




Speech by

Hon. Mark McArdle

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

Hansard Tuesday, 29 May 2012

CALOUNDRA ELECTORATE, INFRASTRUCTURE

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (11.17 am): It is a pleasure to follow the Leader of the Opposition, who spoke about infrastructure. Of course, on the Sunshine Coast we know very clearly what she means by infrastructure. The Sunshine Coast university hospital has not been built but has been delayed for a period of four years, because the previous government could not get its act together and it could not get the funds together to make it happen. Therefore, when the Leader of the Opposition stands in this House and talks about infrastructure, she had better be certain of her facts and look into the background of the Labor government that delayed for four years the construction of that very important hospital. I can guarantee that under my colleague the Minister for Health that situation will not continue. He will have his hands on the tiller and he will make sure that it is built on time and opened on time to provide all the services needed by the people of the Sunshine Coast for many years to come.

In the past in this place I have spoken about the Caloundra aerodrome and how important it is to Sunshine Coast residents, particularly Caloundra residents. The aerodrome sits in my electorate and employs some 140 people. It has been under a pseudo death sentence for 10 to 12 years. In about September or December 2009, the then Premier stood in this House and said that the aerodrome would stay. That appeared to secure the tenure of all aerodrome employers and their employees for many years to come. However, if their leases are to be extended without going to tender, application needs to be made by the local council, that is, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, to the Minister for Local Government. Roughly three years have now transpired and that application has not been made. That is hanging people, including employees, out to dry and that can no longer be tolerated. It is very important that the Sunshine Coast Regional Council moves on this. Although documentation was forwarded to lessees at the end of last year, the situation has not progressed any further. It is absolutely vital that, if we are going to retain and expand jobs in this precinct to provide greater incentives and outcomes for the people of Caloundra, this must be undertaken forthwith. I urge the council to take on board that issue and move with it quickly.

The second point I intend to take forward in greater earnest this sitting is the Landsborough Railway Station car park. I have raised this issue in the past. There is a necessity to understand that that car park is the central hub of the southern end of the Sunshine Coast for the bulk of rail transport. Hundreds of vehicles use the car park that is available there on a daily basis, spilling out across the roadways and, indeed, blocking access to shops and businesses. That is deterring people from coming to Landsborough and using that excellent facility to acquire their goods and obtain the services required to operate their own businesses. At this point there is land readily available on the other side of the railway car park that could be used. I started negotiations with the local community. In fact, I met with Jason Coultis on Friday of last week to again begin the process of ensuring we get an outcome for this in the near future. Without such an outcome, the congestion around the car park and railway station will increase as time goes by. That is simply not good for the people who work there, not good for the people who park there and not good for the economy. Understanding the growth on the Sunshine Coast and the expected growth in the usage of this car park is very critical to understanding the need to expand the car park and make it more viable.

Those two issues are very important for my electorate. Again, I will work with the relevant ministers to ensure we get proper outcomes. I make this one point. Under this government the Sunshine Coast will no longer be neglected, as it was for many, many years under the rule of Premier Bligh and Premier Beattie. For too long the Sunshine Coast was ignored to the detriment of the people who work there and for the aspirations of those people, their children and their grandchildren as well. The tide has now changed and we on the Sunshine Coast intend to put our case strongly and effectively to the government to ensure we do obtain what is needed to grow the region in the time to come. Our population will increase significantly over the next five to 10 years and it is most important that we achieve the outcome and services we need to grow those services to meet those needs.