



Speech by

Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Tuesday, 21 August 2007

WOMEN'S SPORT; REGIONAL PLANNING

Ms NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (11.55 am): Before talking about regional planning in south-east Queensland I want to wholeheartedly endorse the comments of the member for Algeester when it comes to the importance of women's sport. With the Hancocks women's R2 team—that is effectively Ipswich women's third grade—just having won the minor premiership and seeming to win more when I do not go, I do very much endorse the importance of women's sport for health and wellbeing; it is good for one's mind and good for one's body.

Ms Struthers interjected.

Ms NOLAN: That is right; for those women here. I move on to other things. There are two characteristics that utterly define south-east Queensland. They are ongoing growth and a wonderful lifestyle. With demographers predicting an increase in population of between 40,000 and 60,000 people every year for the next 20 years the clear question for south-east Queensland is obviously: how do we manage that growth without damaging the livability that those people will come for?

The regional plan that was released in 2005 took that question by the horns and sought to address the difficult issues at its heart. While other jurisdictions have been serious about regional planning since the 1960s or 1970s, Queensland, sadly, for two reasons, I think—small and ineffective local government and a history of a conservative small government approach—has been slower than it ought to embrace regional planning.

The regional plan brought down in 2005 utterly reversed that trend. It asked the question: how do we manage growth without harming livability? It put forward two key strategies to do that. The first was that it said if there is a decision between density and sprawl it is time we got serious about density. The second thing it said is that we must at all costs avoid the 200 kilometre city from Noosa to Coolangatta. We must do that by drawing people to the west. It is time we got serious about growth around Ipswich.

Since that was said in 2005 the plan has been criticised. It has been criticised by snobs who say we cannot draw people to Ipswich if they do not want to go. It has been challenged to some extent by the opposition who in the last election campaign said they would sell out the regional plan in exchange for developer campaign contributions. The government to its credit, though, has remained strong and remained serious.

Right now we are very serious about Ipswich. We are putting \$11.2 billion into infrastructure in the western corridor. We are building the Centenary Highway extension. It is currently ahead of schedule. We are planning for a rail loop from Springfield through Ripley and back into central Ipswich. We are building a new Ipswich courthouse worth \$100 million. Work is about to start on that. We are, importantly, also getting serious about how we revitalise the depressed Ipswich city centre.

Right now the Ipswich City Council and state government are each putting \$1.1 million into a year long CBD master plan. We have brought together some of the world's best planners like DPZ Pacific, which has led the new urbanism movement in the United States, UrbisJHD, leading Australian planners,

people like Lindsay Nielson who has done great work for federal Labor governments—that is, governments that are interested in city building—and Paul McLean, one of Ipswich's proudest sons. They have come together to address how we revitalise the Ipswich CBD.

Just last month there was a week-long open planning process that looked at questions such as what do we do about the future of river crossings given that we only have one town bridge? Should the Ipswich Hospital stay in the same location? How do we get more express trains going into the centre? What will be the future of transport planning in the city? How do we ensure we get more walkability along the river? How do we maintain the city's heritage? These key questions are on the table right now and are being addressed. It is imperative that if the regional plan is to work Ipswich must work as a principal activities centre. Those questions are very openly and professionally being addressed. I urge the people of Ipswich to use the next few months that are available to them to get involved in the Ipswich CBD master planning process, because this will set the blueprint for the city of our future. As I said, it is imperative that if we are going to make the regional plan work we have to make central Ipswich work for all of us.