




Speech by

Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Hansard Tuesday, 13 November 2012

SUSTAINABLE PLANNING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (9.43 pm): I have sat here tonight and listened to the debate so far. There are quite clearly two different points that we can see here. On one side we have the government with members committed to working hard for their electorates, trying to find employment for those tradies who live in their electorate. On the other side we see an opposition that is determined to shut everything in this state down. That is what they are endeavouring to do; they are endeavouring to shut everything down at the behest of their greenie mates.

The Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 is another way that the Newman government is delivering on its commitment to support the four pillars of the Queensland economy—in this case the construction sector—and build a more prosperous future for all Queenslanders. This bill is widely supported by industry and other organisations and is recognised as another way the Newman government is saying that Queensland is open and we want your business.

Unlike the previous Labor government, the LNP government is getting on with business. We are proactively engaging and collaborating with local government, industry bodies and community groups with a view to finding a better, more efficient way to do business and in a spirit of achieving the best outcomes for the state of Queensland. This bill is a tangible example of how the Newman government is driving productivity and creating more efficient government.

This new legislation will help reduce red tape, encourage engagement and eliminate double handling which will ultimately save taxpayers money. For example, the current legislation requires a development application to include evidence of an allocation or an entitlement to the state resource when lodged for it to be considered as properly made. Feedback received from industry indicated that the process for obtaining evidence of the allocation or entitlement from the relevant state agency can be very lengthy and cause delays to the development application process.

This bill will be a catalyst that sparks economic activity in the construction industry across the state. This will create more construction projects, better infrastructure and more jobs for Queensland. This is highlighted by peak planning entities, such as the Planning Institute of Australia and the Urban Development Institute of Australia, strongly supporting the removal of the current statutory arrangements for master and structure planning, arguing that these arrangements are inefficient. Similar views were expressed by the Planning Institute of Australia, which supported the proposed changes noting that—

The proposed change does not absolve the applicant from obtaining or holding the resource entitlement, but removing the requirement to provide it as part of the application allows the commencement of the assessment of the application while the resource entitlement is obtained.

It should indeed be noted that the new model of a single state assessment manager and referral agency does not reduce the expertise required in considering a development application and, importantly, that the current expertise applied will continue. The new model empowers the chief executive to make a final decision and is not bound by the regulation as state agencies previously were, giving the chief

executive the power to reconcile conflicting state issues where there is conflicting advice or conditions of approval among state agencies.

Further support of the bill was highlighted in the *Financial Review* on 4 October. The paper reported that—

The number of state referral triggers from departments of Transport and Main Roads and Environmental Heritage Protection will be reduced such that 1,500 applications that came to the state last year won't have to come to the state in the next year.

This represents a considerable cut in what? Red tape! The article went on to say—

Queensland's planning and development assessment processes are the worst in mainland Australia, according to the council. The state scored just 5.8 out of 10, or an 'F' on the council's report card issued in March.

We all know what 'F' means, don't we?

A government member: Labor's effort.

Mr HART: Labor's effort! I will take that interjection. And when was this report issued? It was issued in March. What else happened in March? The people of Queensland voted to get rid of that last incompetent government.

Mrs Miller: Yeah, and they'll maybe get rid of you next time.

Mr HART: We will wait and see about that. That was in March in the final days of what was a failing Labor government.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr HART: That is slightly different from what we have heard from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for South Brisbane tonight. Those members have not noticed what I have noticed on the Gold Coast: the cranes are missing. The cranes are missing because of what the former Labor government did when it was in power. The cranes have been progressively moving out of the Gold Coast.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Watts): Order! Member for Burleigh, take your seat for a moment. I would ask that interjections across the floor cease. I call the member for Burleigh.

Mr HART: Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you for your protection.

Mr Cavallucci interjected.

Mr HART: Exactly, and this is Movember. Our changes to the act will not only close the book on a chapter of Labor red tape, but also see confidence returned to the Queensland construction sector. With that will come more jobs, especially in the critical regional centres such as the Gold Coast. That is important to deliver benefits to my electorate of Burleigh. I remind the Labor opposition, which is so used to disabling industry sectors, that by having an innovative approach and a determination, the Newman government is enabling better outcomes for Queensland by using resources wisely. Clearly, the speech delivered tonight by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was written by a lackey who had his head in the sand and had not bothered—

A government member: Harry Potter.

Mr HART: I take that interjection. Clearly he had not bothered to read the report of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee, of which I am a member. He had not bothered to listen to the speech that the Deputy Premier gave tonight. From the submissions that the committee received, it was quite clear that there was a great deal of concern about the cost structure. People were concerned about what would happen with the courts and the outcomes that might put the courts in a position where they would rule that if someone lost a case they would have to pay. The committee heard that evidence, we took it on board and it is addressed in the report for the benefit of anyone who bothers to read it. Recommendation 4 states—

The committee recommends that Clause 61 should be amended to remove the words 'but follow the event, unless the court orders otherwise'.

It is probable that those opposite do not understand what that means, so I will explain it to them in basic terms. The words 'follow the event' quite clearly mean that if you lose the case you may have to pay the bill. Are members opposite clear about that? Quite clearly, the committee took that on board. We made that recommendation to the Deputy Premier. Tonight, he stood before us and, in fact, took it further. He has foreshadowed that he will be moving a series of amendments that will clearly make it possible for people to continue to go to court to fight planning applications that they are not happy with. I wish opposition members would pay attention in this chamber and read the reports that come from our committees. Quite clearly, our committees are doing a very good job. In the past couple of days, we have seen most committee recommendations fully accepted and implemented by our ministers. I commend the bill to the House.