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NORTHERN SUBURBS DEVELOPMENT

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:13): On Thursday 21 May, the Minister for Urban Development and Planning released a draft DPA for Gawler East in my electorate. On the same day, the Minister for Transport released the Gawler Growth Areas Transport Framework in response to the new urban growth boundary announced previously.

The proposed development has raised a number of concerns within the community that need to be clarified and debated in the public domain. To date, most of the concerns surround the issue of traffic management, particularly traffic to and from the proposed development in Gawler East, and other concerns have been raised around the future community character of Gawler, the environmental issues and, importantly, the infrastructure for the proposed development.

At a recent public meeting, arranged by the Town of Gawler, I was asked why this area was being developed. I advised the people at the meeting that the reason the north has been identified for residential and urban development is that this is where the jobs will be in the future. Both the Salisbury and Playford council areas are earmarked for strong job growth because of industries involving defence and other manufacturing areas.

Importantly, if jobs are going to be created in the north, which is a good thing for our community, we need to consider the cost of transport associated with people moving to and from home for work. They are the environmental costs, the costs of actually travelling and also protecting against becoming a dormant community. The further people work from where they live, the more our community becomes dormant.

The development also provides some economic sustainability for the local council. The three elements important in this proposal are, first of all, the DPA itself, the transport framework and the commitment deed. The DPA addresses the usual planning and design issues, and the transport framework outlines how to ensure that development does not congest the existing network of roads and how people can move around the community safely. The commitment deed about the infrastructure requirements of the proposed development, who pays for what, and when, is also important, and I will come back to that point a bit later.

Unfortunately, speculation around transport has created a great deal of distress in some parts of the community. Solutions need to be found to legitimate issues raised about amenity, noise, etc, but shifting proposed road networks to other roads is not the answer; it just impacts on another group of residents. We need to create some win-win outcomes, and those opportunities do exist. Importantly, pitting one group of residents against another is not the answer. We need to find a solution that best fits the overall community.

While some of the public debate has been misinformed, in fairness, by the lack of information, others have been promoted by deliberate politicking. Letters to the local paper today by some regular correspondents do raise some valid points, which the council, the developers and the state government do need to address. While I do not agree with all the views expressed in the letters, they rightly raise issues that need answers.

The letters have been written by Scott Fraser, Helen Wilmore (and I put on record my thanks to Helen, who keeps me informed of her actions and her lobbying) and also Paul Koch, all of Gawler East. The issue they deal with in the letter essentially revolves around infrastructure, and I will quote from Paul Koch's letter, where he states:

What has not appeared is a Deed of Commitment. We were told that before any DPA was finalised, the state, developer and councils would spell out how the different infrastructure provisions would be paid for with an agreed timetable.

The issue around the commitment deed and who pays for what is a legitimate issue, which the residents do raise, and the residents have my full backing to ensure that this information is made available to the community prior to the DPA being authorised. I was given an assurance by the various parties that that commitment deed would be made public prior to the authorisation of the DPA, and I would expect that commitment to be honoured.

Another thing that I would say has to occur is an informed debate around this issue, so I welcome the informed opinions and views of local residents and business people. To assist that process I have asked ministers to make senior public servants available to hold information sessions in the Gawler community prior to the closure of community comment and feedback, to enable the community to fully understand both the DPA and the transport framework, because these two documents will have a major impact on the town.

Time expired.