we want some sort of assurance about what this tax is going to cost.

Mr Lee: You are a real performer, Bruce. I don't know why they want to get rid of you.

Dr FLEGG: That is coming from the member for Indooroopilly! A concern expressed in relation to the UDAs is that they contain no appeal. The minister can introduce amendments to them even after they have been published. When we are looking at a power grab of this dimension, consultation is simply not enough. The notes to this bill say that landowners can appeal by writing to the minister. I could stand here and appeal to the minister—which I am doing on a few points—but I have a fair indication it will not do me a lot of good. That is about how much good it will do. We cannot have an appeals process where you are appealing to the person you are appealing against.

That level of concern is substantial out in the community. People have rights. Queenslanders have rights. Whether they are residents, developers or elected to a local authority, they have rights and those rights should be respected. Grabbing power away in this manner without basically any recourse or appeal goes too far.

The minister can amend a UDA at any time. The five areas that have been designated as the initial areas to come under the authority encompass 20,000 to 30,000 dwellings. So something like 50,000 Queenslanders will have their local plan on the shape of their neighbourhood redrawn with the stroke of a pen here today when the government uses its numbers to pass this legislation. That is 50,000 people to start with, and the government has the power to extend it to as many Queenslanders and as many Queensland communities as it wishes to.

There is nothing defined in this bill—and this is a serious concern to me and others, and I hope the minister will make some response to this—to indicate what areas the minister should designate to come under control of the authority. This is a carte blanche bill where the minister can be driving around on a Sunday afternoon, see a block of land and decide to turn it into an urban area. This bill needs clear definitions so Queenslanders can see what characteristics are required before the minister decides to refer an area to the authority and eliminate effectively the current planning restrictions in that area. It is not good enough to say that the minister can refer whatever he or she likes. This can go anywhere.

Master planning areas allow local, state and property owners to agree to a plan and override local planning and thus reduce dramatically the input of concurrence agencies. This is one of the various changes being made to the IPA. Beyond the five areas being referred to the authority, planning throughout all of Queensland is potentially influenced by these other changes. Again, we understand that we have something of a constipated system when it comes to putting changes through and that some measures need to be taken to address it, but there is a need to respect communities and be cautious with the extent to which you override local planning. Potentially, that measure—which I can see some benefits in—should be exercised with some caution in the light of the rights of the community.

An area of state interest temporary plan will override the local plan. We have a lot of instruments in this bill which can effectively override any planning instrument they like. So we can declare a state interest temporary plan which for a temporary period will override any local plan that already exists. The minister has 20 days to approve over the top of councils or concurrence agencies if decisions have not been forthcoming. Again, I can see some justification for powers of this nature because there have been problems in our imperfect planning system, but this power needs to be exercised with some caution so it does not also infringe on the rights of local communities.

The call-in powers of the minister are to be dramatically increased. Effectively, any sort of development could be called in by the minister. It should be unmistakable to anybody looking at this bill that the minister in this state virtually has the power to plan any development in any area of the state that he or she likes. There is no doubt that this is a power grab. Some reasons which have been advanced to justify it have some validity. I have an uncomfortable feeling that housing affordability is being used to justify the power grab rather than it actually being dealt with, and that is something that will have to be watched closely.

When places are referred to the authority, the process is to set up a three-stage plan—a land use plan, an infrastructure plan and a sequencing plan. As well, some extra policies can be imposed, such as perhaps a heritage plan, an environmental plan or something along those lines, but they are not part of the fundamental requirements.

Once a plan is finalised for one of these areas, it must be displayed for 20 days. Given the advertising requirements for relatively simple modifications to a home, to have a plan for an entire community of many thousands of people on display for 20 days is a very limited opportunity. We know from some other activities of the state government that these plans will quite likely be put up in December or January. These plans are then referred to the Governor in Council and then introduced into the parliament as a regulation.

