



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 May 2019

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.31 pm): I too rise to address the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. For members of the community who want to understand the detail of this bill, I refer them specifically to the contribution of the member for Burdekin, the shadow minister, but also to the contributions of the LNP members of the committee—the member for Condamine, the member for Buderim and the member for Bundaberg. They have done an excellent job outlining what this bill is about. It is a very complex bill. There are many acts that it is amending. There are several concerns with the bill, but three in particular that the LNP has.

I want to confine my comments to those elements of the bill that pertain to the Land Act. The explanatory notes at page 4 make reference to the fact that the amendments will consider the most appropriate tenure and use assessments of state land. The explanatory notes state—

The Land Act requires unallocated land to be evaluated against the matters listed in s 16, to assess the land's most appropriate tenure and use. The matters listed in s 16 that must be considered include the object of the Land Act and State, regional and local planning strategies and policies. State commitments and undertakings in relation to the land is now included as a matter the chief executive must consider.

The reason I want to focus on this provision is regarding a block of land in the community of Peachester in the electorate of Glass House. It is lot 8 on SP304066. It holds a very strategic place in the heart of Peachester. It is on Kilcoy Beerwah Road at the corner of High Street. It concerned me and certainly concerned the community of Peachester to find after many years an auction sign pop up on this block of state owned land.

The community were quite alarmed so contacted me. I immediately contacted the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy requesting a stay on the sale of that property. The reason being that for the best part of three decades what is now the Sunshine Coast Regional Council have had their eye on that property as the prime location for a community park. To the minister's credit, I acknowledge that just over two weeks later we received a response saying that he has put a stay on that sale while discussions continue with the council. I will speak more about that in a little while.

I want to acknowledge the role of Mel Driscoll, Judy Tomlinson, Ray Pulham and Sally Joyce in bringing this to my attention and to the attention of the minister. One of the frustrations is that in the minister's response he still says—

I am pleased to advise you that I have asked the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (the department) to place a hold on the sale of the property to allow the department to offer the Sunshine Coast Regional Council first right of refusal to purchase the property.

That sounds fine except that it is basically suggesting that the council has to buy the property. As the ratepayers and taxpayers of Peachester have pointed out—they are one in the same—they already own it and why should they have to pay for it again. The question that has been put back to the minister, both by me and individuals such as Ray Pulham of Coochin Street, Peachester, is: can we stop the sale full stop and go back to the drawing board and commence some discussions with the council—

**Mr WHITING:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. It relates to relevance. This is way off topic. This is not in the long title of the bill or in the general principles.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stevens): Member for Glass House, could you please return to the long title of the bill. If this matter is related to the long title of the bill, could you please point out to the House how it is.

**Mr POWELL:** Certainly, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I said in my opening remarks, the explanatory notes state that the Land Act is being amended around tenure and the use of state land. It states that it is an important requirement to consider state, regional and local planning strategies. I will come to that in particular.

As Ray Pulham has pointed out in her recent correspondence with the minister, the reality is that for some 30 years the council has been considering this as a community park. Her correspondence states—

The community is incredibly disappointed that the culmination of their dedicated, selfless work and generous donations of time and services would be for the State to sell off this land without contacting Council or to seek consultation from the community with their intention to sell. The community commitment to securing a park reserve is minuted and recorded, including correspondence with Council and State going back 30 years. The High St site was chosen by the previous Councillor due to comprehensive plans—

there is that word again, ‘plans’, as per the acknowledgement in the explanatory notes—local plans in this instance—

for a larger out of town open space block being deemed too expensive to accommodate at the time.

One of the excuses that will be given is that the state has kindly over the course of a number of governments, including the LNP government, donated to the council a large block of land that is used for a cricket field, some historic sites and, hopefully, the site of a new rural fire brigade outside of Peachester.

**Mr WHITING:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, on relevance. I am listening to an adjournment speech not a speech on a bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Glass House, could you bring your speech back to the long title of the bill in your last four minutes.

**Mr POWELL:** If the member for Bancroft struggles with the connection between what—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Glass House, please return to your speech or take your seat. We are not going to get into cross-chamber debate. We will direct comments through the chair.

**Mr POWELL:** At page 4 the explanatory notes also talk about changes around ministerial consent. The explanatory notes state—

The Land Act currently provides over 70 instances where the Minister’s consent is required to complete or approve a land transaction ...

That is why constituents like Ray Pulham have gone to the minister and said, ‘We want you to stop this transaction. This does not need to be a transaction.’ We have a council willing and interested in turning this block of land into a community park. All they are asking for—again, using the language in the explanatory notes—is consideration of the appropriate tenure and use. They are ready and willing to take it on. I ask that the minister respond to Ms Ray Pulham, Councillor Rick Baberowski and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and come to the best solution for the Peachester community—that is, a park for community use, managed and operated by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council.