

ARMADALE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BILL 2001

Second Reading

Resumed from 17 October.

MRS EDWARDES (Kingsley) [12.53 pm]: The Opposition supports the Bill. The Armadale Redevelopment Authority was proposed also by the coalition Government prior to the election. I refer first to the principles surrounding redevelopment authorities. The Subiaco and East Perth Redevelopment Authorities were established by the previous Labor Government. The proposal for the Midland Redevelopment Authority was developed during the coalition Government's term. The purpose of these authorities is to accommodate urban renewal and to allow coordination among government agencies when a large number of government properties are held by various agencies. They have also been useful for developing contaminated sites belonging to government agencies when infrastructure may need to be changed.

The establishment of redevelopment authorities is not a partisan issue. However, it is important that both state and local governments must establish the fundamental principles that underpin their need. Redevelopment authorities assume the powers of planning from the local council and, as such, are unique and very powerful authorities. If a redevelopment authority is to be established to allow state government intervention it must be justified under fundamental principles. One of the first principles to establish is that the authority has the support of both local and regional councils and communities. I am sure that the Ministry for Planning and Infrastructure is able to develop such fundamental principles.

The three existing redevelopment authorities vary to some degree. There is a further variation between the Midland Redevelopment Authority and the Armadale Redevelopment Authority, although there are many similarities. Redevelopment authorities are established to take over planning and development control. They are used to redevelop outworn areas of urban development, including railway, road and pedestrian linkages and industrial sites that are contaminated.

A regional development commission develops its own town planning scheme, called a "redevelopment scheme", which provides for essential infrastructure. It creates the subdivisions, undertakes marketing and selling land and buildings and promotes the establishment of business. It becomes the planner and the developer and takes over the power of a local authority. Apart from being a planner and developer it is also the approval and decision-making authority. As I said, it is very powerful.

Given our experience with redevelopment authorities and their interventionist role, it is important that some fundamental principles be established to ensure that a form of policy exists to justify redevelopment authorities. In her second reading speech the minister referred to the establishment of this authority as a commitment of the Labor Government. However, I did not expect the minister also to say that it meets a policy commitment of the Liberal Party.

Ms MacTiernan: I suppose I distinguished between funded and unfunded commitments!

Mrs EDWARDES: I will deal with that later. The previous Government was committed to the development of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority, and the local council has lobbied hard over the past two or three years for its establishment. The council is made up of unique and vibrant people, despite some of the personnel changes in the various positions, who display a great deal of love for the area. In conversation with them, there is a sense that they believe that Armadale is on the brink of total renewal and of becoming a vibrant regional centre. I certainly hope that will be the outcome of the authority's work. The City of Armadale met with the then Premier, Hon Richard Court, in August and October last year specifically to talk about the future of Armadale as a strategic regional centre and the provision of infrastructure in the area. I refer to a letter from the then Premier to the mayor of Armadale, Roger Stubbs. The letter states -

Armadale is an important urban city and its economic growth and development is essential to a coalition government's strategic vision for the development of Perth as a city and as a community. I share your concern that the activities of governments and agencies working toward the City of Armadale's next growth phase must be well managed and coordinated. As a result of our meeting I have held discussions with my colleagues and reviewed the various options available to ensure that this objective is achieved.

I am pleased to advise that following those discussions the creation of a redevelopment authority in Armadale is now a matter of coalition policy. A coalition government will establish the Armadale Redevelopment Authority to be responsible for development within several agreed development areas, including the city commercial and railway station precinct, and would have a strong community service obligation.

Obviously, the experience gained at East Perth, Subiaco and Midland was drawn upon.

The redevelopment of East Perth has dramatically transformed what was an industrial area into a highly regarded and sought-after Perth suburb. Major works commenced there in 1993 and are expected to accommodate a residential population of 3 800 and a work force of 10 000. In 1992, before the transformation, there were only 100 residents in the area.

Subiaco had different needs. It was necessary to retain and complement the village character. Of course, the Subiaco redevelopment project included placing the railway underground. What was derelict industrial land now houses a cosmopolitan inner-city community. The Midland Redevelopment Authority was created in January 2000. It was given responsibility for the planning and redevelopment of the Midland Workshops site. As members know, the area has considerable contamination that will cost a large amount to rectify. Those authorities have proved successful in bringing together government departments and agencies, local councils and the private sector to renew those areas.

