

RIVERGLADES RESORT — PINJARRA ROAD ACCESS

Grievance

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [9.37 am]: I am very pleased that the Minister for Transport has agreed to take this grievance about Riverglades Resort, which is located at 490 Pinjarra Road in the Shire of Murray. Its residents have increasing concerns about their safety. Over 350 residents live in the resort, which is an affordable housing area. It is a really lovely housing estate and the only access into and out of it is from Pinjarra Road. Riverglades Resort was built over 25 years ago when Pinjarra Road was probably carrying vehicle volumes of just a couple of thousand vehicles a day. Now with rapid growth occurring in the area, Forrest Highway having been built further to the east and the increased development between Mandurah and Pinjarra, Pinjarra Road is a remarkably busy road and will become increasingly so in the future. Pinjarra Road is a dual carriageway. Riverglades Resort is located just east of Serpentine Bridge, which is a significant bridge at the entrance to Mandurah, and is also on the 600 bus route.

The problem is that it is becoming increasingly difficult for people to access the entrance into and out of this housing area because of the volume of traffic on the road and the speed limit of 80 kilometres an hour out the front of this resort. Many of the older residents are increasingly concerned about their safety, particularly those coming from Pinjarra who want to turn left into the resort. With an 80-kilometre-an-hour speed limit, many residents tell me that when they indicate to go left, they shudder when they look in the rear-vision mirror at the cars or trucks bearing down on them from behind, with some drivers not seeing them until the last minute. If they pull off early, they have to pull off into gravel, which is not safe. There is also a bus stop in front of this resort. It is very popular and we do not want that to go. The buses on route 600 have to pull off Pinjarra Road onto gravel to pick up the passengers, and then they have to try to get off a gravel easement back onto Pinjarra Road. Again, many of the drivers approaching are driving over the speed limit.

The problem we have is that we are constantly told—there is some history with this issue—that Main Roads WA does not fund access roads into private developments, but I believe that this is a special case because of the increased traffic volumes that are being experienced, and those traffic volumes will continue to increase into the future. In fact, Pinjarra Road is predicted to become a six-lane road in the longer term. The other issue is the fact that, under Serpentine Bridge to the west, there is a recreational area that is used by paddlers and fisher men and women, and for other recreational pursuits. People have to access that area also via the entrance to this housing area. There is also the bus issue that I have mentioned and the fact that there is no street lighting; there is absolutely no street lighting in front of this housing area. That is not the minister's responsibility—I have already written to the Minister for Energy about it—but again, these issues compound with regard to the safety of the people who live in that resort. We are asking that special consideration be given to these factors and to the fact that this situation will not get better. The safety issues and concerns will only get worse as the population between Mandurah and Pinjarra increases. That increase is projected through the Perth and Peel@3.5million strategy that was released earlier this year.

I am pleading on behalf of the residents. There are three residents today in the Speaker's gallery—Lyn, Jan and Felicitar—who represent 350 residents of the resort. I went out there yesterday and took a great photo, which I am happy to share with the minister. The people in the photo look magnificent, but the minister will note that a significant number of people who live there are older people, so getting in and out of the resort is of primary concern for them. There are no shops nearby, so if they have to access medical or shopping services, they cannot access them on foot; they have to go there by car and/or public transport.

There is a perfect storm developing here, and I ask the minister to consider having someone from Main Roads come down to meet with me and the residents. They will not be badgered; we just want to try to find a solution to this issue. If the answer is just, "We can't do anything because it's a strata title and a private area", that will not help us work towards a solution. I believe this is a special case, and I think we have a good, strong argument about why consideration should be given to providing a slipway that would include a proper hard surface for the bus service that stops in front of the complex. I do not think it is currently safe for either the bus drivers or the bus patrons getting on and off, if the bus has to pull onto a gravel section of road. The minister has just improved all the bus stops along Old Coast Road in the member for Dawesville's electorate, and all of those bus stops have hard shoulder pull-off areas. I am not sure what the latest figures are, but Pinjarra Road is as busy as Old Coast Road in the member for Dawesville's electorate.

I am asking for special consideration. I know that Lyn, Jan and Felicitar would love to have a chat with the minister afterwards if he is able to; I know he is busy. But this is really serious; I do not want to see a very serious accident and someone being injured or even worse because we have not looked for a solution. I think

there is a solution here and I plead with the minister to work with me and the residents to try to find an affordable solution.

