




Speech By
Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Record of Proceedings, 2 April 2019

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (4.10 pm): I am happy to speak in support of the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and to speak specifically about amendments related to Economic Development Queensland. The Economic Development Act 2012, brought in by the former government, established a planning and development assessment framework that applies to declared priority development areas, known as PDAs. Economic Development Queensland, or EDQ, has undertaken a thorough review of the ED Act which focused on the planning and development assessment processes. This was in response to a number of operational issues that affected EDQ's ability to deliver government objectives. It is worth noting that in February 2013 the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 was repealed and replaced with the Economic Development Act 2012. From then on, land areas identified for priority development were referred to as PDAs, not UDAs, and existing UDAs were transitioned under the ED Act.

The amendments today address a range of matters. The bill will improve development assessment processes in relation to advising the community about development applications and asking the applicant for more information about a request; clarify provisions about infrastructure agreements under the ED Act; and include a more comprehensive approach for revoking PDAs when they are no longer required.

I wish to speak specifically on the bill regarding a priority development area that is in the Carseldine area within the Aspley electorate—that being the Fitzgibbon PDA. There was much discussion in the lead-up to the last election and ongoing regarding the Carseldine component of the Fitzgibbon PDA. I acknowledge those people who have spoken to me over the last 18 months regarding the project. My door has always been open, and I have been working with the community to ensure the best outcomes we can get locally from the project. It is worth pointing out the hypocrisy of the former government, now the opposition, regarding this project. They made an eleventh-hour claim that they opposed the project at the last election. This was in stark contrast to their actions when they were in government.

As I mentioned earlier, in February 2013 the ULDA Act was repealed and replaced with the ED Act by the former Newman government. At that point, the Newman government transitioned the Fitzgibbon UDA into the Fitzgibbon PDA. Should the former government and the former member for Aspley have wanted, they could have easily removed or amended the Fitzgibbon PDA in any reasonable way they saw fit, but of course the LNP only started vaguely opposing the project when they became the opposition in 2015 for purely political reasons. This vague opposition only sharpened up with two weeks to go in the 2017 election campaign—a campaign where I had been very up-front with people about the Palaszczuk government's intentions regarding the site.

I note the opposition have been highly critical about the operation of Economic Development Queensland in declaring and administering priority development areas. As indicated in the minister's second reading speech, the bill does not make a fundamental change to the operation of the Economic Development Act. This is legislation that was introduced and passed by the Newman government and wholeheartedly supported by so many on the opposition benches.

It is also unfortunate to see the local LNP BCC opposing the development. I heard the earlier contribution from the member for Jordan, where she said that she is able to work constructively with the local council down there. That is certainly not something we get at all times in Aspley. I of course in no way begrudge those locals who have genuine concerns regarding the Fitzgibbon project. I reiterate that I have met on numerous occasions regarding its development. It is through these discussions that we are able to ensure improved outcomes locally. After representations to me and others, I was very pleased that the minister was able to rule out future urban development on the western side of the site—that is, the side adjacent to Dorville Road. This will please many residents whom I have spoken to throughout the last 18 months, including those at my mobile office last weekend. I thank the minister, his office and EDQ for their great work on that.

We are in discussion with the community about traffic congestion. I am talking to the community about the state of the current Beams Road rail crossing. We had a feasibility study at the last election and consultation through all of this February. I am very keen for all levels of government to step up and make sure this project keeps moving forward.

Also on the site we are currently consulting with sporting groups and organisations to determine the best future use of the \$6.5 million sporting precinct being constructed on the Fitzgibbon PDA. This precinct includes 120 car-parking spaces, three new rectangular sporting fields, two volleyball courts, two tennis courts, a turf cricket pitch and practice nets, LED and sports lighting, fitness and play zones, seating areas, exercise equipment, barbecues, shelters and open space. This will be a great community hub when completed and I look forward to being at the opening.

I am also in discussions with Minister Dick and Minister Grace regarding a pedestrian bridge over Cabbage Tree Creek going from the Carseldine part of the PDA through to Aspley State High School. This will increase community links to the PDA site which will make the whole facility much better for the entire community. In closing, I support the bill. I support the local iterations of the bill as it affects the Aspley electorate.