The issue at Armadale has always been that it is adjacent to major transport routes and intersections and on the boundary of some beautiful urban and regional areas. The Serpentine-Jarrahdale council should be commended for its commitment to creating jobs and encouraging people to live in the area. It has also done a great deal of work to foster tourism. The social and economic relevance of Armadale has been in decline. Some private developers regard it as a backwater. An article in *The West Australian* quotes the mayor on that issue.

In 1998, the City of Armadale sought the establishment of a task force to coordinate planning and development issues in the area. In 1999, the Ministry for Planning and the City of Armadale conducted an urban design study to establish the issues involved in sustainable growth, development and employment. In September 1999, the city briefed the Government about its planning and development concerns, the current development situation and the opportunities to fast track projects. As members know, the issues arising between respective departments and agencies often relate to timing. The priorities of the agencies might not be the priorities of the local community or the Government. Clearly, this was a matter of bringing those agencies together. In December 1999, the City of Armadale, in conjunction with the Ministry for Planning, conducted an inquiry by design workshop. That also occurred at Midland with the charrette. That encourages community support for a new body that will take over the environment. The workshop set out to create the opportunity for consensus, to determine improvements in the urban structure, to strengthen the city's economic base and growth potential and to design responses and sustainable plans for the key localities and sites. I have seen strong local support for the establishment of a redevelopment authority with the appropriate powers to guide redevelopment and urban renewal to maximise the city's and the residents' opportunities.

In November 2000, the City of Armadale made representations to the Government seeking the establishment of a task force or authority to do three things: first, to stimulate growth and development in the city through the establishment of a streamlined planning and development authority; secondly, to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the various existing development proposals in which the State Government is a stakeholder; and, thirdly, to initiate demonstration-built environment options and solutions. The key to that is the function of the redevelopment authority. As I have stated, such an authority becomes not only the planner and developer but also the decision maker. The Liberal Party undertook to establish an authority in an endeavour to do what the local council and the local community wanted.

Obviously, there will always be costing and financial implications with such a body. The authority was to be financed by a grant and/or loan funding. The Government intended to contribute surplus or unproductive land currently held by agencies.

Ms MacTiernan: Is this under your plan?

Mrs EDWARDES: Yes. The local council has commenced discussions with government agencies. Obviously, it is dealing with coordination of priorities, land and asset sales, leasing, fees and charges for the use of authority assets and interest on investments. I will discuss further - probably during the consideration in detail stage - how the minister sees the authority's funds being used.

It is hard to identify the redevelopment area on the small maps attached to the Bill. I have not been able to access a much larger map detailing the specific areas. I understand that they match those promoted by the City of Armadale. Indeed, the city representatives have told me that they are happy with the redevelopment area.

Ms MacTiernan: All of this was done after negotiations between myself, the mayor and the CEO. We worked out what areas would be included. That proposal was put forward as a formal resolution to the council before the Government approved the legislation. It has all been done after consultation.

Mrs EDWARDES: They are happy with and supportive of the work done. They would have liked the authority to be up and running some time ago so that they could build upon the enthusiasm and support that they believe

exists. I want to clarify with the minister what it includes. Obviously it includes the City of Armadale and the municipal and commercial precinct, which is also adjacent to the Armadale railway station.

Ms MacTiernan: Yes.

Mrs EDWARDES: Does it include the Champion Drive high school site?

Ms MacTiernan: Yes.

Mrs EDWARDES: Does it include the Champion Lakes recreation park, for which a master plan was prepared by the Western Australian Department of Planning?

Ms MacTiernan: Yes.

Mrs EDWARDES: Does it include the Forrestdale industrial business park?

Ms MacTiernan: Yes.

Mrs EDWARDES: And does it include the brickworks in south Armadale?

Ms MacTiernan: Yes.

Mrs EDWARDES: They seem to be the key components of concern.

Ms MacTiernan: There are a couple of others. There is the Kelmscott technical and further education site and the high school site. There is also the Department of Conservation and Land Management land on Albany Highway.

Mrs EDWARDES: Yes, and I know that many discussions have taken place with CALM on its intention for the use of that land. Obviously, when examining all of the assets and trying to work out the needs of departments and agencies, as I said earlier, the priorities of some departments and agencies in determining the continued need for locations did not always meet the priorities of local communities.

Ms MacTiernan: CALM has actually moved out of there.

Mrs EDWARDES: I understand that is the case now.

