

I want to thank every one of those individuals who voted for me in Blaxland. There are two major groups in the community now: I have mentioned the people of Arabic origin, but people from a Vietnamese background are also a strong part of my electorate and have supported me solidly and strongly. I want to thank them for their help in getting me re-elected as their champion in this place. (*Time expired*)

Lindsay Electorate: Environment

Miss JACKIE KELLY (Lindsay) (12.05 p.m.)—Today I would like to condemn the New South Wales state government for its failure to adequately preserve the ADI environmental heritage park that this government set aside from development. The housing in the eastern precinct is due to start, the bulldozers are rolling and there is no protection whatsoever on the environmental lands that the residents of Western Sydney have fought hard and long to preserve. With the cordoning off of the area for construction, they will be moving the kangaroos from that precinct into the eastern precinct. The increase in macrofauna on the rest of the site will severely degrade other remnant vegetation, and I have sought an emergency heritage listing for the western precinct and the environmental areas of the ADI site in the electorate of Lindsay.

During the campaign I undertook to represent the ADI Residents Action Group and seek this emergency heritage listing. They have been working to save the site for the past 11 years. They are a very true, local, grassroots community organisation. They are truly bipartisan in their support for the federal, state and local representatives in their area, unlike some of the other environmental groups in our area, who clearly were just adjuncts to the Labor Party in the last election campaign.

The federal government has worked very hard to ensure that land in Commonwealth ownership that is sold is assessed for its environmental and conservation values before it is disposed of. I commend my colleagues on the progress they have made on the ADI site so far, with over two-thirds of the site being listed for conservation parkland and a further 100 hectares being listed for a sporting precinct, which our area so desperately needs. During the election campaign, we also gave a commitment for over \$1 million to erect a vermin-proof fence around the site. This is absolutely necessary. Every side of this massive environmental park is bordered by houses. All of these houses have domestic cats, and those domestic cats can have free and easy entry to the site to decimate any nests, bird eggs or whatever that may come in the future. The bird assemblages that we are hoping for in that park in the future require the exclusion of cats, dogs and other feral animals from the site and the inclusion of our native flora and fauna which we are trying to preserve.

As my Western Sydney colleagues would know, Cumberland Plain woodland once covered 30 per cent of the Sydney basin. Today only about six per cent of the woodland remains, scattered in small fragments across Western Sydney. This government's Australian Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment 2002 was an audit of Australia's land, vegetation and water resources. It put the biodiversity of the Cumberland Plain in the highest stress class. There is clear recognition from this government of the importance of preserving our natural heritage. Opponents to my application say that the western precinct in particular has been investigated in the past, and they are right. In 1997, the Heritage Commission announced that 1,100 hectares of the ADI site, including the western precinct, would be listed on an interim list of the Register of the National Estate. After objections from Lend Lease, the site was assessed by Biosis Research and Ian Perkins Consultancy. Following their reports, the AHC announced that the western precinct would not make it to the final listing on the Register of the National Estate.

However, my argument is that since that time the site has evolved and it is time for a new assessment. In 2001, we saw further parts of the site excised, and in the last two years broadacre slashing of the area has ceased in the western precinct. This has allowed remnant parts of the Cumberland Plain woodland to regenerate, and it is now apparent that there is significant regeneration without the slashing occurring on the western precinct, which was not apparent when that western precinct was routinely slashed to the ground. I believe that the Cumberland Plain woodland can re-establish itself if the site is allowed to proceed as it has done. There has been a significant time lapse, and the site should be reassessed. There is little doubt that the site is of great importance to the people of Western Sydney. (*Time expired*)

Howard Government: Economic Policy

Mr RIPOLL (Oxley) (12.10 p.m.)—I want to put on the record a couple of issues in relation to the state of the Australian economy. During the election campaign the Howard government continually argued that it was the party best placed to manage the economy and keep interest rates low. Unless you were living on a different planet you would have heard this mantra repeated ad nauseam at every opportunity. This happened to the point where, as happens with a lie which is repeated often enough, it became known as the truth. One particular incident which highlighted the complete nonsense of this argument was the Prime Minister's own campaign launch speech. I hear the Prime Minister was standing in front of a lectern emblazoned with the slogan 'Keeping interest rates low'. Meanwhile he went on a bender, spending in a fashion that would make even a drunken sailor blush. That speech,