




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

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ADJOURNMENT

Gold Coast Light Rail, Annette Kellerman Park

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.12 pm): Right next to my Mermaid Beach office is the Annette Kellerman Park, a park named after an internationally famous sportsperson and later performance celebrity of the early 20th century promoted as the Australian little mermaid. Like many celebrities, she retired to the Gold Coast to spend her final years there and is recognised by the naming of that park in her honour. It was brought to my attention by local residents that the Department of Transport and Main Roads, in conjunction with the designers of the light rail stage 3A, had proposed to build a 300-square-metre building on the Annette Kellerman parklands to house an electrical boosting station for the light rail project. The original designation for the building impacted local residents severely and parkland in this area is precious because of the build-up of high-density housing along the light rail route, necessitating parks and open space for future generations. An increasing population in high-rise accommodation, which light rail stage 1 has facilitated through Broadbeach, along stage 3A of the light rail route will mandate the preservation of all existing public open space to allow for recreation for the multitude of extra people attracted by this development enabler transport infrastructure.

After a briefing with department officials and a meeting on site with officials at the Annette Kellerman Park, I believe we have come up with a solution which will be acceptable to residents and future generation users of the park, and I thank Mr John Carroll, a local resident, for his input to the solution. We have determined that the 300-square-metre building can be fitted onto the current road space that leads to the recently refurbished Gold Coast City Council public toilets so as to have minimal impact on the grassed park space and, most importantly, to leave the magnificent fig tree standing in its current location near the Gold Coast Highway. This will require a reconfiguration of the rear entry to the Mermaid Beach Bowls Club, making it a two-way egress and ingress access which the department was supportive of completing as part of the light rail building works.

This is a sensible outcome for local residents, future generations and the light rail partners together and it came as a result of meaningful, pragmatic conversations between all involved with a willingness to compromise for a mutually acceptable outcome. A massive bonus to the solution was an agreement by all involved that a large advertising sign dedicated to the auspices of the Mermaid Beach Bowls Club would front the proposed building facing northbound traffic only that would bring financial advantage to the Mermaid Beach Bowls Club—a win for all parties living in this beautiful part of Mermaid Beach. I personally want to thank Mr Paul Noonan and Mr Chris Brown from the light rail team on the Gold Coast and all of their team for their cooperative and community minded approach to the issue to get an outcome acceptable to all residents and for future generations.