I said earlier that there has always been concern that Armadale was regarded as a bit of a backwater. The city council has tried to work hard to change that image. It must be commended for all the work that it has put in place in the past couple of years. Back in August the council called for expressions of interest to develop a cinema complex. It offered assistance to the successful applicant in the form of part funding or a rates holiday. It hopes to get a five-screen or six-screen cinema complex established in the main thoroughfare of Jull Street. Some might say that we have a couple of cinemas too many with similar complexes at Warwick, Whitfords, Currabine and Joondalup. However, they attract not only young people to the movies but also families to go out together. A successful combination has proved to be a cinema complex with a reasonably cheap eating place in close proximity so that it attracts young families and couples. It does not always work. There was an issue with the cinema complex at Warwick because it had a food hall that competed with the food hall in the Warwick Grove Shopping Centre. That obviously has not worked well because the food hall at the shopping centre has been closed now for some considerable time.

Ms MacTiernan: The combination at Cannington Carousel Shopping Centre has worked well.

Mrs EDWARDES: Yes.

Ms MacTiernan: All the restaurants there are chock-a-block on Thursday and Friday evenings.

Mrs EDWARDES: There are some successful combinations and they must obviously be looked at in an endeavour to encourage as many people as possible to visit them. I visited Booragoon cinema complex and its food hall in the shopping centre is often closed. If people are going to see a movie, there is nowhere to grab a quick bite to eat before or after. They therefore reconsider returning to that cinema.

Another development that the Armadale City Council supports is the proposed Harvey Norman superstore. I know that is not everybody's cup of tea in that region. Could the minister tell me how that proposal has gone? I believe it was approved and the minister has ticked off on it. Is it proceeding or is Harvey Norman on-selling it?

Ms MacTiernan: The town planning scheme amendment has been approved, but I do not know whether the development application has been made. Harvey Norman's projected opening date for the construction of the complex is December 2004.

Mrs EDWARDES: If the redevelopment authority gets up and running, starts its work well and attracts more investment, Harvey Norman could easily bring forward its plans.

Ms MacTiernan: Yes, it may well do that. Many developers are waiting to see what the critical mass will be; one of the problems is that they are all waiting for the others to be first.

Mrs EDWARDES: It is the chicken and the egg problem. What comes first? Perhaps the authority will become one of those. The critical mass is that the professional people who live in that area work in Perth. Although some of those people may wish to retain offices in Perth, an endeavour should be made to attract some of them to operate in the Armadale region, if not full time, possibly one to three days a week. Since the announcement of the establishment of a redevelopment authority the council has received inquiries from people about the facilities that will be available. They may not be able to shift the whole of their businesses there but they would like to use the opportunities to work closer to home.

The owner of Armadale Shopping City, IMG, also plans to lodge a fresh development application next year for expansion in the vicinity of \$35 million. That is again another boost for the area and there may be a similar chicken and egg situation to encourage others to invest.

Ms MacTiernan: Without destroying the jarrah tree.

Mrs EDWARDES: Yes, which I understand the former minister saved much to the disgust of some people, not the least of whom were some of those on the local council at the time.

Ms MacTiernan: The poor tree was then subjected to an unprecedented assault.

Mrs EDWARDES: Was it? What happened?

Ms MacTiernan: A person or persons unnamed poisoned it. The authorities believed the tree had died but it hung on and has sprouted again.

Mrs EDWARDES: Tree doctors can do amazing jobs; that is a good thing to hear. If a community wishes to save a tree, it can. During construction of the extension of the freeway we had to go around a tree but at the end of the day it was an easily resolved problem. It was not a big deal to go around it. If the community wishes to save a tree and as long as it is able to be saved by a road going around it, we should take that option. Obviously the biggest competitor to the City of Armadale has been Booragoon.

Ms MacTiernan: No, Carousel.

Mrs EDWARDES: I understand also Booragoon, because I was told that Armadale was being bypassed. I suppose one can get to it down South Street. It was reported in *The West Australian* on 15 August and relayed subsequently to me by the city that the central business district has suffered because shoppers have been bypassing it in favour of Carousel and Booragoon. The report identified the areas where the local residents go and I suppose that depends on ease of access or perhaps the type of shop. Mr Reynolds, the Armadale mayor, was quoted in the report as saying -

“One of the main difficulties we have with the commercial sector is that when they do high-level planning, they only think of Armadale as a working class area, but there are higher income people and we have to convince the commercial sector that it should justify commercial development, . . .

