




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 19 February 2020

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPIT MASTER PLAN BILL

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.31 pm): I also rise to support the master plan for the Gold Coast Spit. It was interesting to hear the member for Bancroft say earlier that this site has been in conflict for the last 20 to 30 years and for the member for Gaven it has been her whole lifetime. I first moved to the Gold Coast in 1986, some 33 years ago—possibly longer than the member for Gaven’s lifetime; I am not entirely sure—but I have been around the Spit for a long time. My family has enjoyed many a holiday around the Spit. At one stage we had a boat and we would anchor off Wave Break Island. We put our tender ashore at a little mooring whose name I will not mention—it may not be parliamentary language—and we moored our boat inside that particular area. Anybody who has visited those parts of the Broadwater will say what a wonderful area it is, but for a number of years the Spit has had quite a few issues and it really does need cleaning up so it can be the nice place that it could be—so a master plan is vital.

If we look back at the history of what has happened around the Broadwater and the Spit, we see that, every time there is an election in Queensland, the Spit becomes a bit of an issue for people to kick around. They come up with all sorts of brilliant ideas, but those ideas are traditionally axed just before an election. We all remember back to the Beattie years when there was going to be a cruise ship terminal. I think it may have been a week before the 2006 election that idea was axed. We saw videos, virtual reality and all sorts of things about a cruise ship terminal in that space, but that was axed.

Fast-forward to 2015 when another cruise ship terminal was proposed for Wave Break Island, along with an integrated resort idea, and again just before the election in 2015 along came the now Premier who stepped onto Wave Break Island—I think it was the only time she actually visited the Gold Coast during that whole election campaign—and the cruise ship terminal and any development around there was axed. Then the ASF consortium negotiated in good faith with the government about what would happen there. My understanding is that ASF has been paid out something like \$30 million in compensation, so it has cost the people of the Gold Coast and the people of Queensland a lot of money over the years with this chopping and changing. It is nice to see that we now have a plan both sides of government can work with. We can hopefully work together on this, and I do support having a master plan.

We have heard other members say that the Spit is a permanent sand structure. It is about 201 hectares—or ‘hectares’, as I like to say—and it separates the Gold Coast Broadwater from the Pacific Ocean. It is an area of cultural and social significance, and we all know that. However, the report says that the Spit has not had a clear direction until the development of the master plan, and I do support that.

The master plan covers seven areas: the top of the Spit; Wave Break Island and Curlew Island—as I said, Wave Break Island is one of those unique places where you can pull your boat up. You can go for a bit of a wander around there. There are some wonderful dive sites and great fishing there, and it is to be commended that we take care of that. There is also Federation Walk Coastal Reserve, Muriel Henchman Park, the Village Centre, Philip Park and the Southern Gateway. Philip Park could either be

left the way it is at the moment or, as the Mayor of the Gold Coast has talked about for a number of years now, be the site of a cruise ship terminal. That is where his latest idea of a cruise ship terminal comes in.

All of the people on the Gold Coast I speak to think that a cruise ship terminal is a good idea. Obviously, there are some who do not, but most of the people I speak to think that a cruise ship terminal is a good idea. I have been on a number of cruises recently, and before you bring that up one of those infamous cruises was in Canada. I can say that when you take the Inside Passage cruise through Canada and Alaska there are some amazing little cruise ship terminals in very small towns where there is not a lot of infrastructure, yet those towns benefit from 2,000 to 3,000 visitors coming through regularly. If we did have a cruise ship terminal on the Gold Coast, you can imagine the benefits that terminal would bring to the Gold Coast when it comes to 2,000 to 3,000 people going to our theme parks, visiting our restaurants or having a cup of coffee in a coffee shop. That is a wonderful thing that could happen. In the time that I have left I want to raise the hypocrisy of the Labor Party.

Government members interjected.

Mr HART: I have done the 'nice' bit and now I am going to do the 'nasty' bit. As part of this plan the minister intends to convert public land into freehold which the state will control, and I accept that. I am happy with that, but he is also going to lease that land out for 120 years. If we were doing something like that, the other side would kick us for it being an asset sale. I will table a speech that the member for Mulgrave gave on 14 October 2014.

Tabled paper. Speech by the member for Mulgrave, Mr Curtis Pitt MP, dated 14 October 2014, extracted from the *Record of Proceedings*, pp 3308-3309, titled 'Matters of Public Interest: Sale of Public Assets' [286].

The member for Mulgrave said—

For the benefit of those opposite, selling assets via a long-term lease to receive an upfront payment is a sale— or a transaction as the Treasurer now calls it. The Treasurer said back in 2010 'a 99-year lease is as good as giving away the farm—

here we are talking about a 120-year lease—

and 'saying "the state of Queensland will still own the underlying asset" is really a furphy.'

This is the member for Mulgrave—who at the time was the shadow treasurer but who then became the treasurer of the state—who said this. He further stated—

Treasurer, after 2½ years of the Newman government, we agree with you.

It appears that the Labor Party has now changed its mind because, now that they are in government, apparently the long-term sale of a lease is not an asset sale anymore. We know from the history of this place and debates in the last few days that it is only the Labor Party that has actually sold assets in Queensland. I table a list of assets that the Labor Party sold totalling \$16.5 billion.

Tabled paper. Document, undated, titled 'The truth about who sold Queensland's assets' [287].

Members will note interjections I have made in the last few days on this issue, calling on those opposite to name some of the assets that we sold when we were in government. Quite frankly, we have heard none of that. They have not been able to name anything that we sold in government. Getting back to the then shadow treasurer's speech in 2014, he said—

The Treasurer might still be confused about what a 99-year lease is, but the people of Queensland know very clearly that it means full-scale privatisation.

That is one of their own members saying that a 99-year lease is in fact full-scale privatisation. This is a 120-year lease. Although the Gold Coast council has said they need more time to make this happen, the minister is saying to them that he wants this all done before this year's election, and he is providing some staff from his department to assist the Gold Coast City Council in moving forward on this as quickly as possible. Obviously, they would like to see some of this money in the bank before the election happens.

One thing the minister could explain to me in his reply speech is what is happening with land rights and native title. Could we have an explanation about that? There is no mention in the report or in any of the speeches or transcripts I have seen about ILUAs or native title. Is native title being extinguished? What is happening there?

The best thing that could happen for the people of the Gold Coast is that on 28 March we elect Laura Gerber as the member for Currumbin and then we elect an LNP government on 31 October later this year. That is the only thing that could save the people of Queensland.