

During his visit, the Prince met many emergency service workers and volunteers involved in responding to the crisis and those who are working to rebuild our shattered communities. His presence was an acknowledgement of the invaluable service that they provide to Queensland. He arrived in Townsville on Saturday after visiting earthquake devastated New Zealand and immediately commenced a whirlwind two-day tour aimed at being in touch with as many of those affected by our natural disasters as possible. The Prince was determined that his visit be as informal and as low-key as possible. Given the excitement that his visit generated, it was never going to be low-key, but it did have a genuine informality that allowed literally hundreds of people to speak personally with the Prince. From Townsville he flew to Cardwell and Tully meeting the locals at Cyclone Yasi's ground zero. In private meetings with victims he was able to get a sense of the devastation and was particularly concerned about how those locals will get back on their feet and rebuild. He then moved to Cairns where he met with members of the Royal Flying Doctor Service and announced that that organisation, so dear to the people of Queensland, will be one of the five worldwide charities nominated by himself and his bride-to-be to receive donations in lieu of wedding gifts for his impending wedding.


Prince William then travelled to the Cairns Cruise Terminal where he participated in a function to reinforce the message that despite our recent disasters Queensland is indeed very much back in business. He took the opportunity to literally meet with hundreds of emergency workers and volunteers who had been so crucial to the Far North Queensland effort over the past several weeks.

On Sunday the Prince then travelled to the south-east where he attended gatherings of victims and relief workers, including helping to raise the spirits of those in Ipswich and the Lockyer Valley areas. Again he took the time to meet privately with those who had lost loved ones in the terrifying events in Toowoomba and throughout the valley. He then attended the Spirit of the Country concert in Toowoomba. I thank all of those country and western singers and star performers. It was a great line-up. They gave their time to come and lift the spirits of people with a concert that was free. They were not raising money; they were raising spirits. It was a great effort by them. This concert was an opportunity for the country music industry to support the southern Queensland flood victims and the communities that have been hit so hard by the recent devastation. The presence of the Prince at a fundraising event held in Brisbane on Sunday evening put additional funds into the Premier's disaster relief fund. I thank those who came along and dug deep. Some of them have certainly given already and they made an effort to make a second donation.

As the Prince moved through the community, again I was impressed by the inner resolve and strength of Queenslanders and by their determination to recover and emerge stronger from the difficult times they have faced. I was also very proud of our many emergency workers and volunteers as they were able to explain to this world figure their role and their experiences. I thank all the communities involved. I particularly thank the councils that, with very short notice, put on great events for the locals and the many participants for their enthusiasm for the visit by Prince William.

On behalf of Queenslanders, I thank Prince William for visiting our state and for his generous spirit. Throughout his visit, the Prince was clearly moved by the devastation he saw in the communities he visited and the personal suffering that it has brought with it. I was impressed by his determination to bring as much good cheer as he could. I am sure all members will join with me in wishing Prince William and his bride-to-be, Kate Middleton, the very best for their upcoming wedding.

North Stradbroke Island, Sandmining

 **Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.49 am): Today is the beginning of a new era for one of Queensland's most iconic locations, a place very close to the hearts of many in South-East Queensland, including my own. Today I am pleased to announce the final plan for the end of mining on North Stradbroke Island. Last year we announced a vision for a stronger, greener future for North Straddie; a vision that saw all mining phased out by 2027 and a move towards a more sustainable economy focused on the tourism opportunities that this natural paradise has to offer. As a result of this consultation and our determination to stop mining in this beautiful place, I now announce that all mining will cease on North Stradbroke Island by 2025. Most significantly, Yarraman Mine, which accounts for 47 per cent of all mining, will close in 2015. Further, the mine known as Enterprise Mine, which accounts for a further 47 per cent, will close in 2019. That means that by 2021, after a two-year decommissioning and rehabilitation period, 75 per cent of the island will be declared national park. Leading up to 2019, Enterprise's operations will be constrained and limited to minimise the environmental impact within the existing lease areas. In 2025 the closure of Vance Mine, which accounts for the final six per cent of mining, will be the final piece of the puzzle. In 2019, 94 per cent of mining on North Stradbroke Island will cease.

