



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**


**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**Oakey**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.06 pm): The Oakey township is an integral part of the Condamine electorate. It has a small but extremely vocal community who are proud of their town and its many achievements. There is an active and highly successful small business community that work together to ensure that Oakey is presented in the best possible light. The community as a whole wants Oakey to thrive so that they can all continue to enjoy the lifestyle opportunities and benefits that it has to offer.

The Oakey Beef Exports abattoir will almost double its capacity in the next 10 years, with 11,500 cattle being processed each week and 500 new jobs created. The expansion will involve an upgrade of rail sidings in the south-west to allow direct live cattle deliveries. This large exporting business has made Oakey its base, with most of its employees living and raising their families in Oakey.

I recently visited the local aged-care facility at Oakey, CWA House. This is the only aged-care facility run by the CWA left in Queensland. It has a 40-bed capacity, with 15 secure dementia care units offering permanent and respite accommodation for the aged members of the Darling Downs community. The facility and surroundings are beautiful. It is a credit to the Oakey community that they have created such a wonderful place for the elderly to be cared for, whilst remaining in a rural and regional setting. I understand that the grandmother of the member for Toowoomba South is one of the residents.

Since becoming the member for Condamine, I have visited many small businesses and school and community organisations in Oakey. The common thread with all of the people whom I have met is their strong link to their community and the pride that they have in Oakey. Unfortunately, the Oakey water contamination issue has been portrayed by the media as the end for Oakey as we know it. The reports are not all in as yet and the contamination does not extend to all of Oakey. However, that has not been reported upon. The last thing Oakey needs is for this negative publicity to continue. It will impact upon real estate sales, people starting new businesses, people deciding to move from Oakey, or not to relocate at all and the economy of Oakey will decline.

I understand that the water contamination issue is of huge concern to all Oakey residents and in particular those directly neighbouring the army aviation base. However, there are a lot of unknowns and until the scientific proof has been substantiated, the media should be reporting upon the facts, not creating unnecessary hysteria about a small community who is desperately trying to grow and attract new people to their town.