“The biggest hurdle has always been business confidence and when businesses see that a particular area is a focus of attention and is supported by governments at all levels, they are more willing to get involved,

The redevelopment of Armadale therefore is not without its problems. The redevelopment authority may be the vehicle for it, but it will not happen without significant resources and costs. It will probably require a significant financial commitment. I know that \$1 million has been allocated for the next two years. Savings will be made through not appointing a chief executive officer and using resources within government. These points can be fleshed out further during the consideration in detail. I am not sure whether that will end up being sufficient. We can explore it further.

Ms MacTiernan: We have already made that clear.

Mrs EDWARDES: It may come down to the sale of assets, acquiring them and redeveloping them. Money will flow from that, similar to what has been done with other redevelopment authorities. That can be explored further during the consideration in detail.

Some of the more positive comments that outline succinctly the issues affecting Armadale came from members of a development institute who either live or work in Armadale. I will read out the comments, as they are a fairly accurate description of what is there and where we need to go. The letter states -

Apart from one or two adventurous industry members, development within the City of Armadale has not posed an attractive proposition. At best, land development in the area is economically marginal coupled with a relatively slow market.

Personally it is my view the area has potential but will require significant manpower and financial input to broaden its base, lift its image and create employment opportunities. The State Government is best positioned to address these issues and source the capital necessary to deliver a positive outcome.

Of the nominated regional centres it is again my view that Armadale presents the greatest range of issues and challenges. Accordingly, if the government is going to treat the issue seriously, I strongly believe it is necessary for the proposed new Authority to have its own Chief Executive Officer.

We can talk through how the coordination of what needs to happen will occur. It continues -

All agencies within the Minister's area of responsibility clearly are already overwhelmingly overloaded or are unable to deliver their relevant services within realistic timeframes.

Given the magnitude of the issues that would confront the Authority, its success and effectiveness will be measured by the vision, expertise and commitment of whoever is charged with the responsibility to implement any agreed programs. Any organisation is only as strong as its weakest link. Frustration and costly delays will result if the Board is not supported by a very strong administration who singularly, are committed to the task.

Similarly the nominees to the Board should constitute a blend of local community representatives with appropriately experienced persons from outside the City of Armadale. Failure to achieve this blend could result in the prejudices of local representatives limiting the big picture outcomes required to create Armadale as a thriving and dynamic regional centre.

The Board needs also to consider positive opportunities where it can work together with the industry/private sector to achieve desired outcomes for the area.

Ms MacTiernan: Where is the letter from?

Mrs EDWARDES: The Urban Development Institute of Australia. It is a very positive approach to the work the authority needs to undertake. It reflects on a few issues, including the need for a chief executive officer, for board representatives to include people from outside the City of Armadale and for the necessary capital to be sourced to ensure that what is proposed will be delivered. In talking about a chief executive officer, I note that the minister commented in *The West Australian* of 13 August that an office will be established. The issue is who will staff the office and how it will be run. Consultants can be contracted, but personnel, services and resources from respective agencies need to be accessed. How will that happen? Who will pull it together? Board members, with their skills and qualifications, will obviously be very busy people. The board will comprise two members of the local council. It will not necessarily be the case that they will have enough time to perform the day-to-day administrative work. This can be explored further during the consideration in detail. I want to know how the minister thinks it will work without a chief executive officer. Is that the best possible decision? One of the reasons not to have one is to save money and put those funds back into the area.

The other difference between the establishment of this redevelopment authority and that of the Midland authority - apart from not having a chief executive officer - is the extra function to consider economic and social development. The Bill contains provisions dealing specifically with social and economic development. The local council and local people express the view that everybody would like to work in the area. Hopefully, that will be an outcome of the redevelopment authority. It is something new. In respect of the fundamental principles that need to be established, is it one of the functions of the redevelopment authority? While it was not prescribed as the function of the authority in Midland, one of the key emphases was the development of economic opportunities to create jobs in the community. That would partly address social aspects of the area. I would like to explore that further with the minister during the consideration in detail.

