




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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MOTION

Revocation and Dedication of Protected Areas and State Forest Areas (Cognate Debate)

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.01 pm): As a former shadow environment minister and as a former environment minister, I take it very seriously when we come to this chamber and debate the potential revocation of conservation areas around the state. As I have said before, sometimes it is required and sometimes it is necessary. As we have heard today, sometimes it is only temporary.

Quite rightly, it takes a little while to work through this process. What has been interesting and fairly consistent from all of the contributions today concerns the length of time we have been working on some of these projects. I think I heard the member for Noosa talk about the fact that the Pomona men's shed has been at least half a decade in the making. The member for Burnett said that the Mullett Creek aspect has been 22 years in the making. I can add to that. What we are seeing with the revocations in the Beerburrum state forest area, both east and west, are at least 13 years in the making, because they are connected to the duplication of the Beerburrum to Nambour rail corridor. That was meant to have commenced in 2009, before the then Bligh Labor government, in which the now Premier was transport minister, pulled the funding and put it towards the Springfield line in her own electorate. Finally, after our federal colleagues—the member for Fisher, Andrew Wallace, and the member for Fairfax, Ted O'Brien—put in 50 per cent of the funding to a project that previously was 100 per cent state owned, we now have action occurring on the Beerburrum to Nambour rail corridor.

I take this moment to explain to my constituents what they are seeing and what they will be seeing as part of this revocation and as part of that work. Already my constituents, if they are driving up Steve Irwin Way to Beerburrum Road and keep going a little further north to Nursery Road, will see significant construction occurring on the right-hand side, the eastern side of Steve Irwin Way. That is in fact the realignment of Steve Irwin Way. We are shifting Steve Irwin Way to the east so that we can subsequently come through and straighten the Nambour line on the western side of Steve Irwin Way. That is where these revocations come into play.

Already there has been some preliminary vegetation clearing—not in these protected areas, obviously, but further north—up near Moffatt Road. What this allows, through the revocation of that woodland that people will see just to the north of Beerburrum Road, on the western side of Steve Irwin Way and a little further north again on the western side of both Steve Irwin Way and the Nambour rail corridor, is a straightening and duplication of the line through that section.

It is well and truly overdue. It is going to be a fantastic outcome. It is disappointing that we have had to impact upon some of the native vegetation in that area, but the outcome will be beneficial to the environment in that we will be increasing the capacity of the Nambour rail corridor and hopefully getting more people and more freight onto that route. As I think another member mentioned, it is the route that goes all the way from Brisbane to Cairns. Any passengers or freight that we can put on rail hopefully will see a reduction in the number of people and trucks on the Bruce Highway. We have seen billions

of dollars invested by particularly the federal Morrison government on the Bruce Highway. In my part of the world, all that tends to do is create a bigger car park. We need to be getting both people and freight off that and onto the rail; therefore, these small revocations are necessary.

The people of Glass House will continue to see a lot of activity in that area between Beerburrum Road and Bowen Road at Glass House Mountains. I do encourage any of them who have any concerns or questions to please contact me and my office—**glass.house @ parliament.qld.gov.au** is the best way to get in touch with us. I am happy to explain what people are seeing.

I also want to briefly touch on the Conondale revocation. Conondale itself, much of the Conondale Ranges and much of the Conondale National Park sit within the electorate of Glass House. It is actually the border of Glass House and Nanango. Further to the north, it goes into the electorates of Nicklin and Gympie. The aspect that is being considered today is actually, I understand, in the electorate of Gympie and is connected with the Borumba Dam project that the government has proposed. I want to relay again—people will hear ‘Conondale’ and suspect it is occurring in our part of the world: it is very clearly further north and very clearly temporary. I have heard from those opposite that we will be seeing a temporary revocation in that area to allow some testing to be done to determine whether the Borumba Dam hydro project is feasible and is going to work. The government has backed this one in. It will be a concern if, after doing this testing, we find that it is not possible.

As others have said, people will be seeing some drilling. The proponent will be required to remove all equipment and rehabilitate any drilling holes, and at the end of the day you will not know they have even been there. I understand from the minister that eventually the area will be again declared part of the protected area estate, once that work is done. I just want the good voters of the electorate of Glass House to understand why these two revocations are necessary—why they are required in the first instance for the Nambour rail corridor project and, in the second, for work to be potentially done on Borumba Dam. These are not decisions that anyone in this chamber makes lightly, but they are necessary and will produce better environmental outcomes in the long run.