



Speech by

Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

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URBAN LAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AMENDMENT REGULATION: DISALLOWANCE OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (9.15 pm), in reply: On 2 September 2010 I announced that I would consider using call-in powers to progress the Caloundra South Structure Plan if the Sunshine Coast Regional Council continued to refuse to meet statutory deadlines. After careful consideration of this issue, the state government decided to take a new path to progress this important development. This was to declare Caloundra South an urban development area. There has been a range of imputations made tonight by various speakers that this was done for collusive or nefarious reasons. This was done on the basis of the facts before the government. Caloundra South has been identified for development for many years and was nominated in our greenfield strategy as a priority site for delivery in 2007. However, under the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, sadly, the planning approvals for this site continued to languish. This meant not only that the Sunshine Coast would miss out on the opportunity to create an exciting new community but that the region would continue to lose much needed jobs while the housing crisis worsens.

Unemployment on the Sunshine Coast of 6.4 per cent is higher than the state average of 5.7 per cent. There are now more than 10,000 people in the region out of work, many of them in the construction industry. As the Premier has previously stated, every day that plans for Caloundra South sat in a planning in-tray was another day without new construction jobs. This decision to declare Caloundra South as an urban development area was not just about getting land to market quickly and providing more jobs; it was also about addressing the Sunshine Coast's significant housing affordability issues by increasing the supply of housing in a well-planned and well-structured way, a market response which I was surprised the member for Caloundra did not seem to understand or appreciate.

The Sunshine Coast council's own Housing Affordability Strategy has shown housing stress on the coast impacts one in three households. In addition, the Bankwest First Time Home Buyer Report from July this year found that Sunshine Coast homes are now Queensland's most expensive. Similarly, the most recent Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey released in 2009 rated the Sunshine Coast as—and I reiterate this—the third most unaffordable housing market in the world—in the world.

Sunshine Coast residents deserve to be able to buy a home. At the moment for too many that dream is unreachable. By bringing land to market more quickly and identifying land where development can occur in less than 12 months, the Bligh government's Urban Land Development Authority can directly influence housing supply and improve housing affordability. Under the authority, affordability means homes being available for purchase or rent by households on incomes between \$40,000 and \$80,000 a year. The state government does not want to see young families and key workers, such as nurses and teachers, continue to be priced out of a home. Similarly, we do not want to see Sunshine Coast residents miss out on jobs. There is no doubt that the coast is a fantastic place to live, and we want to see it stay that way, but the region could become a place where only the wealthy can afford to live and that is unacceptable to this government.

In addition, the Bligh government does not want to see the coast become a place of high unemployment because the construction industry has been strangled by ongoing and unreasonable planning delays. The Urban Land Development Authority is already delivering major new communities in Ipswich, Ripley Valley, Yarrabilba and Flagstone to help manage growth in the state's south-east. Those three urban development areas were declared at the beginning of October 2010 and already three development applications have been received that could provide more than 800 lots for development. By the end of this month, applications are expected for another 650 lots and development for all three will be underway by early to mid next year. The Urban Land Development Authority has been able to achieve this progress by working closely with the Ipswich and Logan city councils to build on the excellent work they have already delivered for those sites. The authority is also working with developers and landowners to identify opportunities where early development can occur.

Work can start sooner rather than later, because the Urban Land Development Authority's planning provisions allow the body to fast-track early release areas and address housing supply issues quickly, without compromising the broader planning and sustainability outcomes of the rest of the urban development area. The state agency operates under an act specifically designed to swiftly address land and housing supply and affordability, while adhering to all the necessary environmental checks and balances, and the appropriate probity requirements that are set out in the basis of that act. I trust that the member for Burnett will be reassured by the high level of probity requirements in the Urban Land Development Authority Act.

Caloundra South has the potential to provide 22,000 homes for more than 45,000 people in coming years. This development will create thousands of new jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in investment for the Sunshine Coast. By declaring Caloundra South as an urban development area, early construction work can begin in the first quarter of 2011, with planning for the entire site to be completed within 12 months. Those three early release areas have been identified in the interim land use plan for the ULDA. That means the early delivery of homes, as well as the provision for more employment opportunities, and not just construction jobs from the provision of new homes but also jobs in the industry and enterprise area that will accommodate a range of businesses such as warehousing, research, technology facilities and service industries. Therefore, the early release areas will provide not only homes on the ground but also places for people to work nearby, addressing the issues of integrated transit planning raised by the member for Maroochydore. The combination of employment and residential dwellings in Caloundra South is vital to ensure that the area becomes a real community and not just a dormitory suburb for people working elsewhere.

Overall, the Caloundra South Urban Development Area will be an affordable and sustainable community that demonstrates best practice urban design and sound community development principles. A range of affordable housing choices will be available to meet a range of lifestyles and budgets. The urban development area will comprise compact, walkable and well-connected neighbourhoods that reflect the Sunshine Coast's subtropical lifestyle. An appropriate mix of land uses will facilitate the delivery of jobs that contribute to the self-containment that I addressed earlier. Vibrant mixed-use activity centres will provide a focus for the community and offer convenient access to retail services, well-designed civic spaces, community and cultural facilities and local employment opportunities.

