




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Glass House Electorate, Land Acquisition

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.00 pm): This week on my way to parliament, I again met with families impacted by the Bruce Highway western alternative. For most Aussies, the family home is the largest investment they will ever make. It is filled with family memories. It is the home to which they bring newborns from hospital. It is the site of family dinners and countless precious moments. The state should only take that away when it is absolutely necessary, and the landowner should be well and truly compensated not only for the property but also for the entire impost of the ordeal. Here are eight principles that I think each and every government should use when such an acquisition is required.

One: landowners must be notified in person and not in the media. Too often we have heard stories about ministers announcing projects with massive footprints without any sort of interaction with the people on the ground.

Two: Crown land must be the first preference for any project.

Three: the government should pay for and provide an independent advocate for impacted landholders. These advocates would be a one-stop shop for landowners to access advice and information about the process. While the government pays for the advocate, they are independent, not in any way beholden to government, and should not be compelled to pass any specific information back to the government about their engagement with landholders.

Four: valuations should be sought from independent accredited valuers paid for by the state. The highest value should be the preference. Any appeal would be overseen by the relevant accrediting body for valuers and not the Valuer-General.

Five: the process should favour the landowner, not the state. We hear stories of Queenslanders being strongarmed into settling on a price. Landowners should not feel coerced to settle.

Six: however, for projects with long lead times like the Bruce Highway western alternative landowners should be incentivised to settle early. The incentives should consider the potential uplift in value for their property that will come as a result of the project, as this has been foregone by the landowner via the state's action. The state should bear the responsibility.

Seven: payment should be prompt and ahead of time. To secure a new home, often the landowner will need a mortgage. The funds from the acquisition should be there to secure any new property as promptly as possible.

Eight: the landowner should be provided with at least a three-month peppercorn lease of their existing property once it is acquired to allow them to find and secure that new property, that new Aussie dream, that new home for their family.

My constituents have not been treated with such compassion. They have not been treated with such consideration. It is unacceptable. That must change.