

MIDLAND REDEVELOPMENT PRECINCT — REVITALISATION

74. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Planning:

Could the minister please provide an update on the new phase of works in the Midland redevelopment precinct, a historic and important site in the eastern metropolitan region?

Mr J.H.D. DAY replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for the question. The revitalisation of Midland, and redevelopment of the Midland railway workshops site in particular, has been a priority of this government over the last five years and in fact has been a priority since the Midland Redevelopment Authority, which existed prior to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, was established back when the coalition government was in office in 2000. Since that time, there has been a substantial amount of urban development in the Midland area under both governments, with heritage protection provided to the Midland railway workshops, and a range of other developments in the precinct.

I was pleased to be in Midland on Friday of last week to mark the start of works for a new park that will be established at the Peace Memorial at the Midland railway workshops site. This will provide for new seating and landscaping in time for the Anzac Day service this year.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Why did you not invite the local member?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: This is a location that has substantial historic significance. The works that are being undertaken will make reference to the former use of the site as the workshops shunting yards. Once the works have been completed, there will be a new grassed area surrounding the memorial, with garden beds that will reflect the east–west axis of the shunting yards, paving that interprets steam locomotive classes and lengths, and mature trees and platforms that will be equipped with services to host pop-up shops.

When it is completed, Railway Square will become the civic focus of the workshops precinct, which is well on the way to being transformed into a new urban village. We have already had the establishment, as I have referred to, of new residential apartments, office accommodation, and the GP super clinic in one of the large workshops buildings, and also the construction of the new Midland hospital, which is very well advanced. I am aware that negotiations are underway with potential purchasers of lots in the precinct for mixed-use development, with further residential and retail development, and also possibly short-stay accommodation.

This is a very welcome further stage in the revitalisation of the Midland railway workshops site. A review of the Midland redevelopment area master plan will be undertaken by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority over the coming months, and towards the end of the year we will be inviting public comment on that.

To answer the question of the member for Midland, it was a media event, just for the local newspaper. It was not a major event, so it was not the sort of thing to which the member would normally be invited.