




Speech By
Colin Boyce

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

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ADJOURNMENT

Smoky Creek Solar Farm; Callide C Power Station, Fire

 **Mr BOYCE** (Callide—LNP) (7.05 pm): While the government focuses on shutting down coal-fired power stations in Queensland, pursuing their 50 per cent renewable target by 2030, they are missing the bigger picture, which is that Queenslanders need jobs. The Callide C Power Station at Biloela, a mere 20 minutes from my office, employs 260 workers, supplying 1,500 megawatts of baseload 24/7 power, which is 16 per cent of the state's needs, and that supports the local economy.

How does the proposed Smoky Creek solar farm near Biloela, which the proponents Edify Energy are now calling the 'Smoky Creek power station', stack up against those figures? Its installed capacity will be only 450 megawatts of intermittent unreliable power, which is not even one-third of Callide's production. Let us not forget that its deliverable capacity will be in the range of only 20 per cent of its installed capacity, because when the sun does not shine it does not work. At completion, it is projected to employ just five people.

The size of the proposal in comparison to its output is also astounding. We are talking about 36 square kilometres, which is nearly half the size of the environment minister's electorate of Gaven or almost as large as the Treasurer's electorate of Woodridge. The development of the solar farm defies logic. Not only is it located in good agricultural grazing land but also there are no environmental impact statements applicable to its development. The local council can impose conditions on the development but the damage will be done. The council's hands are tied by the Planning Act 2016, limiting their ability to restrict the development application and forcing them to impose conditions to mitigate any problems that develop.

Has anyone considered the impact on the Great Barrier Reef with the impending reef legislation? According to the Department of Environment and Science, their guidelines will be adequate to manage those risks. While farmers bear the burden for increased record keeping, permits and applications for environmentally relevant activities, the solar farm can avoid them entirely.

This afternoon at Biloela, Callide C Power Station suffered a generator turbine failure that resulted in a power outage and caused the closure of the entire plant. All of the staff were evacuated and everybody has been accounted for. No injuries have been recorded. However, that has caused a catastrophic failure in the energy supply grid in Queensland, with many thousands of homes going without power. People have been stuck in elevators. There has been widespread traffic chaos as traffic lights have been out and so on. Another problem is that in Queensland power spiked to \$15,000 a megawatt hour at 6 pm today, which reiterates the fact that we need baseload power.