




Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Mount Coot-tha Quarry

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.18 pm): Everyone around Mount Coot-tha remembers the Brisbane City Council's ill-fated zip-line proposal, which was defeated by an enormous community campaign that BCC just could not ignore no matter how hard it tried. Now it is time for us to look to the future of Mount Coot-tha.

Last Wednesday night more than 100 Maiwar locals and people from all over Brisbane joined me and local community group, the Mouth Coot-tha Protection Alliance, for a community forum on the future of Mount Coot-tha and the quarry in particular. It was a fantastic event and hopefully a demonstration of what creative, thoughtful and meaningful bottom-up community consultation can look like. There were so many great ideas for how we might turn the quarry site into something wonderful for all of Brisbane to enjoy, a site that is sensitive to the natural environment, that is sustainable, non-commercial and accessible to everyone.

We are so lucky to have the beautiful mountain and parklands in our electorate, but the quarry, owned by Brisbane City Council, is a massive, ugly 30-hectare scar on the landscape. The noise, vibrations and dust from blasting are hazardous to the health and wellbeing of residents, human and animal, and there are other options for obtaining rock for road projects around Brisbane.

Residents have been calling for the closure of the quarry for years and as their local MP I have been advocating to the council and the state government over the last year for the same. Unfortunately, the council is not listening and over the years it has kept pushing back the closure date and in typical BCC fashion it has done so without any public consultation whatsoever. It has zero plans for closure and rehabilitation and zero funds set aside for this mammoth task.

I invited the Lord Mayor and the three councillors whose wards are affected by the quarry to attend the forum. None of them were able to make it, unfortunately. The state government, for its part, has imposed no rehabilitation requirements on the quarry, which completely bypassed the new mining rehabilitation laws, and the quarry is allowed to operate outside of industry best practice despite the fact that residents live within metres of this quarry—well within the normal buffer zones. We may be getting some cheap rocks for roads right now, but in a few years we will be really paying for it. As we heard from a mining rehabilitation expert last Wednesday, the council should be progressively rehabilitating and incorporating any closure plans into its current operations and every year and month that passes without progressive rehabilitation underway increases the cost of rehabilitation to Brisbane ratepayers and limits the options for the quarry's future use.

I am calling on the Brisbane City Council to urgently develop a closure and rehabilitation plan and undertake genuine, meaningful consultation with the community. I am also calling on the state government to review the operating conditions for the quarry and develop a new framework for operations in line with current best practice. This is a unique opportunity to plan for what could be a new defining feature of our city. I am extending a genuine and ongoing invitation to all Brisbane City Councillors and the state government to join with me and the community to make the most of this opportunity.