




Speech By  
**David Crisafulli**

**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPIT MASTER PLAN BILL**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (12.45 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill and flag that the LNP will not be opposing it. I do so with the message to the minister of the need and the importance to deliver on this project and to get on with it. I start by saying that this section of the Gold Coast, the Broadwater, could be to the Gold Coast what the harbour is to Sydney. It is a very, very special area. If we get this right, it will be a legacy for generations to come. If we do not, we will live to regret it. Indeed, there are many challenges for the Broadwater of which I intend to speak.

My concern with this process is that it has been in go-slow mode. It was flagged in August of 2017 and then nearly 12 months ago we heard that this master plan was going to be implemented and here we are, many months later, still waiting for it to come forward. That is not to say that consultation has been flawless. It is quite the contrary. The likes of the Gold Coast City Council continue to ask for more time to be able to have further input. I seek to raise a matter that I do not believe has been flagged today. I ask, with respect, that the minister please provide feedback on it.

When I look through the budget papers I see a difference between the projected cost of the master plan and the budget for the master plan. I can only find \$31.5 million, which is a little over half of the total cost of this project, when I look through the forward four years. Yes, it is centrally controlled, but there is nowhere else that I can find the balance. My question to the minister, with respect is: where is the additional funding coming from? Is it from the long-term leases—which are extremely long-term leases—that the member for Surfers Paradise articulated? Over a century is a pretty generous lease. Is the balance of the funds to come from that and will that then fast-track this to be delivered in the next four years or is it, as I suspect, that this project will not be delivered in its completion within four years and it is, in fact, further down the track? I would appreciate if the minister could report back on that in his summary.

I want to speak briefly about the issue of Curlew Island. I understand its environmental significance. To have this discussion without talking about dredging and a long-term proposal for dredging is a little shortsighted. I can tell members just how passionate people are at the northern end of the coast about getting this proper maintenance schedule for dredging. I will acknowledge the significance of those migratory birds in that area and I wish to place on record my thanks to both Bob Westerman and the member for Bonney, who has been a great champion of the environmental significance of this part of the coast. Again, without talking about a dredging schedule we are merely delaying the inevitable of the tough conversation that needs to be had.

In the Broadwater there is something like 2,000-odd migratory birds. That includes the eastern curlew, which is critically endangered. These birds span the globe. In fact, one could mount the case that in some cases this journey is nearing 20,000 round kilometres. That is of world significance.

I want to ask the minister a few things about the waterways authority. The minister needs to explain how—and give the House the reassurance—this will not come at the expense of the core business of the waterways authority. The minister needs to outline how the authority will be properly resourced to undertake this role. We need to ensure that we have a properly resourced and empowered waterways authority.

Issues relating to the Broadwater are clearly the No. 1 source of feedback that we get in the electorate office. If I had to summarise the majority of that correspondence into three parts, the first would relate to dredging. There is a real pushback, particularly from the boating community but also from right across the groups that enjoy the recreation opportunities provided by what is a very special part of the state. They have seen a reluctance to dredge. They have seen a falling budget when it comes to dredging. They have seen a reduction in the appetite of the board and, indeed, the state to prioritise dredging, and that must change. There is no way known that you cannot find a way to strike the balance between good environmental outcomes and allowing people to get out on the water.

The second issue is around speeding vessels. This relates to the interaction between those vessels and not only the people who live on the waterway but also those who use other recreational craft, such as jet skis. That is the second concern raised in feedback.

The third issue involves houseboats. You can have all of the vision, you can have all of the master plans and you can have all of the environmental significance, but if you continue to allow people on those vessels to flout the law then it counts for little. There are people living illegally on those vessels. They are flouting the law. They are not complying with the regulations that everybody else has to comply with. They are not paying their fair share in the same way that other people do—people who pay rent, who pay rates or who pay for the privilege of using a marina. In many cases, they are not collecting their own sewage. That has to stop. A properly resourced waterways authority would be able to deal with that. I make this impassioned plea: give the Gold Coast Waterways Authority the resources to deal with the master planning process and also give them the resources needed so that, by centralising a lot of the functions of multiple departments in a beefed-up waterways authority, it will be able to deal with these issues.

I want to touch on some of the comments made by the member for Surfers Paradise. As the local member, he has a great feel for this. He raised issues around the likes of the fishermen's co-op and the water police. Those things must be clarified. They are important, not just to his electorate but also to the broader Gold Coast.

The member also raised the issue of a cruise ship terminal. The mayor has now run two election campaigns on that issue and his vote has increased each time. He is again campaigning on the issue. At some stage we need to acknowledge that the council has a vision to deliver the terminal. To talk about it but not in the location that they are proposing is wrong. We have to have an honest conversation about that. We cannot continue to kick this can down the road. I want to see a council able to fulfil its vision. Infrastructure challenges will come with that, but those are challenges that we can meet. If any city in the state deserves a cruise ship terminal, I suggest that the Gold Coast should be at the top of that list. It is a city that has come of age on the back of tourism and aspiration. The mayor has run two successful election campaigns and is about to run a third campaign on the issue. It should be acknowledged.

The member for Surfers Paradise also spoke about the additional board members. Again, I ask the minister to heed the advice of the local member and ensure that those people have a connection with the local area. I think that is fair and reasonable. I also ask the minister to look long and hard at the skill set of the people who will comprise the board. Currently, I do not believe the board has a sufficient interest in all things maritime. That is a strength that needs to be bolstered. I think representatives from the fishing industry and the boating industry need to be included. With such an important issue, the minister may also look to bring onto the board somebody who has significant planning industry expertise.

I conclude my contribution by saying the following: the Broadwater can be to the northern end of the Gold Coast what the harbour is to Sydney, but the waterways authority needs the resources to make this work. I ask the minister to clarify whether we will see this concluded in the next four years or whether the bulk of the funding lies down the track.

*(Time expired)*