



Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 19 February 2020

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPIT MASTER PLAN BILL

Resumed from 18 February (see p. 380), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.15 am), continuing: As we adjourned the debate yesterday afternoon, I was sharing with the House and the people of the Gold Coast some considerable concern that, given the minister's track record, there may be an inability for him to implement the outcomes of this legislation and, indeed, the Spit Master Plan itself. As I said, he was taken off transitioning North Stradbroke Island. Despite being the infrastructure minister, he was not given Cross River Rail when the Deputy Premier was stripped of that responsibility. For the sake of the Gold Coast residents, over the next eight months let us hope that the minister does a better job at implementing the Spit Master Plan than he has done in his other portfolio area of manufacturing, as it has been reported that 18,000 Queensland manufacturing workers have lost their jobs on this minister's watch.

With regard to some of the specifics of the bill, I first want to touch on the hypocrisy of this government. Throughout this term and, indeed, the term before and the term before that, we heard references to asset sales. The first commercial parcel of land to be developed on the Spit—a nearly 10,000-square-metre opportunity—is being offered under a 120-year lease. That sounds familiar. Wasn't it the then shadow Treasurer, the member for Mulgrave, who described long-term leases as full-scale privatisation? It is funny how when it suits their purposes long-term leases do not classify as asset sales or full-time privatisation, but when considered under the LNP they classify them as asset sales.

With regard to further specifics of the master plan and the expansion of the duties of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, I will direct people to the upcoming contributions of my Gold Coast LNP colleagues, particularly the local member for Surfers Paradise and his neighbours in Bonney, Southport and Mermaid Beach. They are invested in the outcomes on the Spit. They have been cognisant of what has transpired over the course of the past eight years and particularly what has not transpired over the course of the past five years. They will have very specific input on elements of the master plan.

Although the master plan was finally released in May 2019, it is now midway through February 2020 and the required legislation is only just being debated. While the minister has failed to get on with delivery, in the past year the Gold Coast unemployment rate has jumped by 1.4 per cent to 5.7 per cent, which is the second largest increase in the state. That means 5,400 Gold Coast locals have been added to the unemployment queue, which again is the largest increase in the whole state. The Gold Coast's unemployment queue now stretches more than 20,000 people long and that is incredibly concerning for the local economy. Equally concerning, if not more so, is that youth unemployment has skyrocketed on the Gold Coast over the past year, increasing the most in the whole state by 5.4 per cent to 13.1 per cent.

While the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning was dawdling on this legislation, his colleague the Minister for Tourism was busy making promises while delivering nothing. Despite promising a speedy resolution four months ago, the tourism minister has made no progress on delivering the promise to revamp the Gold Coast Convention Centre.

Despite promising the Indy cars for the Gold Coast, nothing has been delivered. Despite spending millions of taxpayers' dollars on pitching a Gold Coast second casino—

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is straying well off the topic here. This is about the Spit Master Plan. He is going all around the world on a whole lot of other issues, everything except the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Your point of order is relevance, minister?

Mr BAILEY: Yes.

Mr POWELL: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I listened to the minister's contribution to the second reading speech and he, similarly, made a lot of comment about jobs and jobs on the Gold Coast and the work that this government was apparently doing to deliver those. I am being consistent with what the minister also contributed on this debate.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask all members to remain relevant to the bill.

Mr POWELL: As I was saying, despite spending millions of taxpayers' dollars on pitching a Gold Coast second casino, nothing has been announced. In response to the consistent failures of Labor to deliver for the Gold Coast, the Gold Coast Central Chamber of Commerce President Martin Hall accurately summarised—

We do not want to find ourselves in a long stalemate, as we did with the ASF development, with months of speculation when we could be doing something.

Gold Coasters cannot afford another four years of businesses going bankrupt, jobs being lost, projects being promised and under-delivered, and tourism numbers falling. Gold Coasters cannot afford a government bereft of ideas, bereft of direction and bereft of leadership.

Mr WHITING: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is not covered in the long title of the bill. This is not covered in the explanatory notes. None of these issues were covered in the hearings of the committee. I submit that he is extremely irrelevant.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice from the table. Member, I ask that you stay relevant to the long title of the bill and the committee report.

Mr POWELL: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will be listening with much interest to the contributions of Labor members further on. Should they also be talking about jobs on the Gold Coast or lack thereof, I will be sure to pull them up as well. After all, this is about implementing the Spit Master Plan, something that has taken five years to do. Clearly the Palaszczuk Labor government has held the Gold Coast back. It is clear that only an LNP government can unlock the city's potential. I can assure you the LNP will build a stronger economy for businesses to grow, to create new jobs and more higher-paid local jobs on the Gold Coast. While Labor look after themselves, the LNP will work for Gold Coast residents.

Before closing, I want to briefly address the legislative changes to the Planning Act. The bill seeks to amend the Planning Act 2016 in order to clarify the intended scope of compensation rights in relation to an adverse planning change, in particular, that compensation is available in relation to development, that is, assessable development, both before and after the adverse planning change, and include transitional arrangements to ensure that any affected owner who may have been unable to claim compensation as a result of the current provisions of the Planning Act may do so within six months of the commencement. I understand these changes were requested by external stakeholders, including the Property Council and the Queensland Law Society. I understand from the committee's report that in some instances those external stakeholders do not believe these changes go far enough, particularly the Property Council, but at the same time the local government authority probably fears they go a little too far. In balancing out those activities, I believe that we have probably arrived at the right outcome for this particular part of the legislation. This legislation is long overdue. It comes after five years of hiatus. Let us hope, for the sake of the Gold Coast, it stimulates at least some activity, but under the Palaszczuk Labor government I fear it will not.