



Speech By  
**Michael Berkman**


**MEMBER FOR MAIWAR**

---

Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2022

## ADJOURNMENT

### New Acland Coal Mine

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.23 pm): We have all left things to the last minute. We get busy. We put things off. We can only assume that is what happened for the resources minister last week when he just did not get around to letting us know that they had approved the New Acland thermal coalmine until a two-sentence media release at 3.30 on a Friday afternoon. I am sure the timing had nothing at all to do with avoiding scrutiny over this shameful decision!

Before I was elected I represented the farmers opposing this coalmine in the Land Court. It is a crazy and destructive project that will trash some of Queensland's best cropping land, threaten farmers' groundwater supply and contribute to dangerous climate change. It will not even add anything to the state coffers because the New Acland coalmine is exempt from paying any royalties!

To meet our obligations under the Paris agreement, to limit warming to 1½ degrees or even two degrees, we cannot approve any new coal and gas projects. Denying this is denying the science. Queensland Labor have just shown themselves to be climate denialists with this approval and with every other. They have bent over backwards to appease the fossil fuel lobby. They are still hoping the LNP and News Corp will just leave them alone if they do what they want and approve new coal.

In fact, it has been said a few times this week that the Greens are bringing more policy ideas to this place than the LNP. Never a truer word has been spoken here I suspect! Maybe they could learn something from us about putting forward their own policy instead of just taking on the LNP's. Queensland Labor's emission reduction targets are the same as the LNP—net zero by 2050, 30 per cent by 2030, just like the failed federal Morrison government.

Delay is denial, and if the LNP are climate denialists then so is this government. Everyone else can see that coal and gas are on the way out and we need a transition plan to avoid lost jobs and deserted towns across Queensland. We could phase out coal and gas without a single worker losing their job, but we need the government to end the cowardice and denialism and get real.

Our newest Queensland Greens senator Penny Allman-Payne, who lives up in Queensland coal country, is moving a bill to establish a national energy transition authority that would fund and approve locally developed plans for coal and gas communities to transition away from fossil fuels, create new economic activities and ensure that every coal worker is guaranteed a job at the same or better pay.

It could help coordinate a transition plan for workers at Queensland state owned coal and gas-fired power stations and a plan to replace fossil fuel exports with new industries. I hope Queensland Labor will choose this kind of common-sense climate action instead of the denialism and the hollow fairytales we keep hearing about a never-ending coal boom. I sincerely hope, for the sake of every person in Queensland now and into the future, that we get a plan instead of more Friday afternoon media releases about their approval of new coal and gas projects in the state.