




Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Gabba, Redevelopment

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (2.45 pm): I am going to read the speech Amy had intended to deliver this week before her accident on Monday night. If I know one thing about Amy it is that she is wishing she could be here representing her community right now. I know that she wants us to get on with the job, so here goes.

The wheels have well and truly fallen off Labor's community-wrecking Gabba stadium plans. The Premier has been one of the most ardent cheerleaders for the Gabba demolition—the project that would wipe out a school and a park and cost billions in public money. In November the Premier said—

... the demolition and rebuild provided the best possible outcome, the best value outcome for the city.

In parliament the now Premier said—

... completely rebuilding the Gabba is the best value-for-money option ...

That was even after the cost had already blown out from \$1 billion to \$2.7 billion. How much more will it blow out?

Last week we finally heard sense from the vice-president of the IOC as he echoed what the Greens and the community have been saying for nearly three years: we should abandon the Gabba. For nearly three years the local community has been saying loud and clear, 'We do not want this bloated stadium rebuilt. We need East Brisbane State School. We need Raymond Park.' Meanwhile, the rest of the state has stood aghast at the enormous amount of money this government will spend on a vanity project while ignoring the things that Queenslanders actually need.

Since 2021 locals have been running a huge community campaign—organising community meetings and rallies, writing letters and petitions, asking for meetings—and what has been the response from the Labor government? Utter contempt. At every step of the way, the Premier, the former premier before him and Labor ministers have put their egos first and the community a distant last. We say to the Premier: it is done. Call off the \$2.7 billion Gabba demolition now. The community does not want it. The International Olympic Committee vice-president says that it does not stack up, the Australian Olympic Committee president says that there are better solutions, and now even a former Labor premier has come out against it. Labor has to come clean with its plans for the Gabba before the council election next month; otherwise, Labor should expect a complete wipe-out and to be replaced by the Greens, because we will not back down.

The Greens and Amy's community have been fighting this absurd project for so long now—as I have said, nearly three years. As Amy would say, we will not stop fighting, we will keep going until we hear the Premier say that the Gabba rebuild is scrapped and East Brisbane State School and Raymond Park are protected. I suspect that I have not quite done Amy justice in the delivery of that but again wish her well.