



Speech by

JULIE ATTWOOD

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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1999 STATE BUDGET

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.34 p.m.): It has been 15 months since I was elected as the State member for the electorate of Mount Ommaney and 12 months since the last Budget, the first of the Beattie Government. During this short period, a lot has happened both from a Labor Government perspective and in relation to my own electorate. When I was elected, I faced a number of major issues that were the result of the previous Government's lack of foresight and concern for the people they serve. When the new high school at Centenary was started in early 1998, little attention was given to the residents of the local area. They were not consulted or kept up to date by the then local member and a number of issues arose both during and after the construction phase. Residents were concerned about dust, noise, pedestrian and traffic safety, drainage and the environment. I was constantly calling the project manager and the Brisbane City Council about these matters to ensure that they were rectified quickly and put to rest.

The Jindalee Golf Club, a not-for-profit organisation that is located directly opposite the high school, was flooded a number of times due to inadequate drainage and the build-up of silt from the high school oval. That is still a problem and funds are needed to remove the built-up silt to ensure that the course is not inundated with water after the next storm.

The Education Minister has approved \$1,801,000 to be spent on Stage 2 of the Centenary State High School, which is now commencing. A number of weeks ago I wrote to nearby residents, held a public meeting to discuss the plans and have again written to all residents outlining the issues raised and the Education Department's response to those matters. I believe that the project manager has been adequately alerted to possible problems and that Stage 2 will be completed bearing in mind at all times the welfare of the local residents as well as the students. The students at the school are achieving good results and have good support from their parents and teachers.

The issue of the cessation of bus subsidies for students who wanted to complete their education at other schools was difficult to address. After months of lobbying and petitioning the Transport Minister to compensate those parents who would lose their subsidies due to the proximity of the new high school, it became clear that millions of dollars would be lost in the setting of a precedent whenever a new high school was built in Queensland. Parents were advised that where financial hardship was an issue, the safety net provisions would offset some of the costs of transport. It was unfortunate that the previous member promised the parents of the affected children a gradual phasing out of those subsidies without even checking or budgeting the cost with the department.

For many years, the old hospital site on the corner of Dandenong Road and Arrabri Avenue has been the subject of public meetings after it was declared surplus to requirements by the Health Department. In December 1997, the previous Government made a Cabinet decision to sell off the site for development, leaving 30% of the land for a public park. On the change of Government, I immediately lobbied the Health Minister for a better deal for the community. She later agreed to increase the amount of parkland to 41% of the site. When one considers that usually only 10% of a development area is designated as parkland, that is a fine outcome for the people of Mount Ommaney.

I have written to the Minister asking her to consider the construction of a retirement village on the site rather than the development being all high density and to also include on the site a community

centre. I wish to acknowledge the Minister's support of our veterans by enabling a war memorial to be established on the site and the establishment of a hospice for terminally ill children. I am not an advocate of total development and I see that parkland in our suburbs is somewhat lacking. Considering the ever-increasing cost of health and the necessity for the Health Department to obtain a return from the land sale, it is better to consider a win-win situation rather than to wage an all-out war and end up with no parkland.

In my maiden speech to Parliament, I said that I was determined that there would be no more prisons built near the backyards of the people of Riverhills. The CRAMP group fought the previous Government hard to have a prison sited away from their homes. This was honoured by the previous Government and the new prisons, the Wolston Correctional Centre and the Brisbane Women's Prison, were built further away. However, because of increasing prisoner numbers, more prisons were required. The Police and Corrective Services Minister looked seriously at venues other than Wacol at which it was convenient to build another prison. Consequently, the new prison will be built in Maryborough, out of sight and out of mind of the residents of Riverhills.

The Beattie Government promised to consult about the prison land, which now lies dormant behind the homes of the Riverhills residents. I have consulted with the community about this land and, overwhelmingly, they have said that they would like to see it become recreational space or to see cattle continue to graze on it, as they do now. They do not want to see another prison pop up. The people are anxious that the land is utilised so that future Governments do not conveniently place on that land yet another prison. Moreton A prison will be demolished as promised as soon as the Maryborough prison is commissioned. Everything is running according to schedule.

