




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Collinsville, Redevelopment Master Plan

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (10.07 pm): The people of Collinsville may be down, but they are certainly not out. Tonight I want to share with the House a plan devised by some passionate Collinsville residents to get the town of Collinsville back up on its feet again. In boom times Collinsville's population was exploding. The town's 2011 census population was 1,501. It is interesting to note that prior to the mining downturn it was projected that the town's population was going to double to almost 3,000 by 2026. However, times have changed dramatically in Collinsville. Businesses have closed, families have had to move away to find work and, like many in the north, they are fed up with delays of the Abbot Point redevelopment. Glencore's scaling back of mining operations has also impacted on the town and has delivered a significant blow. Collinsville is wallowing in debt and its unemployment level is one of the highest in the state, currently estimated at 17 per cent. However, this resilient community is determined that it is not going to be all doom and gloom for Collinsville.

Following on from the successful campaign to entrench Collinsville as the pit pony capital of the world, community members have identified a Collinsville redevelopment master plan. Prepared by two fourth-year James Cook University town planning students, Taryn Pace and Frances Mahlouzarides, this master plan promotes tourism and builds on Collinsville's strong community spirit which, I can tell you, they have bucketloads of. The plan concentrates on the development of key precincts over a five-year period—namely, the Collinsville Showgrounds, Rugby League club and Memorial Park, which is home to a stand-alone World War II memorial. Collinsville's redevelopment master plan is concentrating on a series of beautification upgrades such as irrigation and tree planting, pathways and walking tracks, picnic tables and park bench seating, road sealing, the creation of an alfresco cooking and dining area, lighting and shade covers over the tennis, squash and volleyball courts and the skating rink.

The revitalisation of Collinsville's Mighty Miners Rugby League Club will centre on creating a designated RV and caravan rest area, as the current 72-hour rest area at the showgrounds is limited in space and facilities. Collinsville recently became an RV-friendly town and, as such, the main focus is to encourage tourism through the town by creating an attractive RV-friendly designated space. The inland route for coalminers, cattle freight and road trains is also a popular route for grey nomads and backpackers wanting to get off the beaten track and explore Australia's outback towns, and Collinsville wants to capitalise on this.

I also acknowledge Glencore, which provided \$10,000 in funding for Collinsville's telecentre, championed by Sue Clark, to conduct a plan with JCU urban planning students. They are keen to convey the message that the project is being driven by the whole community and that this is a good example of what can be achieved when communities work together. I have every confidence that the Collinsville community will succeed with its redevelopment master plan and I look forward to seeing this project delivered in the coming months.