




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 16 April 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Gold Coast Light Rail

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (7.04 pm): When light rail started on the Gold Coast, it was averaging \$35 million a kilometre. When stage 3 was put in place by this government that cost had increased to \$100 million a kilometre—a real blowout. That falls to former minister Bailey’s contempt for spending money on behalf of the people of Queensland. Since then, we have seen Light Rail stage 3 blowout from \$770 million to \$1.3 billion, and it has only just started to be built. At this stage we have no idea how much that will cost by the end of the project.

Surprisingly, last week, out of the blue, the new transport minister, the member for Aspley, came out and said that Light Rail stage 4 would cost somewhere between \$3 billion and \$7.5 billion—a \$4 billion gap. You have to wonder why they cannot figure out how much money this project is going to cost when there is a \$4 billion gap. What are we talking about here? We are talking about Light Rail stage 3, which is 6.7 kilometres at a cost of \$1.3 billion, and twice that distance—about 14 kilometres to the airport—costing a minimum of \$3 billion. It is basically twice the length and twice the amount. However, the end cost could be \$7.5 billion. I wonder why this minister, unprovoked, is telling the people of Queensland this could blow out so far that any private-public partnership would be at risk.

I think the answer to that question is that they want to axe it. They are setting it up for a future federal government or a state government to say, ‘This is not viable, it cannot work, it is unsustainable and we are going to shoot it down.’ That is what they are doing here. They are making an excuse to shut down something that the previous minister, the member for Miller, was dead keen to have built through the middle of my electorate and destroy my electorate. He would not listen to any consultation; he would not listen to any other opinion. They are making up an excuse to cancel this project.