




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

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MOTION

Revocation of Protected Areas

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (8.24 pm): Most importantly, for the purpose of this debate, I am the member for Redcliffe. I rise to speak on the revocation of state areas, specifically in relation to my electorate of Redcliffe. I intend to limit my comments to that particular part of the order. As it is stated in the order, it seeks to revoke a parcel of land in relation to the Redcliffe rail line. The Redcliffe Peninsula line, as everyone in this chamber knows, features a 12.6-kilometre dual track passenger rail line between Petrie and Kippa-Ring connecting our community to Brisbane city. After more than 100 years of promises, in 2010 we finally saw commitment from every level of government to fund this project. It took state and federal Labor governments to deliver it by investing in this essential piece of local infrastructure.

Last year I was incredibly proud to attend the official opening of the rail line at the brand-new Kippa-Ring station in my electorate. I saw hundreds of community members attending this historic opening—one which many thought they would not see in their lifetime. From the youngest child to those who have seen over 100 years of promises, the excitement they showed in riding the first trains to leave from Redcliffe was inspiring. This transport infrastructure provides an essential link with Brisbane's CBD, allowing for easier, faster and more economical access to the city centre. This link provides the next generation in Redcliffe with better opportunities to access tertiary education and training and employment opportunities both within and outside of the Moreton Bay region.

This infrastructure upgrade also attracts investment to the area and provides better opportunities for business partnerships in the region. It has acted as a catalyst for growth in the region, with stations becoming hubs of new development in our region. Providing rail access to the peninsula also reduces congestion on the road network, including the Bruce Highway. It is clearly very important to my local community and to the broader Moreton Bay region.

We have heard from others who have spoken tonight about how this is all about making sure we make way for essential infrastructure investments in our local communities. We know that that sometimes comes at a cost because we have to claim land to do that. I want to acknowledge the minister, who has stated that this decision is not made lightly when they do choose to revoke some parkland and conservation parks for this important infrastructure investment.

This rail line runs alongside a very important conservation area for the Moreton Bay region and for the state of Queensland. This area is known as Hays Inlet. Hays Inlet is one of the wonders of Moreton Bay and my electorate of Redcliffe and I know many other electorates on the north side. Redcliffe is a very beautiful part of Queensland and I am proud to represent such an idyllic area. We have many areas to be proud of—from the beaches at Suttons and Margate, to the red cliffs of Scarborough and Woody Point, to the gorgeous ocean views—but one of the first things we see when we drive home to Redcliffe over the bridge is beautiful Hays Inlet. Hays Inlet is a unique ecosystem and a picturesque natural environment, forming a green fringe surrounding most of the western edge of the

peninsula. It has a thriving ecosystem of flora and fauna, with a mangroves forest, saltmarsh, an open eucalypt forest and a wide variety of animal life, including kangaroos, koalas, flying foxes, numerous species of fish, including significant fish habitats, and a significant number of birds. In fact, Hays Inlet includes an area that is recognised as a Ramsar site, an internationally significant wetland habitat for migratory species as well as a conservation park. This is an area that is significant not just for Moreton Bay or for Queensland but also for the nation and internationally.

That is why a thorough environmental protection plan was implemented during the construction of the Redcliffe Peninsula line to protect this very precious ecosystem. Managing the impacts of the construction on wildlife was a major focus of the project team. The team engaged with local environment groups throughout the life of the project using the local knowledge from these groups to shape the environmental management plans developed by the project team. In this process the team prepared a koala action plan to safeguard the welfare of the large population of koalas in the area. The team used monitoring collars on more than 500 koalas, which assisted in finding the koalas as radio tracking allows koalas to be located relatively easily. This may be very important for koala safety during construction works. More than 50 joeys were born from tagged koalas as well, making it the largest native animal tracking program ever undertaken in Australia. The team used data to determine the most appropriate location for new fauna underpasses and more than 25,000 new koala habitats were planted to offset lost foliage. These efforts were highly successful and have led to a vibrant koala population in the area.

I want to thank the Moreton Bay project team, who were committed to consulting on this project from day one. When they consulted with me as the federal member when we made this announcement, I said that one of the most important things along this corridor was to get the environmental groups in early and work with them and bring them with us. I thank them for their commitment in acknowledging not only that this was a very sensitive corridor along a Ramsar site and a conservation park but also the very important benefits of having public transport and getting cars off the roads. I want to acknowledge the member for Murrumba because this particular area that we are seeking to revoke is in the electorate of Murrumba. When in opposition, as the member for Redcliffe I had many meetings with residents in Rothwell on this very issue.

In conclusion, I am proud of the great work that has been done to protect the local ecosystem. It is wonderful that the beauty and diversity of Hays Inlet is being preserved for the benefit of future generations. I know how much I enjoy the beauty it has to offer. Seeing it on the approach to Redcliffe truly makes Redcliffe residents feel like they have arrived home. With local, state and federal protections we can be sure that it will be thriving for many years to come. It is great to see that we can enjoy all that Hays Inlet has to offer while still allowing Redcliffe to continue developing into a more modern and connected city than ever before. While this revocation order will see part of the Hays Inlet area transferred to the rail corridor, offsets have been made throughout this project to ensure the long-term viability of the area and the protection of our environment. This was done in direct consultation with the local community, and I thank them for their input. This is balanced with the need to expand public transport to get more vehicles off the road, which in itself is an important environmental initiative.

I support this revocation order and the efforts of the Moreton Bay rail project team and the local and environmental groups. I want to particularly acknowledge my local group the Redcliffe Environmental Forum, which works to get the best outcomes for the Moreton Bay region.