



Speech by

Peta-Kaye Croft

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

Hansard Thursday, 24 May 2007

HOPE ISLAND, MOBILE PHONE TOWER

Ms CROFT (Broadwater—ALP) (6.43 pm): On 7 October 2005 Telstra applied to the Gold Coast City Council for a material change of use to establish a mobile phone tower at 10 Santa Barbara Road, Hope Island, near the Marina Shopping Village. The tower development will include an equipment shelter to house associated electronic equipment. The tower will be made up of a base station consisting of a 20-metre monopole with single TUFT mounted panel antennas attached to the pole to make a total height of 22.9 metres.

Under the Gold Coast Planning Scheme 2003 and the Hope Island Local Area Plan, the mobile phone tower is considered to be low impact. This is because the tower does not exceed two storeys. In the past two days I have received much correspondence and contact from Hope Island residents who, for the very first time, have become aware of Telstra's application. From their hard work, they have been able to ascertain further details about the application and the process of its approval.

The residents have discovered that, without community consultation or any notification from the local councillor, Telstra's application was approved in February last year. In fact, the application was approved by a council officer under delegated authority. Elected councillors did not even have to consider it. I am confident that local residents would have indeed been reasonable in providing their feedback with regards to this application if they had the opportunity to provide it.

While the Gold Coast City Council has considered this application and the proposed tower is considered to be low impact, the residents of Hope Island feel very concerned that they have not been afforded an opportunity within the application process to ask questions and get answers about the telephone tower and any perceived impacts the residents may be concerned about.

The local councillor regularly intervenes in state government matters at community meetings. He often avails himself of being very critical once I have left the room. Perhaps if he concentrated on council issues he would not have let this issue slip past the good residents of the Hope Island area. Labor's candidate for Fadden, Mr Rana Watson, has been out supporting residents and has worked hard to obtain for them information on the application process.

I support the residents in raising their concerns regarding this application approval and the lack of community consultation. I understand that the application is code assessable, but Councillor Pforr would have been informed about this application. It is a real pity that Councillor Pforr failed to inform local residents that this tower was going to be built in their community. He has once again failed to keep his community fully informed on council decisions affecting their lives.