




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 15 March 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Mermaid Beach Electorate, Development

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.11 pm): The recurrent cry from unhappy Mermaid Beach electorate residents is the continued push to turn the spine along the light rail route into ‘sardine city’ with increased densities through height-limit extensions, increased traffic causing extended delays, and street parking chaos changing the ideal residential amenity and lifestyle. The blame for this lies squarely at the feet of the Palaszczuk Labor government accompanied by the Gold Coast City Council through their deliberate and deceitful changes to the Gold Coast City Council plan to accommodate the so-called brownfield development policy designed to save government expenditure on greenfield sites.

We know that thousands of people move to the Gold Coast every year because of its fabulous climate, geography and desirable lifestyle. We understand that construction is a big part of our economy and it is necessary for economic wellbeing and to build new dwellings for the thousands of new Gold Coasters moving here every year. We understand the need to conserve our natural valleys and remote rural hinterland scenic backdrops we always called the ‘green behind the gold’. What I cannot understand is the Labor Party government’s dead green hand across the 10,000 hectares of anachronistic caneland blocking development of this prime residential area in favour of jamming more people into a limited space along the development-enabling light rail spine.

It reminds me of the ideological folly of the Goss Labor government when they decried the development of Sanctuary Cove and Hope Island as ad hoc development which the local Albert shire should not have approved. Well hello—those two areas are some of the Gold Coast’s prime residential areas with houses fetching multimillions of dollars, which I do not see being achieved in the electorates of Inala and Woodridge. That tells me it is a political ploy to stop the development of further conservative leaning constituencies with Labor playing class war politics in its executive planning direction over the Gold Coast City Council’s CityPlan. There are only perhaps some 40 practising canefarmers today, and the mill owners recognise that the time has come for the area between Australia’s third-largest city and Australia’s rapidly growing sixth-largest city to go the same way that the cotton and arrowroot agricultural industries on the Gold Coast went and let that land be used for its best and highest purpose in providing housing for the thousands of people who move to the Gold Coast every year.

Canal estates would provide flood-free living for future residents and stop nutrient fertilisers from leading into Moreton Bay and killing seagrasses. Premier Palaszczuk, stop chock-a-blocking more people into an already brimming neighbourhood of my electorate and address the obvious need to pursue the greenfield development of the canelands.