Noise barriers along the Centenary Highway are near completion. This project, which includes the construction of a bikeway to link up with Coronation Drive, was started about two years ago. There is still some animosity on the part of those residents who live near the highway because noise is still an issue. A trial to measure the effect of traffic speed on noise has commenced with a lowering of the speed limit to 90 kilometres per hour near the Sumners Road exit. Residents say that the level of noise has been reduced. However, scientific results are not yet available.

Residents have requested that pedestrians be allowed to use the bikeway as, at present, its use by cyclists is sporadic. When the bikeway is completed and it links up with the bikeway along Coronation Drive, the number of cyclists using the bikeway is expected to increase. In the meantime, I have asked the Minister and the Lord Mayor to allow pedestrians to use the bikeway, but at their own risk.

Since the installation of noise barriers, some 2,000 trees have been planted along the Centenary Highway and another 4,000 are yet to be planted. The trees were planted and fertilised by the Main Roads Department and Greening Australia.

New public housing seniors units have been constructed in Corinda and the construction of six apartment units in Jerrold Street, Sherwood is expected to be completed by October this year. A total of \$1,170,456 will go towards funding the construction of further public rental housing in the electorate to alleviate waiting times for people in the area. The South West Home Assist Scheme will receive over \$300,000 to serve these suburbs, including my electorate of Mount Ommaney.

Over the past 10 years, traffic along the Centenary Highway has increased markedly and will increase further with the link to Springfield. Bottlenecks occur at both ends. The problem lies at the roundabouts at Toowong and Ipswich Road. I have asked the Minister to find some long-term solutions to these problems. There is no room to expand along Milton Road and adjusting the Ipswich Road roundabout will require Federal Government funding.

As a result of my representations that the police station at Mount Ommaney remain open outside normal working hours, it has extended its hours from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Patrol cars now operate between midnight and 7 a.m. every night of the week and during the day on weekends.

I have assisted a table tennis association in Centenary to prepare an application to the State Government for a grant for tables and equipment. That is currently under consideration.

Now to the other side of the highway and the suburbs of Oxley, Corinda, Sherwood and Sinnamon Park, which have equal importance to the progress of the Mount Ommaney electorate. To make access a little easier for those residents, many months ago I set up an office at the Oxley senior citizens' hall which I attend on the first Friday morning of each month. People often pop in to tell me of their concerns or just to keep me informed. On Saturday mornings I set up a stall at various street corners in the electorate to reach a broader cross-section of people in the community.

The major issues that have arisen from this side of the electorate include bus and rail transport coordination, the upgrade of Oxley and Sherwood stations, traffic problems along Oxley Road and Seventeen Mile Rocks Road, the DPI land abutting Corinda residences, sewerage smells and noise issues, the future of the Oxley secondary college, development at Seventeen Mile Rocks and Darra, parkland, the development of the old Corinda State School site, the need for a community health

centre, the redevelopment of the Corinda shops, and Oxley Creek catchment issues. I am happy to say that most of those major issues have been resolved or are currently being given consideration by council and the appropriate Government Minister. I have made representations to the Health Minister for a community health centre in Oxley/Corinda.

Education is very important to me and I have been in regular contact with schools in the area to assess their needs. A number of long-term maintenance issues have been resolved, including funding for the Jindalee State School fire hydrant, maintenance of the Jindalee preschool, the painting of the Middle Park State School undercover area and buildings, and the drainage problem at the Jamboree Heights State School courts which is being fixed. Funding was made available to seal the Centenary State High School basketball court. An upgrade is expected at the Corinda State High School. Road safety maintenance at the Oxley State School has occurred. The Jamboree Heights preschool's flooding problem is on a list of priorities. A gaming machine grant has made it possible for St Joseph's at Corinda to make its footpath usable for all in wet weather and erect a safety fence.

With the Corinda Montrose Special School children needing to find alternative accommodation, the Minister has advised that \$1,627,000 will be provided to construct a special education facility at Grand Avenue School, which will be designed specifically to house those severely disabled children. A sum of \$371,000 has been allocated to purchase MacPherson Lodge in Corinda. This will enable a continuation of accommodation for adults with disabilities.