The other difference relates to provisions for community committees. The Midland Redevelopment Authority has the power to appoint a committee to undertake tasks, report to it and assist it. This situation is somewhat different. The minister will appoint the community committees and a member of the board to chair them. I wonder about the number of committees and the areas that will be looked at. There could be economic, social, environmental and planning committees. A series of committees could be established. That was one of the ways the Luisini winery was established. The local community had concerns and representatives were put on a committee. The committee representatives were not necessarily on the committee that made the financial decisions. While they addressed the heritage and environmental issues, the committee dealing with the crux of the matter - how the winery would be developed and make money - was not necessarily subject to the views of the community. The community wanted limited development and limited impact on their community. With the number of committees involved, they were somewhat stretched. While it can be a tool for support, fresh ideas and community input, it can also be a tool to get dissenters on a committee. I remember visiting a former Minister for Transport, Hon Gavan Troy, about the extension of the railway to the northern suburbs. I was immediately put on the transport community consultative committee. The Government at that time hoped it

would keep me quiet to some extent. It was a useful exercise to seemingly have some input on the planning and decision making. It can also be something of a sop. I raise it on the basis that I am sure that the commitment by the minister is to that community consultation process and involvement in the decision making by the authority about what will happen in Armadale. However, I caution that too many committees on too many different topics do not allow for effective planning and input.

Ms MacTiernan: It certainly helped us out at Midland.

Mrs EDWARDES: The minister raised Midland, and I did not intend to. However, the minister's decision on Midland was not necessarily a good decision. The minister wished to replace two members of the board. Their terms had not been completed. Therefore, the minister could not find a mechanism to remove them. She established a committee, put three other members of the Midland Redevelopment Authority onto that committee, and said that it would provide for greater community consultation. I have no qualms about the people who were on that committee. However, the minister's comments in the newspaper were to the effect that those people would assist the authority. Essentially, the authority rubber-stamps everything. Three is a quorum of the authority. Excluding the two members that the minister wished to remove, three members are on the committee. Therefore, every decision that the committee makes is rubber-stamped.

I am not sure how that places those two board members regarding the authority and their own professional indemnity, because anything that they might say or have input on will obviously not be taken into account. I understand - the minister will correct me if I am wrong - that the meetings of the authority now take a matter of minutes. The authority is not being used as an effective body. The minister took that step, and it reflects badly on her.

Ms MacTiernan: There is now a vast improvement in community confidence, including business community confidence, in the decisions of that body. It was not my desire to get rid of anyone. My desire was to have a redevelopment authority board that was capable of moving forward with broad community support. It appeared that every single body within that redevelopment authority area was absolutely disenchanted with the board. Therefore, I had to do something about it so that we could move forward. The process had stalled because no-one had any confidence in the decisions of the board. Unfortunately, members of the board were not particularly interested in resolving that problem. They offered to leave if I paid out their term. Various emissaries came up with various plans to shaft the other two members. At the end of the day, a broad group of people is having some input, and I have confidence that the decisions have broad community support.

Mrs EDWARDES: The lack of community and/or local council confidence in the decision making of the authority has not been reported to me. Indeed, as a result of the new chief executive officer appointment last year, there was a great deal of confidence in the direction and development of Midland. The only person I have heard say that there was a lack of confidence is the minister.

Ms MacTiernan: We have more than enough work. We do not need to manufacture a dispute. When we have a parade of people banging on our doors saying that this mob has got it wrong, we must do something about it.

Mrs EDWARDES: As I said, the only person who has said that is the minister. Unless the minister is prepared to tell us who are the people and what decisions are involved, we have no other way of knowing that, because it was not reflected in the local newspapers. The only comments I heard were constant complaints about the fact that the minister would not sign off on the road until she got rid of the two members. People's jobs and livelihoods were on the line when that road was held up for two months, until such time as the minister resolved a dispute between her and her office.

Ms MacTiernan: It was not a dispute.

Mrs EDWARDES: The minister held up the tender process on that road, and it did not reflect well on her. The minister will wear that; I just relate it.

Ms MacTiernan: I must have confidence that the recommendations put before me have broad community support. If a body brings those recommendations to me, and that body has been the subject of many deputations from community members and businesspeople saying that they are not happy with it, I cannot have that confidence. I waited until this community consultative committee was in place so that I could be confident that the recommendations coming to me were soundly based. It is as simple as that.

Mrs EDWARDES: The minister's actions will be judged by others, not necessarily by me. I just relate them. The caution I raised was about the establishment of community committees. The minister, not the board, is establishing them, even though a board member will be the chairperson. It will be important that those community committees work with the authority, and not with the minister. I remember that one of the concerns the minister had about the Midland Redevelopment Authority was that the minister of the day would appoint three of the five members. If any one of them had a conflict of interest in any of the development, the minister

of the day also had the power to approve those applications. The local council was acting merely in an advisory capacity, not in a decision-making capacity.

