



DAVID MORRIS MP

Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government

Member for Mornington

Management of Crown Land – Reservations Revoked

Legislative Assembly 13th October 2009

Mr MORRIS (Mornington) — Management and occupancy arrangements, and the appropriate use of public land have been significant subjects in the history of this house in many debates over the more than a century and a half it has been in existence, and the Land (Revocation of Reservations and Other Matters) Bill 2009 continues that tradition of parliamentary oversight of the application of public land. The bill proposes changes to more than nine separate parcels, but they are in nine particular locations and the circumstances of each are different. The changes proposed vary in some ways, and some are more controversial than others.

While clause 1 of the bill outlines the purposes in a practical sense in terms of amendments to the principal legislation, the second-reading speech outlines the purposes more effectively from an outcomes perspective. It points to a more accurate recording of the Crown portfolio to improve management of the sites. It allows the government to dispose of surplus land, to engage in land exchange and to facilitate projects and developments.

The first two are essentially management issues. Anything that improves the management of the Crown portfolio is to be supported, so I have no argument with that. The last point, facilitation of projects and developments depends very much on the particular project. Some projects will be good on public land, some projects will be bad, but no project will be bad simply because it is being built on Crown land. It is very much a matter of assessing each development on its merits.

I have some concerns with the third point I mentioned, which is the ability to allow the government to dispose of surplus land, not in the specific sense of this bill but in the general sense that it has almost become essential to keep reviewing the portfolio and to dispose of what is considered to be surplus land. I suggest the term is a misnomer. As a man said of land a very long time ago, 'They ain't making any more of it'. We do not always take that into account in making decisions on these things.

Before I go any further, given that Kardinia Park is a subject of the bill, I need to make a declaration. As a member of the Geelong Football Club and social club, as is Linda, we obviously have an interest in that development. Fortunately the proposal for Kardinia Park is not a revocation of a reservation; it will simply make changes to achieve consistency in the use of the land and will allow the City of Greater Geelong, as manager of the reserve, to plan for a longer period of time. Part 7 of the bill certainly supports that.

It is a very different approach to that taken with the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve and Western Oval Reserve in that it clearly has the support of the local government.

Of the remaining parcels of land, the Yarra Bend Park reserve proposal to move management of the reserve from the Yarra Bend Park Trust to Parks Victoria is a management issue, and I do not have any argument with that. The two road works reservation changes, the J. R. Parsons Reserve in Sunshine and the Altona Memorial Park cemetery arrangements, involve two relatively small parcels of land, 943 square metres and a tad under 50 square metres, and once again I have no problems with that.

The proposal for 619 St Kilda Road – (debate interrupted pursuant to standing orders)

Note:

Debate did not resume – the Bill was guillotined by the Brumby Government and passed by the Assembly on 15 October 2009

Other matters that would have been raised had the debate resumed would have included:

- *Loss of Crown Land (5865sq metres) adjoining Caulfield Racecourse*
- *Redevelopment of the Western Oval and concerns expressed by the local Council*
- *Concern that the land proposed to be swapped for Crown Land on the Seaford foreshore was not identified*