



Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

Record of Proceedings, 2 September 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Maiwar Electorate, Primary School

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.06 pm): I rise to give an update on the progress of the much anticipated and long overdue new primary school in the inner west in my electorate of Maiwar. After years of overcrowded classrooms and demountable buildings, we are getting closer to giving west side kids a bit more breathing space. We are now nine months into the consultation process and the education department has arrived at two possible sites: Indooroopilly State High School or the former Toowong bowls club at Gailey Rd in Toowong. A report yesterday on the latest round of consultation shows that the former Toowong bowls club site scores better, on average, among residents against the department's criteria, with 70 per cent approval compared to Indooroopilly State High School with 43 per cent approval. That is broadly consistent with the feedback I have received, but locals know that neither site is perfect and both have some pretty significant challenges. My position has always been that the state government should spend their \$100 million plus budget allocation on private land to build this school. It is disappointing to see that the department has only considered using public land so far.

Turning to the Toowong site first, the biggest concern I have heard from locals about that site is the loss of the bowls club building itself and the greens as public space. That is along with traffic, flooding and a significant nearby colony of endangered flying foxes. If that site is chosen, the state government should fund a land swap to offset the loss of that community asset. The council and the state government could still buy back the ABC site to create a beautiful, landmark riverside park, but that is certainly not the only option! The government could also expand Perrin Park by converting the currently off limits SES depot into public parkland. They could even buy back commercial property to expand the Toowong urban common on Sherwood Road and High Street, an upgrade which council has sadly neglected to date.

At the Indooroopilly State High School site, the biggest local concern has always been traffic and pedestrian safety, along with flooding and community access to the ovals. My office organised a large survey of more than 1,000 parents at the four existing schools in this precinct, and we have published a list of six public transport upgrades and 16 pedestrian safety improvements that the state government could fund together with council. As a member of the project reference group and the transport working group, I have been working with the department to try to get some of those solutions funded and put in place. Making it safe and attractive for more than 6,000 students in this precinct to walk, cycle and bus to school is cheaper than building or widening roads.

One of the most exciting ideas residents brought to us, and which I have taken up, is to reopen the Tennyson train line between Yeerongpilly and Corinda. That would link the western suburbs with the south side and take cars off the Walter Taylor Bridge, Coonan Street and Lambert Road. A decision on the location is due by the end of September, and I will keep working up until that date and beyond to get the best outcome for the community.