The ULDA accesses all development approvals and there is no appeal. Clause 55 provides for a decision by the urban development authority regarding an urban development application, a UDA. The authority may refuse to grant the application or it may impose conditions on the UDA development approval. However, clause 55 does not provide a right of appeal from this decision. This means that an applicant cannot appeal a refusal or the imposition of conditions, nor can people who have made submissions regarding the UDA development approval appeal a grant of an application. Clause 61 provides applicants with a limited appeal right against particular conditions proposed by other government entities nominated by the UDA.

In this process the concurrence agencies are effectively removed except for a provision that they should be consulted. There is power to attach its own conditions or third-party conditions. So the authority can not only attach its own conditions to a development application but also can attach third-party conditions to a development application, such as collecting infrastructure fees on behalf of councils.

When this bill was introduced a very short time ago, I circulated it for comment. The response I had in what amounted to only a matter of days was quite substantial. I have had over 20 submissions to date and they are still coming in this morning. It was interesting to note that quite a number—a larger number than what I would normally expect—went to great lengths to say that they did not want their name used. These were not developers as such but other organisations and other stakeholders who rightly ought to be able to participate in a public debate and represent their views as stakeholders—some of these were very senior stakeholders in property development circles. This indicated to me a high level of anxiety and fear that even if organisations—not particular developers—were to speak out publicly against aspects of this bill they may find themselves not being treated in the way they feel they ought to be treated. I think that is a very disappointing development in a democracy. This bill has concentrated so much power in the hands of a government and a particular minister that even stakeholder groups do not feel comfortable to put their views, or at least their unsanitised views, out publicly. Some serious note ought to be taken of this, because it tells us immediately that the view out there is that this is delivering enormous power without appeal and without a lot of accountability.

Among the submissions that I have received, which are quite numerous, some are from community and environment groups. Not surprisingly, perhaps, they are very concerned about measures in the bill, particularly the lack of appeal mechanisms and the fact that these groups will have very limited input into planning in many areas of the state. Some indicated to me that they were still preparing submissions and others wanted to organise meetings, but this bill has been introduced with such haste that not only are things being taken out of their hands in the local community; they have not even been given the chance to take things so far as to come into a meeting with their views.

Certainly a number of submissions that I received were concerned about current bottlenecks. They were concerned about delays. I think that tells us that there is a concern and there is a need to address some of these things, which is why there are aspects of the bill that I have supported. However, there were as many submissions or more that were concerned about infrastructure charges and their impact on affordability. Unfortunately, I do not have a lot of good news for these people, only that there will be another level of infrastructure charges imposed. Among submissions that I received, one senior industry submission stated that the government is seeking to introduce a new charge on development—a state infrastructure charge. This process was introduced to reduce the cost to new developments and housing but they have actually added a new cost.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Dr FLEGG: This is a quote from a submission that I received. It continues saying that nearly 100 per cent of state provisioned infrastructure is for general benefit—that is, it benefits the whole community—and is not local benefit infrastructure.

There are no defined triggers as to when the minister will step in and direct a council or government agency to make a decision on an application. Such a power needs to be objective and clear. This current subjectivity will only lead to confusion and inconsistency. The bill seeks to place the onus to develop master plans on councils or the ULDA and not the landowner themselves. I think that is a significant issue to have been raised at senior levels of the property industry. A master planned community can only properly be done if it is done by the landowner itself. That is the one risking the capital. Why would a landowner place the future of a multimillion-dollar development in the hands of others?

The bill essentially recognises that there is a problem in the development assessment processes in Queensland. Why isn't the government doing more about fundamentally reforming the whole system? There were responses from people in local government complaining that there had been no true consultation with them; that the authority would have very significant powers, which raises the fears of the potential for it to become a 'beast' that is difficult to control as has occurred elsewhere. It raises another level at which the state government will intrude on local councils. It creates another level of bureaucracy and there is significant risk of duplication with existing council planning services.

Shortages exist already for skilled town-planners. This scheme will place further strains on resources and will likely lead to further brain drain from council DA officers. The bill does not compel the authority to consider council concerns or aspirations. Neighbourhood planning currently undertaken by councils considers the whole community and involves community consultation throughout every stage. This will not be possible under the conditions set by the bill for development areas. Regulated infrastructure charges will likely lead to higher rates—this is feedback I have had from members of local government—for homeowners.