The urban form of the urban development area ensures the provision of adequate green space for recreation purposes and a high level of amenity. During the planning processes undertaken to date, there has been significant consideration given to a range of environmental factors at this site. The state government is very well aware of the values of the area, particularly the Pumicestone Passage. There has been much debate with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, the landowner and the community on those values and how best to protect them. The Urban Land Development Authority recognises the environmental, natural and cultural heritage values of the area and has committed to ensuring that ecological sustainability is incorporated into the planning and development activities in the urban development area.

The declaration of the ULDA provides an opportunity to complete a review of the work to date, look for additional innovative opportunities for the management of environmental issues and make independent recommendations on those matters. The urban development area will provide for the preservation of local and regional biodiversity values through the protection of ecologically important areas, and the establishment and maintenance of buffers to those areas. Integrated water cycle management will contribute to better water quality values in the Pumicestone Passage, Bells Creek and Lamerough Creek riparian corridors and associated tributaries.

The decision to declare Caloundra South as an urban development area means it joins Ripley Valley, Greater Flagstone and Yarrabilba urban development areas in becoming one of South-East Queensland's newest model communities. Caloundra South will also benefit from the Urban Land Development Authority's experience in planning and delivering the Fitzgibbon Chase development in Brisbane's north, as was highlighted in the contribution by the member for Sandgate. In Fitzgibbon Chase housing affordability is being addressed through product innovation and not discounts. Smaller lots and the

innovative use of land means the authority, through its planning regime and development processes, can deliver a diverse and innovative product that offers a greater pool of affordable homes to rent and purchase, now and into the future.

I appreciate that in moving this disallowance the member for Nicklin has raised some valid points on procedure. I accept and acknowledge that. I respect his commitment to good and improved procedure in this place. I recognise that there are recommendations from the committee that the parliament will have to take credence of. Of course, those recommendations were made after the declaration. The member called for a more detailed set of explanatory notes. I respect that, but I point out—and all members will appreciate—that the reasons for the declaration of the Caloundra South UDA, as I have alluded to in my response to this motion tonight, were given in the most public of places—the parliament. This government has hardly been hiding its reasons.

Tonight some of the Independents raised concerns about this declaration being a tool to override councils. I remind the member for Nicklin about Katie Rose Cottage. On that matter the member for Nicklin wanted to pass legislation overriding the popularly elected Sunshine Coast Regional Council. I remind the member for Nicklin that at times, when the council does not act in the broader interests, there is a role for the state to override councils. In that case I ensured that we worked with council to get a better outcome. We tried that on many occasions in relation to Caloundra South. Unfortunately, it failed to respond.

I have heard similar protestations about the overriding of council from the opposition benches. That is quite surprising when we look at its policy leading up to the last election. The member for Waterford highlighted this. According to the *Brisbane Times*, local councils would be sidelined if they took too long to assess development applications under a Liberal National Party plan to streamline the processes. Where have I heard that before? Then, of all things, I get a lecture from the member for Kawana about call-ins. What was the member for Kawana's position on council's role with call-ins? The last time I heard from him on this issue, he was asking me to call in a McDonalds restaurant. He was asking me to override council on a McDonalds restaurant. That is the last time I heard of that issue from him. So much for dictatorial call-ins from the member for Kawana.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. The minister has made a reference to an application that he says I made for a McDonalds store to be called in. I have never requested a McDonalds store be called in. When I was first elected, there was a time when the community had issues with the Minyama McDonalds store—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: An issue that was raised by a number of speakers, including the mover of the disallowance motion, that I want to address is the Caloundra Aerodrome. This issue needs to be addressed. I reiterate and make clear that throughout the whole of this year I have asked Mayor Abbot for council's position on the future of the aerodrome. The letter that was tabled tonight makes that clear. I have been asking him for council's position. Council has been very belated in its response, which we had to respond to, deal with and manage. The declaration of Caloundra South as an urban development area was not a knee-jerk reaction. It was a recognition of the need for responsible planning and deliberate action. While we are aware that councils across Queensland, especially in the state's south-east, are facing growth related challenges, there is a real need to plan for the future.

Failure to plan will not stop growth, just as deliberate delays and dithering will not stop growth. This government will continue to play a hands-on role in regional planning and facilitating the development of strategic sites such as Caloundra South, a site that has been the subject of ongoing planning and there has been an intention to see it delivered as an urban development area for many years. We will continue to do that to ensure that we see the delivery of sustainable and affordable housing for Queenslanders for many decades to come.

The Urban Land Development Authority is the right mechanism to deliver affordable housing for Caloundra South. The authority will work in conjunction with council, the community and landowners as part of the Bligh government's commitment to boosting housing affordability and supporting employment.