




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 19 February 2020

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPIT MASTER PLAN BILL

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (11.48 am): I rise to contribute to the debate in relation to the Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill 2019. At the outset I note the LNP will not be opposing this bill. As a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee which dealt with this bill, I would like to acknowledge the committee secretariat and my fellow committee members.

It is pleasing to finally get some work from the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing Infrastructure and Planning, who clearly has not been run off his feet with work. Given this lack of workload you would think it would have been a lay-down misere to get responsibility for Cross River Rail when it was stripped from the Deputy Premier. Surely the state's biggest infrastructure project—

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Member for Buderim, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill. We are talking about the Gold Coast Spit.

Mr MICKELBERG: Despite this lack of workload, it has taken nearly five years for the Palaszczuk Labor government to get around to doing anything for the Gold Coast Spit. It is five years ago that the Premier scuttled the ASF proposal and the Spit has been languishing ever since. It is pretty clear that the Gold Coast is not a priority for Labor. The Palaszczuk Labor government is holding the Gold Coast back. Last year unemployment on the Gold Coast jumped by 1.4 per cent, the second-largest increase in Queensland, so this master plan is well and truly overdue.

The committee held hearings in Brisbane and the Gold Coast but, importantly, our site visit to the Spit provided important context with regard to what is proposed. The majority of submissions in relation to the bill were broadly supportive—

Ms Jones: You gave them Townsville's rejects.

Mr MICKELBERG: Sorry, Minister, do you have something to add?

Ms Jones: I said, 'You gave them Townsville's rejects.'

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, I advise you to continue with your speech and not to take those interjections.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. As I was saying before I was interrupted, the majority of the submissions in relation to this bill were broadly supportive, with specific concerns expressed in relation to: funding certainty for the Gold Coast Waterways Authority; the skills and composition of the board; the transparency of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority's reports; protection of the land mass identified as Curlew Island; and a lack of clarity in relation to land purpose and height limits for development across the Spit. Specific concerns were also heard in relation to helicopter operations across the Spit, as we heard previously from the member for Bancroft.

As I mentioned, submitters to the bill raised concerns that the bill does not outline a guaranteed ongoing minimum source of funding beyond the initial \$60 million. This is important to allow the Gold Coast Waterways Authority to carry out its ongoing community infrastructure and public works and associated duties. The Save Our Spit Alliance noted—

... there is no guarantee the GCWA will have annual funding or suitable budgets to ensure the continued implementation of the Master Plan in a timely way or have the ongoing funds to appropriately govern the commercial, tourism and recreational activities that have been determined as being the duties and responsibilities of the GCWA by *The Bill* and as a consequence in accordance with *The Spit Master Plan*.

Submitters proposed that the income generated on the Spit could be quarantined to guarantee future and appropriate funding of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. Mr Philip Follent proposed—

Income from rental leasing of crown land and from other Spit related businesses/ventures should, in the main, be quarantined to fund projects and maintain the improvements to The Spit.

I note that the committee made a number of recommendations which seek to address some of these concerns. Specifically, the committee recommended that clause 25 of the Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill be amended to include 'design and aesthetics of public open spaces, parks and natural environments and built forms' in proposed section 45(2)(aa) as part of the skill set. I acknowledge that the minister intends to accept this recommendation.

The committee also recommended that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy take action to ensure the ongoing protection and management of Curlew Island. Other contributors have spoken about this. Finally, the committee recommended that all stakeholders collaborate to expeditiously resolve issues regarding helicopter operations within the Spit Master Plan area, which were of considerable concern to a number of submitters. Another area of discussion during the committee process related to the term of proposed leases across the Spit. Proposed lease terms of more than 100 years are considerably longer than the lease terms provided for existing developments like Sea World and other accommodation providers on the Spit.

In conclusion, it is good to see Labor finally getting on with the Spit Master Plan. It has taken an inordinately long time, and it is the latest example of the fact that the Palaszczuk Labor government just does not care about the Gold Coast. While Labor will look after themselves, only the LNP will work for a better Gold Coast.