




Speech By
Stephen Bennett

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Record of Proceedings, 15 October 2015

MOTION: REVOCATION OF STATE AREAS

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.06 pm): I hope the gallery is not disappointed with such an uninteresting but important debate here this afternoon. We on this side of the House support the motion moved by the minister—

Mr Hinchliffe: No green sheep on a boat ramp!

Mr BENNETT: Yes, very exciting. Thank you, Stirling—to revoke by regulation under section 9 of the Marine Parks Act 2004 an area described as unallocated state land adjacent to Lions Park within the Burrum River at Burrum Heads containing some 2.2 hectares of tidal land and tidal water.

Burrum Heads is a town full of boaties; some streets have more boats than houses and when there is a big fishing event there are hundreds more. Not only is the boat ramp good for the residents who have boats, it is something good for the 9,500 registered vessels in the Fraser Coast region and the tens of thousands of people who visit the region each year. A safe boat ramp with adequate parking, with due consideration to the ecology and aesthetics, is more than a luxury: it is an essential feature for this town.

Potential locations for the ramp and whether it was even needed in such a small town have been the topic of debate since it was first proposed in 1992. When we came to government we heard, 'Why has it taken two decades?' There was no resolution in sight. The town was determined to get a suitable boat ramp—and we should acknowledge Anne Maddern for making this project a reality—but it took two decades even for the most cynical observer of the bureaucratic process, particularly when the community and council, and sometimes the state government of the day, all have been in agreement. There was delay after delay. The local government amalgamation could have been a hiccup. The need for rezoning of a marine park would—and should quite reasonably—lead to a delay. We support this motion, and I thank the minister for allowing this project to go to completion.

We all breathed a sigh of relief when we heard that the new member for Maryborough supported the boat ramp. We heard the rumours that were circulating about the new member's stance on this issue back in February, and we are glad that it is going ahead.

All matters raised in objections to the Burrum Heads boat ramp were appropriately addressed by council back in 2014. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the council's assistance and determination over 21 years in seeing this project reach an appropriate conclusion. In 2014 the council endorsed plans to build the ramp at the western end of Lions Park. In 2014 the council received 62 written submission—45 in support and 17 against. This project stacked up on environmental and financial considerations. All gave it a tick.

The state government is responsible for building the ramp and the sea based facilities while the council is responsible for land based facilities such as car parks and rigging areas. We again thank all those involved in the project. This is a sensible revocation of state areas and it should be and is supported.