Education Queensland is opening up new high schools in developing areas in the western suburbs. Meanwhile, the Oxley secondary college has seen a decrease of 22% in its school population in 1999. Last month a public meeting was held to discuss the future of the college and parents have been asked to complete a needs survey to be assessed by Education Queensland. I am totally supportive of the role of the college, which caters for the disadvantaged. I have asked the Minister for Education, Dean Wells, to continue to provide this kind of service to the community. We must look after those young adults who do not fit into the conventional education system.

Mr BAUMANN: I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mrs ATTWOOD: The Corinda State High School, which has a current enrolment of about 1,400 students, is due for an upgrade. I have been in close contact with the principal of that school in relation to needs that have arisen. Action will be taken in the not-too-distant future to strategically plan for those changes.

The Oxley Railway Station is utilised frequently by locals and people from neighbouring electorates. The station certainly needs upgrading to cater for increased patronage. I have made sure that the Minister is aware of the need for funding for ramps or a lift for the elderly and disabled at both Oxley and Sherwood stations.

A sum of \$750,000 has been set aside in this year's Budget for the purchase of land and the construction of a new ambulance station for the Mount Ommaney electorate. Over the past 12 months I have been working with QAS officers to select a suitable site that will provide quick responses to the Centenary suburbs, Sinnamon Park, Seventeen Mile Rocks and the outer reaches of Oxley.

The old Oxley Police Station will be refurbished to accommodate specialist squads from Alderley. A sum of \$1,949,000 will be injected into the community to undertake this activity. The Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre has received a number of grants to support its programs. In the past 12 months many other community organisations, including P & Cs, have benefited from State Government grants totalling \$162,413.

Graffiti continues to be an issue in the electorate. The toilet block that was recently installed at the Jindalee skate park has already been vandalised. It took me two years of lobbying the Lord Mayor's office to get that facility built. While most young people value its usefulness, unfortunately some individuals do not.

In recent times, the issue of drugs and discarded syringes has been brought to my attention. Recently, an elderly woman was attacked at the tunnel linking Sinnamon Park with the Mount Ommaney Shopping Centre. This is a known meeting place for drug users. On this issue I am working with the Police Service and a mature-age research student from the QUT, who is undertaking a study of the effect of drugs on youth and the community. She will document her research in a report that I will use to work with the community in relation to this issue.

I have doorknocked the new Windemere estate and from time to time I continue this grassroots approach throughout the electorate. Apart from dealing with the major issues, the rest of my time is spent dealing with many individual issues, visiting community groups, attending official functions, attending Parliament and parliamentary committee meetings, and visiting schools, State Government organisations and retirement villages. The best part of my job is the opportunity it gives to converse

with, inform and assist the people I meet every day. To be able to represent them is a great honour and a privilege.

Finally, I take this opportunity to acknowledge some hardworking local community groups that I have had some involvement with: John Oxley Orchid Society; the Centenary and Districts Chamber of Commerce; the Chinese Business and Professional Association; the Jindalee Lions and the Jindalee and Sumner Park Rotary Clubs; the Sherwood RSL; the Vietnamese Forum for Multiculturalism and Women's Association; the Hindu Alalya Sangan Queensland Inc; the Sri Lankan community; the Taiwanese Friendship Association; Focus on Youth; a number of Neighbourhood Watch groups; the Salvation Army, Centenary; the P & C associations; the Sherwood respite centre; Concerned Residents Against More Prisons; Safety House committees; the Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre; the Oxley CWA; the Oxley and Centenary Senior Citizens and National Seniors groups; the Jindalee and Centenary Probus clubs; the Centenary View Club; the Centenary Project Group; the Sinnamon Park, Seventeen Mile Rocks and Oxley Progress Associations; the scouts, guides and Trefoil guilds; the Centenary and Sherwood Meals on Wheels; Benarrawa; the Oxley Creek Environment Group; the Centenary Riverfront Advisory Committee; the Westlake/Riverhills Bush Care Group; the Jindalee Bush Care Group, the Zoe Reed Little Bridge House Association; the St Catherine's and Centenary soccer clubs; the Jindalee Jaguars; the Jindalee and St Catherine's netball clubs; the Jindalee and McLeods golf clubs; the Y West; the Jindalee and Corinda bowls clubs; the Young Widows and Widowers Support Group and the Centenary Suburbs Historical Society. I thank them for all the good work that they do in our community and for bringing people together.
