

Question on Notice
No. 838
Asked on Tuesday 5 June 2007

MS LEE LONG asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the planned location of a prison work camp in the Johnstone Shire, for which the preferred site was on a dead-end road which would have isolated a number of residences further down the road—

Is Corrective Services working to find an alternative site which would avoid the community concerns raised by the original location?

ANSWER:

On 15 May 2007, Queensland Corrective Services agreed not to proceed with the purchase of the original preferred site for the Innisfail Work Camp until the shire has had a further opportunity to consult with the community and offer any additional sites that they believe are appropriate.

The Chief Executive of the shire placed a public notice in the local media giving residents 14 days to nominate potential sites. This notice included the criteria set by Queensland Corrective Services for site selection.

The community nominated six sites for consideration and the Johnstone Shire Council passed each of these onto Queensland Corrective Services for consideration. Queensland Corrective Services has inspected each of the properties nominated through that process and will now determine a preferred site. The evaluation of the sites is based on the criteria outlined in the expression of interest and provided by the Johnstone Shire council

Queensland Corrective Services has continued to assist the shire in their community engagement. This has included:

- the provision of public information about work camps and their benefits to the community including a toll free phone number for queries;
- the processes of establishing a work camp and assessing prisoners;
- the roles of the community advisory council; and
- and the role of Queensland Police Service.

Queensland Corrective Services is evaluating each site nominated by the shire in order to determine a preferred site.

Queensland Corrective Services has always made it clear that it will work with the local authority in the establishment of this site.

Once a work camp is established a community advisory committee is formed. The committee membership can include shire councillors, representative of community or service clubs, church or welfare organisations, union representatives and local police. These committees advise on the priority for work to be undertaken and make a recommendation on projects. All project work by camps is assessed to ensure that

projects do not take away paid work. Local police are fully informed about offenders attending the camps.

We are not in the business of setting up work camps without the support of local communities.