The situation is similar now, except that there are four ministerial appointees on a six-member committee, with two members being nominees from the local council. The minister also appoints community committees. The minister's agencies and departments are involved in the process as well, even though they essentially report to the authority. Under the Public Sector Management Act, I believe that there might be a conflict and a problem as a result of having two masters. Therefore, I suggest to the minister that there is equally a concern about the way in which the operation is likely to be played out. Given that the minister had these concerns previously, were those concerns found to be warranted? Given the actions of the minister in Midland, she has shown herself to be clearly of a mind that if she does not like what is going on, she makes other arrangements to get what she does like, and works around the legislation. That does not give any level of confidence to anybody that there will not be ministerial interference in the running of any authority.

Ms MacTiernan: Come off it! In both of your redevelopment authorities you put in former members of Parliament. In the East Perth Redevelopment Authority, you put in your former planning minister; and in the Midland Redevelopment Authority, you put in a former Liberal cabinet minister; and then you claim that we will try to doctor the redevelopment. Give us a break!

Mrs EDWARDES: The minister is not listening.

Ms MacTiernan: You cannot possibly claim -

Mrs EDWARDES: I am not talking about the people that the minister will appoint; I am talking about the power of the minister to appoint three members. It was the minister's concern in the debate on the Midland Redevelopment Authority that the then minister -

Ms MacTiernan: And borne out by the nature of the people appointed.

Mrs EDWARDES: The minister's actions in Midland do not give the same level of confidence. It is a quid pro quo - exactly the same. The minister had that concern, based on a personality issue. I am raising this because the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has already shown that she will work around a piece of legislation to get what she wants.

Ms MacTiernan: Yes, in order to get it working. You are absolutely correct; I stand guilty as charged. If something is not working I will attempt to solve the problem; I agree with that.

Mrs EDWARDES: I will quote the minister, when she was in opposition, on the Midland Redevelopment Bill on 19 August 1999. She stated -

The problem here is that the minister will have the power to appoint three out of five members of the authority that will oversee the development. That authority will then put up development applications which will go to the minister for approval. So we really have a situation where the ministerial appointees are making decisions about development proposals and those decisions are being signed off by the minister without reference to the council, or, indeed, any other authority. I note a word of concern about that.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan obviously does not have the same concern now that she is the minister.

Ms MacTiernan: The Armadale City Council is pleased with this structure.

Mrs EDWARDES: It works even better now that Hon Alannah MacTiernan is the minister, because she can appoint community committees in place of the authorities.

Ms MacTiernan: As opposed to not having any?

Mrs EDWARDES: The redevelopment authorities have always had the power to appoint committees.

Ms MacTiernan: But they haven't, have they? I can advise you that Midland Redevelopment Authority has not appointed any to my knowledge.

Mrs EDWARDES: It had the power to do so. However, the minister has inserted a power so that she can appoint these committees.

Ms MacTiernan: I want to make sure that happens.

Mrs EDWARDES: A couple of other clauses in the Bill are different from the Midland Redevelopment Act, which also gives the minister greater powers. I will quote the minister in opposition during debate on the Midland Redevelopment Bill. She stated -

Yes, but, as I say, I issue a word of caution here that effectively the ministerial appointees are putting together development plans which they submit for approval to the minister who appointed them. A certain closedness in the system could give us cause for concern. It would very much depend on the calibre and quality of the people who are selected.

Ms MacTiernan: I agree with that.

Mrs EDWARDES: The tide has turned. It is okay to have ministerial appointees when Hon Alannah MacTiernan is the minister, because it depends upon the calibre of people who are appointed, and she has confidence in those people.

Ms MacTiernan: I am entirely consistent. That is exactly what I said.

Mrs EDWARDES: Obviously the former minister had confidence in the calibre of the appointees. Now it is not a matter of concern to the minister, because she will make the appointments!

Ms MacTiernan: It depends on the quality of people you appoint, and I stand by that.

Mrs EDWARDES: Absolutely, and now that the minister will be appointing people she thinks everyone should have confidence in that. The wheel has gone a full circle. I will again quote the minister when in opposition. She stated -

On my reading of it, that is only for development approvals -

The minister was referring to what had been signed off by the previous minister. To continue -

- that are submitted where there is a conflict and where the authority is the developer. I hope the minister does the right thing, good people are appointed to the board, and the concerns we have raised about the powers of the minister are not realised.

I will be repeating those words to the minister about this legislation.

Ms MacTiernan: I stand by them.

Mrs EDWARDES: As an opposition member I can now raise the same concerns with the minister.

