

HANSARD

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 6 June 2006

MURRAY BRIDGE RAILWAY STATION

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I wish to refer to a question I asked the Minister for Transport yesterday about the railway station area at Murray Bridge. The railway station has been unused for a period of approximately five years and the council would like to take it over and develop it into a youth centre. This requires a massive cleanup bill, and the council obviously would like to work through the process to get it into a useable state to assist the many youth in Murray Bridge, which is a booming town at the moment. The minister also brought up the subject of the whole of the railway lands development in Murray Bridge, and, yes I do agree with him, it is on very valuable land, and I think it is a waste to see it sitting there as it is, with the amount of development going on in and around Murray Bridge. We can see the potential for a tourism-type complex, whether it be a hotel or convention centre, etc.

The minister made the comment that it is too valuable for the council to handle. I am assured by the Rural City of Murray Bridge that it is more than happy to hand over the money to acquire this land and develop it as it sees fit—that is, in accordance with its grand plan for a tourist development on this site, which has magnificent views of the Murray—instead of its being just a weed-infested hillside with a few old houses. Obviously, there will be a lot of things that need to be talked through—not least, Ngarrindjeri land rights and other land ownership issues in the area. There is also land owned by SA Water further down, and there are some initial plans for various developments which could coincide with a development such as this, for example, a golf course, etc.

Also mentioned yesterday by the minister was the fact that the Thoroughbred Racing Authority has interests at Murray Bridge and there is a major development planned for a location next to the freeway to develop a new racetrack and areas for trainers to train horses. It is also part of a housing development which will involve thousands of new houses, which will be a real boon to the area. With Cheltenham shutting down and the resulting lack of training facilities, the state needs to have a good look at the most appropriate place for a venue of this type, and I think that on the road to Melbourne is the most appropriate location. I believe the initial plans for the Thoroughbred Racing Authority development are with Planning SA, and I would be very pleased to sit with the planning minister, minister Holloway, to work through this proposal. One question I would ask is: where does all this fit with the master planning for government land in Murray Bridge? There is huge growth forecast for jobs and population in the Murray Bridge area and it needs appropriate master planning. I believe that a project was set up two years ago to discuss master planning but the project has stalled, and I think it is a disgrace that there has not yet been a brief made available to employ consultants to move forward with this project.