

Question on Notice

No. 1534

Asked on Tuesday, 28 October 2008

Mr WELLINGTON asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Premier in Western Queensland (Mr Shine) -

QUESTION:

Will he investigate the calls to redevelop the Nambour Magistrates Courthouse site so that more people can have their matters dealt with in Nambour rather than Maroochydore?

ANSWER:

In answering the Honourable Member's question, I first refer to his recent similar enquiry, Question on Notice No. 1211 on Tuesday, 9 September 2008, to investigate the case for the Nambour Magistrates Courthouse to undergo a major refurbishment so that more magistrate sittings can be held.

Queensland has 84 courthouses across the State and this government has been very active in providing new courthouses and updating older courthouses when the need is clear, with the allocation of funds for new courthouses and renovation of existing courthouses being based on the condition of the court premises and the business demands in the area.

The Sunshine Coast is well serviced with courthouses at Maroochydore, Noosa Heads, Nambour and Caloundra. The main centre for hearing court cases will remain at Maroochydore and the new Caloundra Courthouse has capacity to handle increased cases at the southern end of the Sunshine Coast.

The Nambour Courthouse continues to play an important role for clients on the Sunshine Coast. However, a relevant consideration must be the reality that a greater number of resources for court matters, including police prosecution and legal aid services, are based in Maroochydore. Maroochydore also has a greater population than Nambour. As a result, more hearings are listed and dealt with at the Maroochydore courthouse.

I understand that the population in the Nambour district is expected to increase, but at present the court facilities in the region are adequate for at least the next five years.

The allocation of court matters at Nambour Magistrates Court is a matter for the regional co-ordinating Magistrate. Should the co-ordinating magistrate determine that more matters should be listed for hearing at Nambour, resources will be reallocated to meet this demand.

The Nambour Courthouse has provided excellent services to the people of Nambour and will continue to do so.