



The Hon David Bradbury MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR LINDSAY

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer

23 February 2011

Main Committee

APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 3 & NO. 4) 2010-2011

Second Reading

Mr BRADBURY (Lindsay) (Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer) (6.59 pm)

I rise to take this opportunity—in the debate on Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2010-2011 and Appropriation Bill (No. 4) 2010-2011—to update the House on some developments in my local community: in particular in relation to commitments that had been made prior to the 2010 election and also commitments that had been made during the course of the last term of parliament, many of which have now been delivered and some of which are well and truly underway.

Before I report on the progress of those particular projects, I will comment on some of the initiatives that we proposed during the course of the 2010 election campaign. One of the commitments that we made was a commitment of \$1 million to an upgrade of the Western Sydney International Hockey Centre's fields. The hockey fields are a regional facility, and they are home to many games not just throughout the weekends but on weeknights as well. They really are the centre of hockey in the greater Penrith region. The facilities have been there for some years, but unfortunately over that time they have fallen into a state of disrepair. That has meant that in recent years one of the two hockey fields has not been available for use for hockey. The granting of this \$1 million for the upgrade of these facilities will go a long way towards addressing those difficulties. The commitment that we made was to provide \$1 million to upgrade both of the hockey fields and, to the extent that there are any funds left over, to apply those funds for the purpose of embellishing and improving the surrounds of the hockey fields.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the University of Western Sydney, on whose premises the hockey fields are located—in particular the vice-chancellor, Professor Janice Reid, and also Rhonda Hawkins—for their assistance in facilitating this particular project. I acknowledge Tony Geange from uwsconnect, who was also involved in the project. On the hockey side, I make special mention of Noelene Knowles and Pat Hurley, who have been great advocates of this project for some time and have undertaken a considerable amount of work at the preliminary stages to ensure that we had a proposal that was suitable for a funding application. Whilst processes take some time, and it looks as though the university is working through the implementation of this funding, we look forward—if not later in this season then certainly for the season next year—to new or upgraded hockey fields being available for use not just for local players but for players from further afield.

Another commitment that we made in the course of the election campaign was \$200,000 in community safety funding under the program for CCTV, which is an initiative that the minister, Brendan O'Connor, came out to Penrith to announce. These funds will be applied not just for the purposes of CCTV but also

to improve general levels of safety in the area that is located between Westfield Penrith Plaza and the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre. This is an area that has become idle loitering space, if you like, for many of the young people in the area. On a Thursday night in particular, after frequenting the shopping centre, they will hang around in this area, which can sometimes cause a little bit of concern to those that might be attending a show at the performing arts centre or doing some shopping themselves. I would like to acknowledge Mr Antony Keenan, who is the centre general manager at Westfield. Antony is a young person himself but a man with great passion and someone who is working very hard with local young people and other stakeholders to ensure that there are activities there to keep young people engaged in their spare time, particularly on a Thursday night and particularly in this space. The space is commonly known in the local area as the Mondo, and I know that this funding will go a long way towards improving that area and lifting the overall levels of safety for all concerned.

In the course of the election campaign we also made a commitment to expand our commitment to the Cumberland Conservation Corridor. Prior to the 2007 election we committed \$15 million to expanding the conservation corridor. Subsequent to that commitment, working closely with the New South Wales state government, we were able to apply those funds towards the purchase of the former Airservices Australia site at Cranebrook, a 181-hectare site containing several important and critical remnants of native vegetation.

Having preserved that site, which now forms a very central part of the Cumberland Conservation Corridor, at the last election we committed to provide an extra \$7½ million to build upon that. This corridor connects up with the regional park on the ADI site and the other areas secured as part of the commitment we made back in 2007. That commitment was to secure the bushland on the Orchard Hills defence site and to set aside, for future preservation, the Airservices site at Shanes Park. All of these sites are connected, particularly through South Creek and Ropes Creek, forming a flora and fauna corridor throughout Western Sydney. These funds will help with acquisition and further tree planting in order to augment the Cumberland Conservation Corridor.

