



Speech By  
**Michael Berkman**


**MEMBER FOR MAIWAR**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**Maiwar Electorate**

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.26 pm): As I rise for probably the last time in this parliamentary term, I reflect on my wonderful community on the west side of Brisbane and some of the things that we have achieved together over the past three years. I will have time to mention only some of the highlights because time is short for such an incredibly busy few years.

Perhaps most memorable for me was when we stopped the LNP council's proposal to privatise Mount Coot-tha for its ill-conceived mega zip-line development. When council eventually backed down on its ridiculous plan, it was no random decision. It followed a huge local campaign that I was incredibly proud to support. My office coordinated rallies, doorknocks, petitions, yard signs and more than 1,000 resident submissions. When council leadership changed, we saw an opportunity and mobilised an entire community of passionate people to call his office and make him scrap it. Only three days later he did.

Of course, we have not always been able to make them listen. I am still waiting for both major parties to get on board with the massive local push to buy back the old ABC site on Coronation Drive in Toowong for a public riverside park. In recent decades we have lost much public space and facilities such as the Toowong pool, and there are hundreds of new apartments being built in the area. Now that the ABC site is up for sale again, buying it back for a park just makes sense. It makes sense not least of all because council has to buy back part of that site anyway to land its new green bridge over to West End, which is another huge win that I will never forget. Early last year I launched a community vote on a resident-led vision for the ABC site. One thing we proposed was a walking and cycling bridge from the site to West End. Soon afterwards, the Lord Mayor adopted that proposal and committed to build five green bridges across Brisbane, including one from Toowong to West End as we had proposed.

Another of my proudest moments came recently when we learned that our long campaign for a new school had been successful. I still remember the first Town Hall forum I held when I was elected, at which I met Michaela and her daughters, Anisha and Ishika, who were students at Ironside State School, which is struggling with such severe overcrowding that playtime is limited and the outside school hours care is constantly full. From that moment we began fighting for a new school for the inner west, so the \$65 million commitment from the government was an amazing win for local families.

I have been able to do these things only because I do not take corporate donations and I do not rely on big mining companies and developers for support. I rely on regular people. That is why I believe we have done something really special in Maiwar's first term. Of course, there is so much more to do and—touch wood—I am looking forward to seeing what we can achieve with this new kind of politics in a second term.

It has been an extraordinary privilege and an honour to represent my community as the first MP for Maiwar and as the first Greens MP elected to this place. The only greater privilege would be to return for a second term to keep up the good work and to do it with more Greens MPs as colleagues in this place.