

Harvard-educated enviro candidate says let's do business

Easy being Green

By PETER GARDINER

NOOSA small business and the Greens are a natural fit – that's one of the key campaign messages of local business mentor Joe Shlegeris, who will be standing in the next state election against Glen Elmes.

"Virtually all new jobs in Queensland come from small businesses, but the major parties focus entirely on big business and big projects," Mr Shlegeris said, who has been selected to stand in the seat of Noosa for the Greens.

"Small business is forever hampered by job-destroying state taxes, especially payroll tax and stamp duty, while big business extracts other concessions to ease these burdens."

Mr Shlegeris is pushing his business credentials as an active member of Business Mentors Noosa – a group of about 16 experienced business people from big corporates and small business, offering assistance at no charge to local business proprietors.

The California-raised proud Aussie earned a business administration degree from Harvard and formed an installation company and "spent a couple of years up on the



GREEN POWER: New candidate for Noosa, Joe Shlegeris.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

roof installing solar water heaters, solar air-conditioning equipment, and pool heaters".

He received his MBA from Stanford University in 1981, and said his business background would put the Greens into new territory.

"Obviously environmental issues are critical to all aspects of life,"

he said.

"Without a thriving natural world we won't have the resources or the economy we need.

"I think that in the past Greens candidates have been boxed in as single-issue extremists."

Mr Shlegeris said times have changed and sound environmental management

goes hand-in-hand with "sound economic management, with job creation, and with debt reduction".

"The tired old parties think they can sell you business as usual – more of the same. I hope people are ready to move forward.

"The Greens are the natural allies of small business, although I appreciate that I'll have to tell this story many times.

"Small business is where all of the jobs are coming from, no where more so than here in Noosa, where so many jobs depend directly on our abundant natural world."

Mr Shlegeris said he was worried that Queensland was on track to financial disaster because of its commitment to "the dying coal industry".

"The state cops billions of dollars of expense supporting the coal industry for extremely little return," he said.

"The LNP Government has bet Queensland's future entirely on the coal industry, which is on the brink. The government is making a one-way bet with Queensland's future.

"The Treasurer might as well be taking our money down to the track."

Living by what he preaches in Noosa's sustainable house

GREENS candidate for Noosa Joe Shlegeris advocates green living and has taken part in the Sustainable House Day for the past two years by opening up his environmentally friendly Noosaville home to public tours.

"We live in perfect comfort. We cook, use the dishwasher and wash clothes. We have beautiful, bright LED lighting, and we run the electronic gear we need in two home offices," he said.

"Our consumption of electricity from the grid is just three kilowatt hours per day, about one-eighth as much as the average house. I can disconnect from the grid whenever I choose to.

"Meanwhile, our solar electricity system generates 50 kilowatt hours per day, which

means we're meeting the daytime demand of several of our neighbours.

"Obviously our system didn't need to be this big, but I'm an enthusiast. In the last two years we've generated more than 40 megawatt-hours."

Mr Shlegeris says not everyone has to "go at it as hard as I do", but there are plenty of people standing by to produce cheap electricity for themselves and their neighbours.

"I know finance and I know energy, and I can tell you this much for sure – you can generate your own electricity at an all-in cost of less than 10 cents per kilowatt-hour," he said.

"The state forces you to pay more than three times that much. Why would you keep doing that?"

"You can generate your own electricity at an all-in cost of less than 10c per kilowatt hour."