

CARNARVON, PROGRESS OF PROJECTS

737. Mr R.N. SWEETMAN to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

Can the minister provide me with an update on the projects that are important to my constituents in Carnarvon? Tomorrow night the Shire of Carnarvon is hosting an after-hours business function in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia. I have been invited to attend, and I am very keen to give it an update on the following projects: the Bibbawarra Crossing, the Carnarvon boat harbour, the surge wall, the Whitlock Island project and the flood mitigation works.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for his question and for some notice of the question. I have lots of good news. I will use this opportunity to pay tribute to the member for Ningaloo. In all the dealings I have had with the member for Ningaloo, he has been an extremely honourable man. Some might argue that he does not have enough mongrel in him to be a politician and that he is too fairminded. He is certainly an honest man, and all of our dealings with him have been exceptionally good. I want to particularly thank him for the acknowledgment he gave the Government - I have had reports back - at a recent Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia function in Carnarvon. He paid tribute to the good work this Government has been doing and urged the local government - Mr Speaker, I know you are very interested in this - to acknowledge the exceptional work we have been doing in Carnarvon and to get behind us and stop whingeing. That was good advice.

I have good news. I recently awarded the contract for the Bibbawarra Crossing. We had already awarded the contract for the construction of the concrete blocks and now we have awarded the contract for the construction of the road. The successful contractor is Bocol Constructions WA Pty Ltd. We expect to see that project under way within the next couple of months. It will be completed by 2005. It is a long-awaited project that will ensure that people in the plantation area can get into town all year round.

The second project is the Carnarvon wharf, which is another fabulous project that has been wanted for many years. It will create great benefits, particularly for the fishing industry in Carnarvon. I expect to award that contract some time this week. Construction will begin, likewise, in the next couple of months and is due to be completed by May next year. We are making great progress on both of those projects.

The third project is the surge wall. As the member knows, there has been a lot of dispute about the surge wall. I pay particular tribute to Clinton Strugnell. When he became the chief executive officer, we met with him and we were able to negotiate a new approach to the surge wall project. There has since been strong support for the project across the community. It is a much more sensible project than the original one that was planned. I have recently issued the notice of entry for that site to resolve the native title issue. We are really progressing that issue. It should get under way very shortly.

The next project is the Whitlock Island project. We have developed a master plan. We have identified Carnarvon as an integral part of the Carnarvon-Ningaloo strategy. It will be one of the prime bookends for the development of the Ningaloo coast. We have identified Whitlock Island as the most appropriate site for the construction of a tourism facility. We have been working with the Minister for Tourism. We have developed a structure plan that we believe will work. I have submitted a funding application to enable us to do all the feasibility studies for that site. I know that the Minister for Tourism is supporting us strongly. I am sure the Treasurer will support us by getting that funding. I am transferring the land -

Mr E.S. Ripper: Absolutely.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: Oh, good, I have got that in!

I am about to transfer the land in Northwater over to a project within LandCorp that enables us to use community service obligations because, on a pure market basis, we would not be releasing any more land at this time in Carnarvon. There will be around 30 new lots on stream by November next year. That is a significant expansion of the Northwater estate. The flood mitigation scheme is largely within the province of the Minister for the Environment. However, I understand that as we speak the Waters and Rivers Commission is purchasing property in that area. We will get the member for Ningaloo a fuller report on that project by the end of the day.