

Question on Notice

No. 532

Asked on 8 August 2013

Mrs Cunningham asked the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (MR LANGBROEK) –

QUESTION:

As residents in Calliope and indeed the electorate of Gladstone remain opposed to the sale of the Calliope High School site, will the Minister have regard to these well founded genuine concerns?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for her question, and her continued passionate representation of the constituents of Calliope and surrounds.

In April 2010, under the Labor Government, the site at 55 Don Cameron Drive in Calliope was determined to be surplus to requirements.

Since this time, my Department further investigated the need for a high school in Calliope. The investigation confirmed that a high school in Calliope will not satisfy the required enrolment threshold that warrants the significant capital investment and ongoing operational cost of a new state high school.

My Department continually monitors growth in regional areas to ensure appropriate planning across the State, and recognises the growth in the township of Calliope has increased. This growth, however, does not show the required population peak to support a viable high school.

To meet growth to the south and west of central Gladstone, as well as planned growth in Calliope, my Department has identified the need for a secondary school in the medium to long term in Gladstone south-west. This approach would reduce the distance and travel time for Calliope students while also relieving pressure on Gladstone State High School.

The efficient allocation of the State's resources based on this objective analysis of need is a priority for our Government. This is why the Newman Government has established the Queensland Schools Planning Commission (QSPC) to streamline and coordinate the planning of schools infrastructure across state and non-state providers.

Through the QSPC and as part of ongoing planning work, my Department is working with the Gladstone Regional Council and local regional office staff to ensure all available planning information is accessed and considered in the determination of the specific location for a future high school, which is best suited to meet projected growth in the region.

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with Mr Ken O'Dowd MP, Federal Member of Flynn and community members at the recent Gladstone Community Cabinet. During our discussions I was presented with additional information which I will consider alongside the outcomes of the Queensland Schools Planning Commission's work with Gladstone Regional Council and regional staff.