




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 19 April 2023

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Housing

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.40 am): At the Housing Summit the Palaszczuk government called for organisations to propose under-utilised land and buildings that could be repurposed to house vulnerable Queenslanders. We are carefully assessing all land and buildings offered to ensure it is safe, is fit for purpose and represents good value for money.

Griffith University contacted us and offered the temporary use of disused student accommodation owned by the university. EDQ has been assessing that accommodation and planning what work would be required to make it suitable for housing. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds previously earmarked for the possible repurposing of the student accommodation—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr MILES: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funding previously earmarked for the possible—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr MILES: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds previously earmarked for the possible repurpose of student accommodation.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr MILES: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Members, I ask the House to come to order. The Deputy Premier is not being provocative. He is delivering a ministerial statement. I will start to warn people. Deputy Premier, I ask you to move beyond this part of your speech. I have heard it now.

Dr MILES: I will just finish that sentence, if I can, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds previously earmarked—

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South, you are warned. I gave clear instructions of my expectations.

Dr MILES: I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds that were earmarked for the possible repurposing of student accommodation at Griffith University. The 64 homes comprise 165 rooms, more than the 100 rooms anticipated at Griffith. This will see vulnerable Queenslanders housed quicker and is a better value, long-term outcome. The properties will be suitable for a wider range of household types. The Palaszczuk government has identified houses and units across the state on the open market that we have contracts to purchase with funds that had been allocated. Around \$25 million will be invested to purchase 64 dwellings, including houses and units, to get vulnerable people housed quicker.

Detailed cost estimates found substantial works would be required to bring the Griffith Mount Gravatt campus student accommodation up to current fire safety standards, especially given its proximity to bushland. After consulting with Queensland's leading housing advocacy group, Q Shelter, we have made the decision to purchase homes directly on the private market to get more people into accommodation quicker—accommodation that will remain in the state's social housing stock permanently. The Griffith site was only a temporary option while the state and Griffith determined the long-term future of the campus. This decision will deliver better value for money. It will be more beds, suitable for longer term accommodation, available sooner and permanent.

The properties are at varying stages of the purchase process and are located in the following suburbs: Acacia Ridge, Annerley, Atherton, Bucasia, Cloncurry, Cooran, Eagleby, Emerald, Gladstone Central, Gleneagle, Gordonvale, Griffin, Kawungan, Mount Low, Ormeau, Pimpama, Rural View, Smithfield, Tully and Urangan. I am advised that most will settle over the next two months.

I would like to thank Griffith University for offering us the use of the student accommodation. Their offer was in good faith and appreciated. I am advised—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, there is far too much interjection. Given the number of times you raise housing as an issue, I would think you would want to hear the ministerial statement relating to housing. I will start to warn people.

Dr MILES: I would like to thank Griffith University for offering us the use of the student accommodation. Their offer was in good faith and appreciated. I am advised they were unaware of the fire safety work required to make it useable again. I would still urge organisations with under-utilised land and buildings to put them forward so they can be assessed as accommodation options. Q Shelter executive director, Fiona Caniglia, said—

The allocation of funding to purchase housing directly makes more sense given the challenges presented by the Mt Gravatt site. She said—

We support any action which achieves homes for Queenslanders faster. In the longer term, this funding will go further and achieve sustainable housing outcomes for as long as people need them. Q Shelter will be working with Government to ensure that not-for-profit community housing providers assist in any way possible to implement this plan.

This government is committed to tackling the current housing challenges. That is why we have convened two round tables and a summit to pull together all of the people from industry, local government and our community housing sector to get the best advice on how to get more Queenslanders into homes. It is why we are investing \$3.9 billion in social and affordable housing—the largest concentrated investment in Queensland's history. It is why my department is working with councils to help them to bring more housing to market quicker. And it is why we are supporting the federal government in their efforts to build another 30,000 homes with their housing fund.