North Stradbroke Island is a place that is special to many generations of Queenslanders. It is also a place of deep cultural heritage for which the Quandamooka people are the custodians. That is why the Quandamooka people are central to our government's vision for North Stradbroke's future. We have


been working closely with them to negotiate an Indigenous land use agreement and an Indigenous management agreement, which will provide the Quandamooka people with a key role in the management of their country through joint management arrangements for the proposed protected areas, as well as economic, social and cultural development opportunities.

Mining may have been a big part of North Stradbroke Island's past, but our government is determined that it will not define its future. To enable the transition and to deliver on our commitments, today the Minister for Environment and Resource Management will introduce the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Bill, which will enshrine the timetable I have announced and ensure that the future of North Straddie is secured forever. This is a place that Queenslanders and visitors from around Australia and across the world should be able to come to to enjoy its remarkable beauty, its unique environmental features and its rich cultural heritage. This transition plan means that we can now start to build a strong and sustainable economy for North Straddie, where its natural features are seen as assets to protect and share with the world.

To support our vision for a nature based tourism economy on the island and the protection of what makes this place so special, we will be delivering on our commitment to make 80 per cent of the island national park by 2027. We want people who visit North Straddie to not only marvel at its environmental beauty and appreciate its past but also enjoy its many beautiful places. Our vision for North Stradbroke Island is for a people's place with new walking tracks to explore hitherto hidden parts of the island, with new camping grounds providing affordable accommodation for families, with just as many if not more opportunities to throw in a line off the beaches and with new recreational facilities for family barbies.

All of those elements make North Stradbroke one of Queensland's most special island getaways. Its location, right on Brisbane's doorstep, means it is one of our most accessible islands. The potential for North Stradbroke Island is enormous and I am very pleased to say that its future is now protected.

North Stradbroke Island, Sandmining

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Resource Management) (9.54 am): This morning the Premier has announced the final transition plan to see an end to mining on North Straddie fast-tracked, with three-quarters of the island to be declared national park in the next 10 years. One of the most important elements of this plan is the closure of the largest mine in 2019 to pave the way for the declaration of 75 per cent of the island as national park by 2021. In fact, 50 per cent of the island will be declared national park by the end of this year. That was a commitment we announced last year as part of our vision and it is a commitment we are well on track to meeting.

This is a huge win for conservation in Queensland. It is a courageous step to ensure that one of our state's iconic places, with such incredible potential as a nature based holiday destination, is protected for future generations to enjoy. North Straddie is an island of rich and vast habitat with mangroves, wetlands, heathlands, freshwater lakes, rainforests, old-growth forests and woodlands. It is the second largest sand island in the world, with the most diversity of wetlands known in one place in Queensland. It is also home to a rare perched lake known as Brown Lake, as well as the spectacular Blue Lake. It is a special place that is well worth protecting and one that we want to share.

That is why our plans for national park declaration involve significant investment in the management of those parks. Most importantly, we are working closely with the Quandamooka people to provide a joint management approach that will allow the traditional owners to provide leadership on the protection of their country and ensure they have access to economic opportunities on their land. Two new rangers have already started work on North Stradbroke, both of whom are Quandamooka people. In total, we will be appointing 12 new rangers to manage the increased national park estate on the island, working closely with the Quandamooka and the Redland City Council to ensure the area grows into a new world-renowned national park.

We want to achieve the quickest and most practical end to mining on Straddie while also allowing enough time for a smooth and effective economic transition for all of the island's residents and, very importantly, the workers. The bill that I will introduce today will give certainty to anyone who has a stake in Straddie's future. We know that providing a period of transition for workers and the island's economy is essential. People need certainty in order to make choices for their future and that is what we are providing through this plan.

We do not approach this transition half-heartedly. A key plank in our plan is the appointment of an economic transition task force. We know there is huge untapped potential for North Stradbroke to be a tourism mecca for South-East Queensland, with many different niche markets including ecotourism, education camps, spa retreats and classic family getaways such as caravan parks and camping. The