The state government has not demonstrated how it will lower infrastructure charges. The state government does not have technical expertise in this area and so on. There is extensive consultation that I would have liked to have had time to delve into further.

Another senior industry stakeholder expressed special concern about the introduction of state infrastructure charges and the requirements and operation of the master planning process. A theme that is coming through is that the master planning process will generate significant problems for people coming to Queensland as the big end developers try to establish new communities here. The other issue raised was the perceived effectiveness or otherwise of the ULDA and the IPA amendments in actually improving housing affordability.

State infrastructure charges are an additional tax which will be borne by developers and passed on to new homebuyers, further inflating the cost of dwellings. With these regulations on property the government has set a dangerous precedent in planning to levy these charges, which appear to contradict the very nature of the government's strategy.

The question was raised—why not have code assessment now? While there is strong support for the use of code assessment in the development application process, one senior figure did not understand why councils cannot incorporate code assessment within their current planning schemes rather than require detailed and time-consuming master planning that halts the development process. So industry sees the master planning process as likely to be another constipating, time-consuming, delaying process. The comment was made that this introduces another level of red tape.

The stated intent or excuse for introducing this bill is its impact on housing affordability. The government considers—and perhaps with some justifications—dealing with delays in getting developments up and running an issue in terms of housing affordability. There was no cost analysis released with this legislation. This is a major bill that is going to impact almost everybody in the state but no cost analysis has been released to outline the savings achieved by taking these rights away from communities and putting them in the hands of the minister and the authority. What will be the savings in the cost of a block of land or the cost of a home? Again, I would say to the minister—and I hope she will respond at the end of the debate—if she cannot tell how much these measures will save and what the impact on a unit, a block of land or a home will be then, at the end of the day, she has failed the test of showing that this will improve housing affordability.

The point has been raised that some of the areas that have already been referred for planning are quite expensive areas. By and large they are not first homebuyer areas. I think it is incumbent upon the government and the minister to show us what the savings will be, if any, and to show us where in these areas that are being centrally planned the benefit is going to be, particularly for low-income earners. Some of these areas are ones where there would currently be no affordable housing.

Mr Hinchliffe: And that is the point. This will be able to drive them in there, through the planning process.

Dr FLEGG: I accept that interjection. I am posing the question. There is nothing in this bill that requires a developer or a planning scheme to provide affordable housing. There is no detail of what percentage or how much affordable housing there will be. We have no details about how much money it is going to save. There is nothing in place in this plan that would indicate that affordable housing will be delivered in the localities that are being planned. They are questions that need to be answered.

We all know that the government has levied a dramatically increasing burden of taxes and charges on property owners. That has been a significant issue impacting on housing affordability in Queensland. We see that this bill introduces a new tax.

I had a look at the state government collections on transfer duties. The majority falls to property transfers and home transfers. Transfer duties have risen from slightly over $1 billion in 2001-02 to a projected $2.84 billion in 2007-08. If we are talking about housing affordability I would say that the $2.84 billion state government impost largely on the purchase of homes would be a pretty good place to start.

There is an array of issues that impact on housing affordability. The issues related to the supply of property and the delays are certainly well known. But issues such as infrastructure charges, skyrocketing transfer duties and the like have led to the price of land, in particular, going through the roof. If the government is serious about dealing with housing affordability it needs to have a look at all the factors that impact upon it. The record budget receipts from transfer duty raise within me considerable concern that through this bill the government is introducing yet another revenue stream to be imposed on property in the form of another tier of infrastructure charges.

We have been saying since the state budget this year that this government is looking for more ways to raise revenue and looking for more assets to sell off. It is doing so because of its deteriorating budget position. It is very likely that we see now a Trojan Horse in the form of another new state government tax on housing. I look forward to hearing the debate on the issue and the minister's comments. We are concerned about housing affordability. We are concerned that the measures being introduced to impact on housing affordability actually work. We are concerned that the government address the real issues that impact on housing affordability and not simply use housing affordability as an excuse, as a Trojan Horse to centralise and grab power for planning from local communities and to introduce new state taxes.