



Speech by

Dr Alex Douglas

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Hansard Thursday, 2 September 2010

CARRARA HEALTH CENTRE; COOMERA RIVER, CLAGIRABA

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—LNP) (9.49 pm): Honourable members, DERM and Queensland Health seem to have a major problem clearing their desks of easy straight-forward cases. We have two problems in the Gaven electorate where they both need to get cracking—the Carrara Health Centre in relation to parking for the staff and residents and the Coomera River at Clagiraba.

Carrara residents and Carrara Health Centre staff have a big problem with car parking. The centre currently has none. It is a very significant step-down facility from the Gold Coast Hospital. These car parking spaces cannot be accessed. Currently in the basement of the centre there is room for 40 vehicles under cover and probably the same outside. The only thing missing is the access driveway. The council has already granted the land to the government for this purpose and done all the paperwork. DERM and Queensland Health have done nothing for nine months. Contrary to the health minister's promise back in February that the project would be completed by mid-2010, work has not even begun. One hundred metres of bitumen pavement with basic drainage is all that is required to get cars off roads, footpaths and local driveways to ensure the safety of staff and sanity of residents.

Locals are asking how hard can this be? Queensland Health must be asleep at the wheel. It claims that the delays are due to the planning process. Neither department has any excuse for such a simple project taking so long. Both departments and the minister must be following a script from the TV classic *Yes, Minister*. I have had no response to my last question on 2 August 2010, which is the third in a series over the last nine months. In addition, a new school located 200 metres from the centre has opened exacerbating the car parking nightmare. Why are Carrara residents less deserving than those of other Labor electorates? Why has the health minister abandoned his own staff's safety? Staff and residents rightfully demand that the Labor state government builds the driveway to access the car park without delay.

In Clagiraba, DERM cannot seem to get its head around sawing through trees at their bases to stabilise the gravel that is potentially a major cause of river flow obstruction. This obstruction led to major floods along the Coomera River earlier this year and last—not to mention that no geomorphic study has been done. Young people lost their lives on this river in a previous serious flood. After a spectacular 24-hour downpour in February this year, the Coomera River broke its banks and destroyed the livelihoods and properties of residents right along the river to Upper Coomera. Property owners are fearful of the consequences of what might follow the higher than average rainfall period we are moving into. We have just had the wettest August on record.

DERM disregarded the downpour in February stating it was merely natural and there was little they could do. Well, this is not the case and locals are asking for a few trees to be cut back and funding from DERM to assist in undertaking a geomorphic audit of the river. Then, accordingly, DERM and the state government must address the problems outlined in the audit. Locals need this short-sighted Labor government to get on board with long-term solutions as this will continue to be a long-term problem if not addressed properly now. These are not significant changes. These are trees in the river blocking river flow and people's homes and lives are in danger. Please, something should be done.