Ms MacTiernan: I can assure the member that people will be appointed on the basis of their competence and skills.

Mrs EDWARDES: As I am sure they were previously. I have no doubt the minister will recognise the competence and skills of people who have been appointed to the many redevelopment authorities under her control.

I will move to the issue of heritage. I note that is one of the skills for people's appointment to the board. Armadale has some turn of the century homes; some real estate representatives raised this issue with me. I do not know the location of these homes, but I imagine they might be close to the Armadale central business district - the minister would probably know better than I would. How are heritage issues played out in this Bill and in the redevelopment scheme? Obviously environment issues are considered by virtue of specific clauses in the legislation and the like. I know that the minister has taken a great deal of interest in this issue in the redevelopment of East Perth, where some homes were proposed to be demolished by the authority, and the minister intervened. The decisions have gone either way for a couple of properties and some homes will be restored; that was also the case under the previous Government. Could the minister advise me how heritage issues come into play, and how she makes those decisions? What is the basis for the minister's decisions. There does not seem to be a process in the Bill to require heritage issues to go to the minister. How does that work with the East Perth Redevelopment Authority?

Ms MacTiernan: Before the East Perth Redevelopment Authority can demolish a building, ministerial approval is required. If it concerns something that has heritage protection it must go through the normal channels. Over and above that, the authority must submit applications to me about buildings it wishes to demolish. I will have to check to see whether that is a specific provision, because the undertaking given by the previous Government over Northbridge was that once the tunnel went through no further buildings would be demolished. That policy was not carried through, and I will have to check whether a special power was put in the legislation for that.

Mrs EDWARDES: I have not gone through the East Perth Redevelopment Act as such, but I have not picked up anything in this Bill.

Ms MacTiernan: I honestly do not see that it will necessarily be such a big issue in Armadale, particularly with the government land. Very little of that land would have heritage significance. Most of the government land comprises either vacant sites or modern buildings without any great particular architectural or historical significance. There are some heritage buildings in that area, but I do not think there will be a massive problem.

Mrs EDWARDES: I would be interested if the minister could advise the exact process, whether it is as a result of a direction by the minister and whether the East Perth Redevelopment Authority is different because its Act contains a specific clause. I could not locate one, but there might be one in the Bill. I looked for it, but it is easy to overlook this sort of thing when one goes through a Bill.

The Opposition supports the establishment of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority in line with its commitment to the people of Armadale and to the City of Armadale. Again, I issue a cautionary note about the establishment of redevelopment authorities. Is it time now, after the establishment of four redevelopment authorities, to establish some fundamental principles, given the unique character of the beast? The City of Armadale wrote to me to confirm its commitment. The letter reads -

The City of Armadale is pleased that the legislation proposes two representatives from Council on the six member Board. While the City is confident the aims of the Government will be at one with the Board's objectives, two members on the Board should ensure the Council's views are well aired during the Board's deliberations. The City does not hand over its Planning powers lightly.

Although the legislation will be reviewed after five years, it does not expire until 2011. Redevelopment authorities operate for a long time. The Midland Redevelopment Authority will expire in 2014.

The City of Armadale strongly urges bipartisan support for this legislation based on its knowledge of the models currently in place at Midland, East Perth and Subiaco. As I have said, that is not exactly correct. It is essentially the same legislation. The functions and the words in the pieces of legislation may be essentially the same, but the Government needed to take a strong role in those areas, particularly where contaminated industrial sites required a great deal of resources. Armadale is a little different. That is not to say it does not justify or warrant the establishment of a redevelopment authority. However, essentially, the functions relating to the social and economic role of the redevelopment authority put a different complexion on the authority. In addition, as the Urban Development Institute of Australia acknowledged, Armadale has significant issues as a regional centre, despite its location at the intersection of many major highways and freeways. It is basically used not as a point of destination but as a passing-through point for people on their way to somewhere else. Hopefully, the redevelopment of the area will change that, as well as encourage those people who live in the area to stay and shop there and to work in the area wherever possible, and attract new investment, new jobs, and, of course, jobs for young people.

I wish the redevelopment authority well. I wish the board well in what will be a challenging exercise. The City of Armadale is to be commended for all the work that it has done. It has also put out an excellent pamphlet. I should not describe it as a pamphlet -

Ms MacTiernan: A brochure.

