



Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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ADJOURNMENT

Burdekin Electorate, Molongle Creek

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.12 pm): The Burdekin electorate is home to so many gems, and one of the best is Cape Upstart. Over the years ‘the cape’, as it is affectionately known, has grown since the first huts appeared there early in the 20th century to now being an idyllic getaway for over 200 families and their friends. Those families pay their council rates, their electricity bills, their boat registration and other state charges while also voluntarily keeping this slice of paradise clean and a haven for wildlife. Despite almost 120 years of families taking a break at the cape, it is still largely only accessible by water. Every weekend families and groups of friends use Molongle Creek to travel to the cape. Actually, let me correct the record: every weekend, when the tide is high enough, families and groups of friends travel to the cape via Molongle Creek.

Despite promises made in the lead-up to the 2017 election, using Molongle Creek is still a lottery. In fact, just over a week ago, one local was asking if a 2.09-metre tide was sufficient water to allow passage of a 4.5-metre tinny. Anyone with any knowledge of boating would know that a 4.5-metre tinny should be able to access most creeks in Queensland on most tides—not at Molongle. What if it is not a 4.5-metre tinny but a vessel used by Burdekin Volunteer Marine Rescue? What if a child is injured at the cape and needs medical attention? Well, right now, they either have to wait for up to 24 hours or, if severely injured, rely on the rescue chopper from Townsville.

Despite the promises, users of Molongle Creek will now wait until mid-2021 at least for all-tide access and, despite promises, the dredging that would provide a temporary solution has still not commenced despite being scheduled to take place last September. Frustrations are at boiling point and for good reason. The projects that users of Molongle Creek have been promised have not materialised—delays with permits and even issues with border crossings due to COVID restrictions having been cited as excuses.

The message from Molongle Creek users is simple. They are sick of false promises and excuses that, at best, restrict their time for a family holiday and, at worst, could claim a life. Tonight I stand on behalf of the users of Molongle Creek and convey their message to the Queensland government and the Whitsunday Regional Council: no more excuses will be accepted. Get on and do the work you have committed to do before your inaction results in loss of life. The time for delays is over.