

HUGE PROGRESS ON FLINDERS-KARAWATHA

12 July 2006

Member for Ipswich Rachel Nolan today described the signing of the MOU on joint management of the Flinders-Karawatha as “huge progress” in ensuring preservation of the corridor for future generations.

The MOU was co-ordinated by the State Government through the Environmental Protection Agency and includes the Department of Defence, as owners of the Greenbank defence facility and the three local governments which encompass the green corridor passes; Ipswich, Brisbane and Beaudesert.

The MOU is the first official recognition of Flinders-Karawatha as a single, continuous green corridor and sets up a framework for co-ordinated management of the lands within it.

Ms Nolan, who has been working on the corridor’s preservation for nearly two years said that today was a real landmark for environmental protection in South East Queensland.

“The 40km Flinders-Karawatha green corridor is the largest tract of open eucalypt bushland remaining in South East Queensland. While much of the south-east has been built out, this corridor provides vital protection for koalas as well as endangered flora and fauna species like the brush tailed rock wallaby, the powerful owl and Lloyd’s native olive.

“Many people know about Greenbank, White Rock, Karawatha or Mt Flinders but they simply don’t know the corridor joining those important areas exists. If this area is properly managed, it will act as SEQ’s lungs as well as providing key recreational open space for the growing and southern and western parts of Brisbane and Ipswich.”

Ms Nolan congratulated Environment Minister Desley Boyle for overseeing the MOU process and said it was an important first step in ensuring the corridor’s proper preservation.

“In the medium term it may also be necessary for the State and councils to purchase land along the corridor to ensure that vital pinch points are not lost but that couldn’t happen before this step provided the crucial recognition of the corridor’s existence and importance.”

“I am thrilled to have gotten to this day. People need natural areas to live and be happy. I think protecting significant bushland in urban areas is one of the crucial ways in which political leaders can improve quality of life for people and that’s what we’re doing.”