

Mount Isa land hope

City builders struggle to keep up with booming demand

By DANIEL BATEMAN

MOUNT Isa City Council claims its housing worries could soon be over if a State Government land study can help free up 200 parcels of land.

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines is reviewing the use of up to 20,000 parcels of unallocated state land across Queensland to hunt down places suitable for new housing, commercial, industrial and environmental purposes.

The study will look at about 1.3 million hectares of vacant land,

Motorcyclists hurt in crashes

TWO men were injured during separate off-road motorbike crashes in North Queensland yesterday.

A man suffered leg injuries after his motorbike hit a tree on a property off Orient Rd at Blackrock, south of Ingham.

Camper's guided emergency crews to the injured man after the crash happened about 12.55pm.

A Queensland Ambulance spokesman said the man, 27, was taken to Ingham Hospital.

Just 30 minutes later, a man was injured after he came off his motorbike at the Bohle.

The 19-year-old suffered leg and shoulder injuries after the crash happened on vacant land off Abattoir Rd about 1.25pm. He was taken to Townsville Hospital in a stable condition.

Police injured

A POLICE officer and security staff were assaulted after a fight broke out near a Mount Isa nightclub early yesterday morning. Officers attended a disturbance outside an Isa St licensed premises.

Two 21-year-old Mount Isa men were arrested and charged with assault causing bodily harm.

One of the men will also face charges of assault police and willful damage.

Both were bailed to re-appear on August 11.

Tyres deflated

A MISSION Beach man was charged after he roamed around town letting air out of tyres.

Police were called after three separate motorists reported their tyres had been let down on Thursday.

A 50-year-old man was charged with three counts of unlawfully interfering with a vehicle.

An Innisfail Police spokesman said the man had been drinking at a local pub. He will face the Tully Magistrates Court on August 21.

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giving priority to large land parcels close to urban centres. In Mount Isa, the study is looking at 200 parcels of unallocated state land in about 138 reserves spread out across the city area.

The land is being examined for housing, industry, sports and recreation use in response to the shortage of suitable space for new residential land due to the mineral resource boom.

Mount Isa City Council Acting Mayor Les Bunn said if the study found the land suitable for residential use, it could solve the city's housing problems.

"We obviously need to get our staff to look at what land is coming available, but having done that, I'm really sure it would alleviate the housing problem," Cr Bunn said.

"Like any other area in Queensland, we are affected by the resources boom."

About four years ago the council green-lighted the Healy Heights Estate development in response to citywide residential shortages.

Of the 180 blocks included in the new subdivision, 100 have already been sold.

Cr Bunn said a similar development could do wonders for the city.

"If more land is available, it would contribute to solving the housing shortage," he said.

Mount Isa MP Betty Kiernan said the department would work now to try and free up the land as quickly as possible.

"The purpose of the study was firstly to identify unallocated state land and reserves in Mount Isa city," Ms Kiernan said.

"Now that we've identified them, the State Government can work with council and obviously we work towards freeing up these parcels."

She said another housing estate similar to Healy Heights would

Everyone gets into planting for National Tree Day



GREEN GUERRILLAS ... above, Bronte, Paige and Hunter Blackwood doing their bit, top right, Jack Connolly getting down and dirty and bottom right, Morgyn Stutley and Brandon Stutley at Kalynda Chase



THE greening of Townsville continued in a big way yesterday as an army of volunteers got their hands dirty for National Tree Day. Hundreds of people across the city rolled up their sleeves to plant almost 3000 trees.

At the Bohle Wetlands, about 70 people helped Conservation Volunteers Australia plant 1300 eucalypts, pandanus and other water-loving species.

"It was absolutely fantastic," said CVA co-ordinator Brett King.

"It was an extraordinary coordinated effort by the community." People from all walks of life participated in the big greening event.

"We got everyone—we had five-year-olds, retirees, scouts, and even people from Ergon Energy and BHP."

The wetlands site, on the edge of the Bohle River between the lagoon and the creek, is being vegetated to provide a dense corridor of native plant species to help stabilise the river bank and improve water quality within the wetland.

"We're establishing a canopy to create a corridor for the wildlife, and to prevent weeds from growing," Mr King said.

The project is part of a greater plan to help green several suburban areas.

On Friday, conservation workers planted more than 1500 natives along Dalrymple Rd.

Across the city, developer Urbex did its best to replace missing vegetation at Kalynda Chase.

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A third of Aussie Olympians want a free Tibet

A LARGE chunk of the Australian team will enter Beijing opposed to its occupation of Tibet.

More than a third of athletes — 35 of the 100 polled — declared they wanted China to withdraw from the strife-torn home of the Dalai Lama.

Tibet has been a huge talking point among athletes in the wake of

riots and a ruthless response by Chinese authorities earlier this year.

Tour de France contender Cadel Evans — perhaps now the most famous Aussie Olympian at these Games — triggered world headlines when he wore a Free Tibet t-shirt during a race in Belgium earlier this year.

The International Olympic Committee has toughened its interpretation of the Olympic Charter for Beijing, adding a clause that no form of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted at any Olympic site, venue or other area.

The Chinese have been extremely sensitive about any form of Tibetan protest. They have also barred journalists in the Games main press centre from accessing articles about Tibet — in direct breach of China's promise of unfiltered internet access for the world's media covering the Games.

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