

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 115

asked on Thursday, 6 February 2020

MR L MILLAR ASKED THE MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT, MANUFACTURING, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING (HON C DICK)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Minister's introduction of a Temporary Local Planning Instrument to protect agricultural productivity in the Mareeba Shire—

Will the Minister provide similar protection for strategic cropping land in the Central Highlands which is under threat from resources exploration and development?

ANSWER:

The Palaszczuk Government supports both the resource and agriculture industries. If properly managed, neither activity should be a threat to the other.

I welcome the honourable member's recognition of the Mareeba Temporary Local Planning Instrument and its importance in protecting agricultural land.

The *Planning Act 2016*, under which Temporary Local Planning Instruments are made, does not apply to the regulation of resource activities.

The impact of resource activities on strategic cropping land, including land in the Central Highlands, is managed through the *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* (the RPI Act). The RPI Act manages the impacts of resource activities on areas of regional interest, such as strategic cropping areas, and manages the co-existence of these activities with, for example, cropping activities.

The RPI Act and the *Regional Planning Interests Regulation 2014* were introduced by then Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney in 2014 and the relevant provisions to protect strategic cropping land have remained unchanged since this time.

Strategic cropping areas are identified on the state's development assessment mapping system (DA mapping system). This includes extensive strategic cropping areas in the Central Highlands Regional Council area. The DA mapping system can be accessed at <https://dams.dsdp.esriaustraliaonline.com.au/damappingsystem/>.

All proposed resource activities in strategic cropping areas must obtain a regional interest development approval. Every application is subject to a rigorous and thorough assessment process, undertaken by the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, with advice from other relevant government departments and the Gasfields Commission.