Mrs EDWARDES: Yes, a brochure. It is entitled "Armadale Alive", by the City of Armadale. The cover note states, "Your opportunity to take part in revitalising Armadale, Western Australia." Little pamphlets are included introducing Armadale, and talking about public transport and accessibility, its facilities and services, the city centre and the redevelopment authority itself, as well as the support provided by the City of Armadale to that redevelopment authority. The city is to be commended for the amount of work and planning it has undertaken over the past couple of years, which will make the job of establishing the redevelopment plan much easier. Unlike the other redevelopment authorities, a lot of the groundwork has been done. The issue now is how it will be coordinated, how it will be put together and operated. Even though the City of Armadale has essentially done a lot of work, it still needs to pull everything together, and that will be the crux of the success or otherwise of the authority: to ensure that Armadale stays alive and moves out of what has been a negative image by the business communities which have not had the confidence to establish investment in that area.

MR ANDREWS (Southern River) [1.53 pm]: I support this Bill with a great degree of enthusiasm. In many ways, this project has been a long time coming. I congratulate the minister. We have spoken many times about the need for the redevelopment of the south east corridor and the development of Armadale in particular. When I look back at my time since joining the Labor Party, I realise that this was always one of the things that was in the minister's eye, and I congratulate her for that. The member for Kingsley has given an outline of the program and the issues relating to the authority. I do not wish to go over those, but I would like to make a number of observations that have not been covered in detail.

The location of the City of Armadale is both a positive and a negative. In many ways it is a combination of an urban setting and a rural setting. It is the entrance to the city for people coming from the south west, but from the city's point of view it is at the end of the line, and that causes a number of social and economic problems. The area I will be focusing on tends to be a set of dormitory suburbs. One of the problems is the need to provide employment, particularly for the youth of the area. Armadale suffers from a low level of jobs - the types of jobs that kids can get when they leave school, such as apprenticeships and so on. After-school work in the retail

sector simply does not exist. Youth has the problem of finding their way in the world and finding a career path. The low retention rates in the local high schools mixed with the lack of job opportunities in the area results in the youth moving to another part of the metropolitan area to get a job. Associated with all of that is the problem of kids leaving home. So, Armadale does suffer because of its location. It is both a boon and a disadvantage.

The member for Kingsley made a very good point about competition for the retail dollar in the City of Armadale. For day-to-day shopping, picking up groceries and that sort of thing, people tend to go into the city. Armadale suffers from a lack of diversity in shopping. It suffers because people coming home from the city tend to stop off at Carousel and also Maddington, which provide a greater variety of shops. The point the member for Kingsley raised about Booragoon is an interesting one. Many people from Armadale travel down Ranford Road onto South Street and then down to Booragoon. The nature of the shopping is different there. It tends to be a day out. If people need to go to an optician, for example, they take advantage of those services at Garden City, have lunch and go to a movie, and it is a day out. That is one of the things that is lacking in Armadale - the diversity of the shopping. Facilities are certainly there for picking up groceries and so on. The member for Kingsley mentioned a firm today, and I hope that project goes ahead, because it will certainly provide a lot more diversity for that type of shopping. Specialised services, such as opticians and so on, will be attracted back into the city following the redevelopment. People will tend to shop more in the city of Armadale and will therefore have more opportunities.

I return to the point about the low retention rates in high schools in the area. As members know, I have worked in that section of the metropolitan area and have met students from Armadale Senior High School many times on the sporting field and elsewhere, and I have found them to be a great bunch of kids, but one of their problems is a lower level of aspiration than that of many kids in other parts of the city. I suppose this lower level of aspiration comes from a generation of circumstances, in that many people there have only part-time employment and perhaps have not had the advantages of education and so forth. The kids therefore tend to have a lower level of aspiration. It would be great to see those kids get involved in things like the youth Parliament and youth CHOGM. The redevelopment of Armadale will provide the mood and the climate for those kids to have a brighter future and aspire to those things.

The plan is important from the point of view of attracting a higher level of services into the city. The days when the people moved easily from the south-eastern corridor from Armadale into the city are gone. To drive the car into the city on Albany Highway is extremely difficult these days. Therefore, the importance of rail transport cannot be overemphasised. We often talk about the environment. A way to protect the environment and to reduce emissions from cars is to have jobs available closer to our dormitory suburbs. The redevelopment of Armadale will have this effect. If it is done correctly, which I am sure it will be, and if the infrastructure of the rail system continues to improve and is supplemented by bus services, more and more jobs and shopping will be available; therefore, the idea of commuting will become less important.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 5188.]