



Speech By  
**Peter Russo**

**MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK**

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**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Cornerstone Living**

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (11.55 am): Contrary to recent comments by the shadow minister for housing that we have a failed Cornerstone Living project as a guide for Queensland's long-term provision of social housing, the truth is that Cornerstone Living is a very successful partnership between the Department of Housing and Public Works and the private sector. Cornerstone Living at Coopers Plains within my electorate is a development which comprises 10 hectares of land which was unsustainable in its prior form of public housing. The land was once occupied by houses built largely by Dutch immigrants when they moved into the area just after the Second World War. Over time, many of the houses had fallen into disrepair. As a result, there were large parcels of land at Coopers Plains that were able to be renewed for public and private housing initiatives. Brisbane City Council adopted the Acacia Ridge/Archerfield Neighbourhood Plan, which allowed for multistorey apartments to be built on land where previously only detached dwellings had been allowed.

The renewal project provides considerable financial and social wins for the government. The Palaszczuk government has committed to the creation of jobs since winning government, and the Cornerstone project is a good example of this commitment in action. Some 4,600 jobs are being created at Cornerstone Living over the life of the 10-year project. Four hundred jobs have been created by the project so far. Consolidated Properties has completed 149 properties out of the 1,200 apartments and townhomes that are planned for the site.

The project has been very successful in delivering beautiful, affordable housing. Under the government contract, 15 per cent of the dwellings were required to be affordable housing; however, Consolidated Properties has far exceeded that, with over 60 per cent of the properties meeting the 'affordable' criteria in the first seven stages. The project has so far delivered \$14 million into the Queensland housing fund, and the structured agreement with Consolidated Properties means the state government gets to reap some of the uplift in property prices in Coopers Plains as a result of the development's positive impact on the suburb.

Approximately \$127 million has been invested in the Cornerstone Living development to date, and it provides community services in addition to new housing. Cornerstone Living is becoming a community hub, with a very busy cafe operating seven days a week; a community hall providing a meeting place for cards groups, chess groups and art classes; and a community garden with 45 garden beds. Garden members come from within the Cornerstone Living apartments as well as the wider community. I can strongly recommend the coffee at the cafe, as I often call in there to grab a quick cup on the way to my electorate office.

The community garden has been very well received and is tended to by new and old residents alike. This is another example of the Cornerstone project bringing the community together. Sixty per cent of sales have been to owner-occupiers and more than half of those buyers are first home owners.

All stages sold out either at the point of release or very soon after. Owners and tenants have generally been from the local area working in local businesses or studying at nearby institutions, including Griffith University and QEII Hospital. The locality at Coopers Plains was ideally suited to urban regeneration and renewal. Further regeneration of the area will facilitate increases in housing supply, including affordable housing to first home buyers. The 2016 budget saw increases in grants for first home buyers, who will be able to take advantage of this initiative by the Palaszczuk government. Cornerstone Living has been recognised by receiving an award from the—

*(Time expired)*