

DISABILITY JUSTICE CENTRES — BASSENDEAN ELECTORATE

258. Mr D.J. KELLY to the Premier:

I refer to the government's announcement yesterday that it will locate two disability justice centres in my electorate, one of which will be on land that is part of Lockridge Senior High School. Given that the land to be used for the Altone Road centre is currently part of Lockridge Senior High School and is used by the school to deliver its award-winning farm program, has the Premier not shown absolute contempt for the school and its staff, students and parents by making this decision without any consultation with the school?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

The only way any sort of discussion can be started with the community is to name the site, and the Minister for Disability Services has done that.

Mr M. McGowan: It's not for consultation.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: As the minister said yesterday, we have to start somewhere, and naming the site is where we have started.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany, I call you to order for the first time. A question has been asked of the Premier, not of the Leader of the Opposition or the member for Albany.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: There will be some public meetings, and I think the minister will attend the first of those over the weekend to talk to the community about what is proposed and also about the conditions of the people who will be placed in those two centres in Lockridge and Kiara. As I said yesterday, these people have a mental health condition. They may have been born with that condition.

Ms M.M. Quirk: They're offenders.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, they have committed an offence. They generally have been neither charged nor convicted. I think that when dealing with generally young people who have a mental health condition, there is room for some compassion and there is room to try to find people who have offended—I told members yesterday the story of the young boy who stole an ice-cream and ended up in high-security Casuarina —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the first time. The question was asked of the Premier.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: How did he get to Casuarina?

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland, when I am on my feet, please do not talk across the chamber. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am aware of Lockridge Senior High School and its agricultural program. I have visited the school in years gone by. There is a large amount of land at that site. That issue will be one of the issues that the minister will no doubt discuss with the local community. It is not appropriate that we simply confine people with mental health conditions to prison environments. Yesterday the member for Bassendean made accusations —

Mr F.M. Logan: Is it appropriate to put it next to a high school?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: That is an issue to be looked at. These people are not in any way considered to be a danger or threat to anyone.

Ms M.M. Quirk: That's not true.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member assumes that. They will be in a purpose-built environment. Yesterday the member for Bassendean made accusations about Liberal and Labor electorates. I remind him that the Graylands psychiatric hospital is in my electorate.

Mr P.B. Watson: It's been there for a hundred years.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, it has.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Frankland Centre for people who have committed serious offences is in my electorate. People with mental health issues are housed in the community in my electorate. I know there will be concerns in the community.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: It has very high security. It's entirely different.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I know there are concerns in the community, as there have been in my electorate. I have absolute confidence in the minister to meet with the community. I believe she will be able to allay those fears. Indeed, if the member were prepared to do his job, he would sit down with the minister and members of his community and be part of a constructive discussion about it. That is what you would do as a responsible member of Parliament. All that the member opposite displays is a prejudice against mental health.