



Speech by

RACHEL NOLAN

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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NORTH IPSWICH RAILWAY WORKSHOPS; RIVERLINK

Ms NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (11.41 p.m.): The Beattie Labor government has shown real faith in Ipswich by setting the wheels in motion for a comprehensive transformation of the inner suburbs. The government has invested in the workshops—a project to redevelop and build a museum and tourist attraction at the old North Ipswich railway workshops. The workshops have been located on that site since the 1850s and once employed 3,000 people. This project will again make the site the industrial heart of the town. It will bring people back to North Ipswich, creating around 100 jobs and attracting over 100,000 tourists a year. It is a significant vote of confidence in our town and is strongly supported by the chamber of commerce and the community.

As well as the redevelopment of the workshops, the state government has set the ball rolling for the commercial development of the southern end of the site—an area that currently is a barren wasteland directly across the river from the CBD. Under the Riverlink plan, the area will be developed into a commercial precinct and will include acres of beautiful riverside parkland. The Riverlink development could solve Ipswich's major shopping dilemma by bringing a department store to the town. It has the potential to bring Ipswich shoppers back from Indooroopilly and Redbank to shop in the centre of Ipswich. What is more, it could also be the catalyst for Ipswich becoming a genuine river city.

With its plans for parkland right along the riverfront from the town bridge to the workshops, I believe that Riverlink could be the start of a parkland project that creates pathways running all the way from the town bridge to the Brassall and even Wulkuraka Bridges. We could build a pedestrian bridge at Woodend and genuinely link our city.

The development of the workshops and of Riverlink are significant opportunities for Ipswich. They ought to be treated that way. I am very concerned that some members of the Ipswich City Council seem intent on finding problems with the project. Despite the government's \$20 million commitment, which even includes upgrading council roads, the Ipswich City Council has not committed one cent. Instead, up until now comment from councillors has been limited to hand wringing about the potential cost of maintaining riverside parkland. When we have a chance to become a beautiful riverside city, all some councillors can see is the cost of mowing the grass. On Tuesday, two Ipswich councillors were reported in the *Queensland Times* claiming that they would not support Riverlink unless a new road bridge across the Bremer River is built within about only 200 metres of the existing town bridge. Quite simply, their argument is bizarre.

I know that there are serious cost and planning implications associated with commercial development on the southern end of the workshop site. I know that the impact on the CBD needs to be looked at carefully. However, I think that it is time for an attitude change. As the member for Ipswich, I will work with council and anyone else to make our town better, but some members of the council need to get positive. They need to start looking for ways to make things better, not just to look for problems and for headlines.
