




Speech By
Samuel O'Connor

MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 22 April 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (6.00 pm): This week we have heard a lot about the Olympic Games and the benefits they will bring to Queensland. Coincidentally, it is three years since the Commonwealth Games were held on the Gold Coast and my community is still waiting for the government's largest legacy project to be realised, that is, the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct. Construction has not started on a single project on any of the sites within the 9½ hectares of state owned land. It is not just any old land. It is next to Griffith University's largest campus, the Gold Coast University Hospital, the Gold Coast Private Hospital, the nation's largest build-to-rent project Smith Collective, the brilliant Cohort Innovation Space, as well as retail such as hairdressers and cafes, a massive parkland and one of the best Woolies I have ever shopped in. That is all on the Smith Street Motorway and the Gold Coast light rail line, within an hour's drive of Brisbane and barely 10 minutes from the beach. It is an extraordinary location but, unfortunately, the land is sitting empty.

The closest thing to work being undertaken is some trees being planted and the installation of signage to rebrand the area. That rebranding on its own is ridiculous because the name 'Gold Coast' has been removed from the marketing of the name of the precinct and the area is being called 'Lumina'. The problem is that nobody knows what that means. The fact that this is on the Gold Coast is actually one of the precinct's best selling points. Even more outrageous is the fact that the rebrand will cost around \$130,000. We were promised that 12,000 jobs would be created here. The economic boost to our state was meant to be worth \$1.4 billion. We are nowhere close to that. Yes, we were told this would take 10 years to develop, but we are a third of the way into that. One would have expected some progress or at least a plan by now.

I compare that to South Australia's version of the precinct, Lot Fourteen. As of last year they already had over 1,000 people working there. This week they have secured Google's public sector cloud team and in the last month they opened the Australian Space Discovery Centre and announced the \$400 million Entrepreneur and Innovation Centre, which is expected to create over 400 more jobs. One might think, 'Yes, that's great but they've probably been at this for longer.' No. Lot Fourteen launched just a few months before our Gold Coast precinct.

Labor needs to stop being all talk and actually get serious about delivering this precinct. They need to work with the mayor and the council and make this transformative project a reality. This is about the future of our city. Tourism and hospitality will always be our cornerstones but we need to diversify.