



Speech by


Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Thursday, 31 May 2012

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Urban Land Development Authority

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.32 am): I am pleased to report that my government is well on its way to delivering on its responsibilities as part of its 100-day action plan. This government believes that it is important to shift power back to local government and, where appropriate, give this important tier of government the autonomy to make decisions for their communities. This is about empowering local governments to make local planning decisions. If Queensland's planning system worked well there would not be a need for an Urban Land Development Authority. The ULDA is symptomatic of a system that has failed Queenslanders, and it is the system of the Australian Labor Party.

I am therefore happy to inform the House that the Urban Land Development Authority board will delegate its development assessment functions to councils. The Deputy Premier is progressing that initiative. Section 136 of the ULDA act allows the ULDA to delegate its functions to the chief executive officer or an appropriately qualified officer of a local government. I will stop right there and point out that this is the Labor Party's odious legislation. Let me read it again: it allows the ULDA to delegate to a CEO—not to the council, not to the democratically elected leaders of a local community, but to a public servant who should be working for the democratically elected leaders. Nevertheless, that is the legislation at the current time. But it does allow for that. We will use the current legislation as an interim measure and roll out a delegation to 17 urban development areas that currently exist across Queensland. This is, of course, subject to each council's willingness to take on that responsibility. The Brisbane UDAs of Fitzgibbon, Northshore Hamilton, Bowen Hills and Woolloongabba will be the first to be transferred. Councils will need to perform to the same standards and timeframes that the ULDA has to ensure the delegations continue.

The Deputy Premier's department will provide support, direction and assistance to smaller councils and those under resource development pressure in integrating UDAs into their planning programs. The delegations will apply to new development applications to avoid disruption to existing applicants and landowners. I would like to assure all property owners within existing UDAs that they will not be adversely affected by this decision; it is business as usual. We will also engage with affected landowners during the transitional process. Work to officially delegate the development assessment powers is already happening. The Deputy Premier's department is working closely with the ULDA and local governments to ensure that this transition is achieved smoothly and as quickly as possible. It is part of the process in the Deputy Premier's department to consider the long-term role and functions of the ULDA. This might mean that in the longer term the transfer of powers may become broader and require legislative amendment. I have foreshadowed that issue about delegation. Using the clause in the act of delegation means newly elected mayors and councils can get on with the job of planning their local communities, which is exactly what they were elected to do.

This is a good and quick first step and key in the state government's agenda to create a more efficient planning and development assessment system. It is important that councils have stronger input into planning decisions because they know their local communities best and they will make more effective decisions with these powers. What a contrast it is to the Labor Party's centralist, we-know-best-here-in-

George-Street approach. This state government continues to deliver on its promise to empower local government to better plan for the future growth of their own communities as part of the government's plan to get Queensland back on track.