




Speech by

Liz Cunningham

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

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SUSTAINABLE PLANNING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (4.24 pm): I rise to speak to the Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I want to talk on a number of issues. The change to plumbing inspections and plumbing approvals is welcome in the sense that for many people trying to make major modifications to their home and renovate there will be not only a cost reduction but also a reduction in red tape. I would be interested in the minister's response to the fact that the notes in relation to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 state that, for example, in 2010-11 one local government collected \$1.1 million in fees charged to applicants. Obviously that is a significant amount of income, but there are some very positive changes that are proposed for the Plumbing and Drainage Act. I would be interested in the LGAQ's response to the proposed changes to that piece of legislation.

The bill also will make changes to the Sustainable Planning Act in relation to infill and greater density of housing, particularly in the south-east corner. It is acknowledged that that will increase the level of conflict between land uses. It is a very real issue, not just in the south-east corner but everywhere. We had a situation in my area where a development occurred some years ago: a caravan park was established by one brother and a garage was established by the other brother. Over the years the brothers operated those two facilities cooperatively, without any problem. In subsequent years the properties changed hands and the garage was operated by somebody completely separate to the van park owner, and there was a significant conflict in the relationship between the caravan park owner and the garage owner to the extent that eventually the department of environment restricted the operation of the garage from 24 hours a day to between 6 am and 10 pm. Obviously that had quite a significant impact on the income of the garage, yet the two businesses had previously cooperated quite effectively for years and years and years. What it took was the owner of the caravan park to have a differing philosophy from the owner or the lessee of the garage and there was significant stress between those two.

I think there does need to be—and I remember discussing this at the time—some recognition of pre-existing industry or pre-existing operation when people move to dwellings nearby. A similar situation is when an airport is established and over the years the council allows a housing estate to be built alongside the airport. Again, that has happened in Gladstone. People move there knowing that that industry is there, yet in subsequent years new purchasers in that housing estate can create quite a significant stress on the existing long-term business in relation to noise encroachment issues. If these changes will bring some kind of a practical application to those conflicts of land use, I think they will be exceptionally welcome and particularly by those who have lawful businesses and have had them in a location well before urban development encroaches.

There are changes to the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008. Again I would put on the record my appreciation of organisations that handle animals that are lost or strayed or unwanted. I think the RSPCA—and we have a Friends of RSPCA in Gladstone—does an enormous job in trying to re-home animals that are unwanted.

Mr Lucas: Separating the sheep from the goats.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Perhaps. We do not have a lot of sheep or goats that go to the RSPCA but perhaps, Minister. The only concern I have with this is the manner in which vexatious or malicious complaints are made. I am sure that the intent is for those genuine circumstances where a dog is vicious and there has been a genuine attack, but I do think it always has to be remembered that within human nature there are those who will make vexatious complaints about a neighbour—a bit like dividing fences and overhanging trees—in order to cause problems for somebody with whom they are not getting on.

I do not have examples that I want to bring forward here, but I think each of us would have had instances where somebody's much-loved animal has been accused of being dangerous or likely to cause harm. There are instances where you go and see the dog and it does not have a tooth in its head. Within the parameters of ensuring that dangerous animals are not let loose on an unsuspecting community, it is also important to give protection to those people who may have vexatious or malicious complaints made against them.

In the time that is remaining, I want to talk about changes to the ULDA. The ULDA's in my electorates—one in particular, because it has houses coming out of the ground now—are providing housing for people who can afford to buy into the market. I note the Premier's comments in relation to a question that I asked her earlier today about affordable housing for government employees. The ULDA will provide some accommodation for some families who can afford to buy into the market. In my electorate the ones who are most at risk and most hurting are those who do not have the wherewithal to purchase a home, to get a home loan and to service the home loan. It is the renters who are facing problems because of the enormous increases in rents—\$650 to \$700 for a very modest flat or house is not uncommon. The ULDA's are important, but they are not the be-all and end-all to housing affordability, particularly in areas like Gladstone.

The proposal affects the arrangements that are made between the government and local authorities. I would have to further put on the record that it is critically important for the ULDA to liaise closely with local authorities when they are establishing. We have three ULDA's. We have one that is being constructed now. We have one at Toolooa and one at Tannum Sands. The one at Tannum has 1,500 properties. I cannot recall the size of the one at Toolooa. However, each of them is a significant development and will have impacts on infrastructure outside of the ULDA, which makes it critically important that those who are administering the ULDA's liaise and negotiate with local government very carefully to properly address the social impacts and the infrastructure impacts that the construction of that many houses in a location will have. If this legislation will in some way bring forward that negotiation or the rights to negotiation, it is certainly welcome.

I turn to the Building Act amendments in relation to private certifiers. There needs to be changes to ensure private certifiers are passing buildings in liaison with local council. There are many occasions where private certification has caused problems and local authorities are unaware of what has been certified simply because they are not involved in the process other than receiving the documentation at the end of the day. I support the legislation, particularly in relation to affordable housing in the ULDA developments. I look forward to closer negotiation with local authorities and attention by government to affordable housing not in the ULDA sector but in the rental sector in the establishment of more Queensland housing rental properties.