




Speech By
Amy MacMahon

MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

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MOTION: GABBA REDEVELOPMENT

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (5.16 pm): I do not really have words strong enough without being unparliamentary to express how angry my community feels about the Gabba redevelopment. This government is literally planning on building what will be one of the most expensive sports arenas in the world at a sickening \$2.7 billion. In the process, it plans to close an active and growing state primary school. East Brisbane State School is 124 years old. They are nearly a class bigger than—

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I am just inquiring whether the member for South Brisbane got the call there.

Mr SPEAKER: She got the call because she rose to her feet and sought the call. That is the process in this place. Speaking lists are a guide only, members. Member for South Brisbane, you have the call.

Dr MacMAHON: East Brisbane State School is 124 years old. They are nearly a class bigger than they were this time last year. They host kids from refugee families. They have built a community that is strong and connected, and they remain committed to fighting what is being forced on them by this government that does not care about them. The Gabba redevelopment will also require the clearing of Raymond Park and family homes for a warm-up track. We will lose a park, old trees, a community garden, the Kangaroo Point Rovers Soccer Club, a dog park, playgrounds and exercise equipment. Residents have been deceived and now face being the first residents forcibly displaced for the Brisbane Olympic Games.

Displacement is a regular trend in Olympic host cities. Between the 1980s and the 2010s, summer Olympic related developments displaced more than two million people. Brisbane continues that proud tradition. The Gabba could easily be brought up to excellent modern standards for a fraction of the \$2.7 billion price tag without the need to close a school or clear a park and family homes. It could be brought up to the standards deserved for people with disabilities and women athletes without being razed to the ground and rebuilt. The Gabba could host the opening ceremony and athletics could be held at a more appropriate and affordable location such as QSAC or at Carrara. In fact, this is exactly what the IOC recommended: host the athletics at Carrara.

The secrecy from this government is chilling. Key parts of the Olympic Host City Contract have not been made public. The Premier could not even answer my questions about the contract a few weeks ago. Clearly, she is not across her portfolio. Key documents between the local organising committee and the AOC and the IOC are shielded from right-to-information requests. The promised independent infrastructure authority is being absorbed within the bowels of the Premier's and Deputy Premier's departments and away from the transparency it deserves. When the Deputy Premier described these new arrangements in parliament earlier this week, he said that a key issue going for them was that Deloitte thinks it is a good idea. I am very curious about the role of Deloitte and other overpaid private consultants in managing the games going forward.

Every Queensland community should be thinking: is my school or home on the chopping block? Which of my essential services are going to go underfunded while billions and billions are thrown at the Olympics and the Gabba? How many families will go without public housing? How many women will go without access to a maternity unit?

I am not sure that anyone in here—not the government nor the opposition—has actually looked at the evidence base behind the Olympic Games. The promised economic benefits are not backed up by evidence. The promised tourism benefits are not backed up by evidence. The idea that the Olympics gets everyday people involved in sport is not backed up by evidence.

Do members know what is backed up by evidence? The Olympic Games, without exception, run over budget by, on average, 172 per cent. The summer Olympic Games run over budget by, on average, 213 per cent. Where is that money coming from? What essential services are going to be defunded so we can throw money into the black hole that is the Gabba and the Olympics?

Research by our federal government said—

... there remains considerable uncertainty as to whether the benefits of the Brisbane Olympic in 2032 will outweigh the costs to the community. Given the substantial costs involved, prospective host governments should ensure a rigorous and critical assessment of costs, benefits and risks before committing to hosting the Olympic Games.

Where is this rigorous and critical assessment here in Brisbane? Economists Baade and Matheson write—

The overwhelming conclusion is that in most cases the Olympics are a money-losing proposition for host cities.

This is what we have signed up to. If the opposition are serious about this motion today, they need to come out and say that they do not support the Gabba project, they do not support closing a school and they do not support bulldozing a park and family homes. They need to say the same to their mates in the Brisbane City Council. They need to withdraw their support and put Queensland kids first.