MR D.C. NALDER (Alfred Cove — Minister for Transport) [9.44 am]: I thank the member for Mandurah for this grievance, which was also the subject of his email of 11 November 2015 to my office. I am not sure whether the member is aware that Riverglades Resort has previously raised the issue of the need to construct a slip lane into this business. In February 2013, Main Roads WA responded to the secretary of the resort advising that the monitoring of traffic by Main Roads had shown that since Forrest Highway had opened, traffic volumes on Pinjarra Road near Riverglades Resort had dropped slightly. Main Roads also advised that the speed limit for this section of road had been reduced from 100 kilometres an hour to 80 kilometres an hour, and that the treatment at this driveway was similar to that of every other driveway on Pinjarra Road, except for one business that constructed a left-turn slip lane at its own expense. The resort was advised that in other similar instances, driveway improvements constructed for private developments, such as left-turn slip lanes, were funded by the property owner or developer. Main Roads further advised that the existing treatment was similar to the majority of road intersections along Pinjarra Road in that it did not have a left-turn slip lane.

I am advised by Main Roads that subsequent traffic monitoring has indicated that there has been little if any change in conditions since that response was provided in 2013. I can appreciate the concerns raised by the residents, clients and visitors of the resort; however, it is difficult to justify the expenditure of public funds to improve a driveway to what is essentially a private development, particularly as there have been no reported crashes at this driveway in the past 10 years.

Mr D.A. Templeman: You shouldn't have to wait for a crash.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I will touch on the issue the member just alluded to. Across the whole metropolitan area, every intersection is monitored for the numbers of accidents that occur, and that is the priority for government funding. We are always trying to remove problems when there are common incidents around the state, and that is the challenge we have. There is a lot that we would like to do, but we are often confronted with a number of areas that have higher priority because of the number of incidents already occurring.

I am sure the member can appreciate that if Main Roads were to allocate funding to improve this private driveway, it would create an equity issue for many other private developments —

Mr D.A. Templeman: Minister, it wouldn't be a driveway; it would include a hard stand for the bus. It's not a driveway; it's a slipway that connects with it.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Yes, I will come back to that.

It would potentially direct scarce resources away from numerous other unfunded improvements across the road network for the greater benefit of the community. However, Main Roads is always willing to provide any technical advice the resort may seek with regard to an appropriate access improvement, so, yes, I am happy to instruct Main Roads to work with the member to try to find a suitable solution. The issue becomes a funding issue which, as I mentioned, is the challenge we face as a government to direct resources away from one area to another. We need to actually understand how we can prioritise that. I am more than happy for Main Roads to work with the member and local residents to look at alternatives. I take the member's point about the bus stand and will ask for further advice from Main Roads about that.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I'll give you a copy of the photo of the bus that was there yesterday morning.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I will ask the Public Transport Authority to further investigate that matter and to review the situation to ensure that it is fit for purpose for bus patrons. I will actually ask; and I take note of the earlier photo of the patrons that are there. We need to ensure that it is safe for them as well.

Mr D.A. Templeman: It's a great bus stop; they love it. It's very important for them.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Yes. I am more than happy for Main Roads and the Public Transport Authority to be involved in working on a fit-for-purpose solution for the local residents. The difficulty I am sharing with the member is the reallocation of state government funding based on prioritisations, and that is where the challenge lies in me being able to commit to the provision of funding, but I am more than happy to work with the member to see what solutions can be found.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I appreciate that. Given there is a bit more time, can I interject? One of the things I think could be a solution, as I mentioned, is on Old Coast Road where you've done a great job with the bus stop hard stands that have been cut in off the road. I think this is where we can find a solution in terms of some of the costing. That will be done for some of the stops along Pinjarra Road and I think it can be something that is created, together with a bus stop solution. It is not safe for buses to pull off the road onto gravel and then back

out into the 80-kilometre-an-hour zone. There are heavy streams of traffic, and Serpentine Bridge is just 100 metres to the west. I appreciate the minister's willingness to work with us.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I am glad the member is taking up my seven minutes! I am more than happy, as I said, for Main Roads and PTA to be actively involved in looking at this situation to make sure it is fit for purpose. I cannot promise anything around funding at this point, but it would be great if we could find a suitable solution for everyone.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I appreciate that. Thank you.