




Speech By  
**Hon. Bill Byrne**

**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 October 2016

**MOTION: WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.21 pm): I obviously stand to oppose the motion. It is good to see that the Liberal National Party again is not using real information or fact to support the position as has been stated by the member for Burleigh. He has mentioned Eden Bann and Rookwood weirs and I particularly want to focus on that, given that it is one of the business cases that is in the proposal that has been put to the federal government and funded. I particularly want to talk about it but, before I do, I want to say that I have no problem with on-stream storages or development in any way, shape or form assuming that the EIS and the business case stack up. I have no problem at all—none whatsoever. I support that process in principle and that is a process that this government embraces.

In recent times on the back of these proposals and the federal election campaign Deputy Prime Minister, Barnaby Joyce, in a post-election frenzy, went out there being deliberately mischievous about this government's position. Everything that he has said in recent times has deliberately lacked substance and is inherently false. Joyce and his compadres up there in Central Queensland, Canavan and Landry, know this as well. The Rookwood Weir was always conditional on an EIS and a business case being supported. That is funded in this proposal by Barnaby Joyce. One minute he is out there saying something along the lines of, 'Why don't we just get on with it. The business case has concluded,' but at the same time he is trying to pay the business case.

This government has engaged in good government process specifically designed to kill off the pork-barrelling by the Liberal National Party that has been so evident over many eras. We know for Rookwood and Eden Bann there is no EIS concluded; it is not finished. There is no business case completed, but we have the Deputy Prime Minister out there saying, 'It's done. Let's get on with it. You're holding things back.' It is complete and utter nonsense and deliberately so. On what basis did Barnaby Joyce decide to put a great swag of money into Rookwood Weir? There was no business case, no EIS. He is funding the business case himself in another part of this program. He is out there foghorn and leghorn making things up as he goes along, blustering and bullying his way through. I thought to myself, 'I will go and have a look at this. I will go and have a look at where this actually sits.' I got the *Australian infrastructure plan* from Infrastructure Australia. One would think it is a pretty informative document—pretty important. It is dated February 2016, so it is contemporary. Most of the members opposite have read it. I suppose they are all familiar with this document given their great expertise in infrastructure. It states—

Inclusions on the Infrastructure Priority List range from the description of a problem through to fully developed solutions. This breadth of content requires classifications to differentiate between ideas which are in their infancy and address a problem or opportunity of national significance, through to those which are more developed.

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To meet this challenge, the Infrastructure Priority List contains two broad groupings:

- **Initiatives:** ... require further development and rigorous assessment to determine and evaluate the most appropriate option for delivery; and
- **Projects:** ... have undergone a full business case assessment by Infrastructure Australia ...

The matter was mentioned so I thought, 'We will go and see where we sit on this project list in relation to the Eden Bann and Rookwood weirs.' What did we find? At the very end of the priority issues, as I described earlier, which require considerably more work including the business case, we found Eden Bann and Rookwood Weir. What are they called? They are an opportunity for growth in Queensland. They are a medium-term problem. That means five to 10 years down the track. This is Infrastructure Australia's document, not Barnaby Joyce's and the opposition's document. It is at options assessment stage and it is an opportunity to develop industry and agriculture.

That is the truth of the matter. What have we seen coming from those opposite, from Barnaby Joyce and from Matt Canavan—this great icon who wants to split the state in half, who does not believe in climate science—backed in by Michelle Landry, who cannot string three words together even when it is scripted for her? These icons stand up and pretend they know something about infrastructure development in this state but have done nothing.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, we will not have a shouting match, thank you.

**Mr BYRNE:** I conclude by saying: tell me exactly one piece of infrastructure that the mob opposite delivered in three years in government.