Those were some of the commitments made in the course of the last election campaign. But I want to take the opportunity to update the House on some of the projects that are currently being delivered in my electorate. Perhaps the most significant one, not just because of the dollars involved but because of its impact on the local community, is the \$96.4 million investment in the redevelopment of the Nepean District Hospital. This is an investment that will massively increase the capacity of a hospital that is located at the centre of one of the key growth areas in outer Western Sydney.

As part of this funding, there will be six additional operating theatres; extra day-only and extended day-only beds; two new purpose-built, 30-bed surgical wards to replace the older wards; a new surgical outpatient clinic; a new 12-bed intensive care pod, including six more Intensive Care Unit beds; a new renal dialysis unit for hospital inpatients; significantly, a new 64-bed mental health unit and community mental health facilities; and an extra 32 chairs in the oral health building. These investments are well and truly underway. Anyone that has driven past or walked past the Nepean hospital site will see that the buildings are well and truly under construction and we look forward to those works progressing to their completion—to deliver the sorts of health services and health infrastructure that a growing community such as mine not only requires but deserves.

I acknowledge the important contribution of Professor Michael Peek, in particular, to securing funds for the Nepean Clinical School, which is located adjacent to the Nepean District Hospital. The funding of \$17.2 million will ensure that we have a first-rate, state-of-the-art teaching clinic—a clinical school—opposite the Nepean District Hospital. This will ensure that the teaching hospital that the Nepean hospital has become is also a place where young student doctors will, hopefully, have the opportunity to get a better sense of the community—to sink their roots, so that in the future they not only contribute productively as doctors to our community but also become an important part of it. I acknowledged Professor Peek. There are many outstanding doctors operating at the hospital, many of whom live in our local community. I know that this is a philosophy that they are keen to foster. All of this health spending will, I think, ensure that we have the capacity that we need. But, most importantly, it will ensure that the nurses and other assisting staff doing outstanding work under difficult circumstances at Nepean District Hospital will start to have the facilities that they need in order to do their job and do it well.

I recently attended a function held by the Penrith Cricket Club at CUA Stadium. In attendance at that event was Richie Benaud, that great icon of the game of cricket. Richie was, of course, born in Penrith. In coming back to re-establish that connection many years later, he spoke very highly of the facilities that are now on offer in our local community. Within eyesight was the work currently being undertaken at the Howell Oval, which is the centrepiece of cricket in our district and is adjacent to CUA Stadium, which is where our rugby league is played. Together they are establishing the nucleus of an important sports precinct along Mulgoa Road.

The work has had \$5 million allocated to it. About \$3 million has been dedicated to the upgrade of the Howell Oval pavilion. The other \$2 million has gone towards improvements at the southern end of CUA Stadium. These improvements, whilst not complete, are certainly very visible to the onlooker. You can see that tremendous work has been undertaken and that the improvements are not far away from being completed.

One of the items that I have spoken about in this place before is my commitment to delivering a healthy river. The Nepean River is a great artery that channels through the centre of my electorate. The health of that river is so important to our community. That is why it was so important when our government committed \$77 million to improving the health of the river. To provide some feedback on what that has achieved—and I am sure there are many scientific studies and analyses that will demonstrate that that work has been worth while—a couple of months ago there was a sighting of a platypus in the Penrith sewage treatment plant. The sewage treatment plant is connected by various waterways to the Nepean River. I am told that it is the first time that a platypus has been sighted within the catchment in a very long time. In large part, that is a testament to the improvements in water quality. So if it is good enough for the platypus, it is good enough for all the young people in Penrith, on the scorching hot days that we get throughout the summer, pushing up around 45 degrees, to go and have a swim in the Nepean River, as so many of their parents and grandparents have done previously.

I also note that I have spoken at length in the past about the \$500,000 commitment we made towards the aquatic weed harvester. It is almost like a lawnmower on the water to chop away the salvinia and other aquatic weeds. The Nepean Rowing Club have taken a delegation to see me on a few occasions to raise the fact that the work of the aquatic weed harvester had not been extending out to the front of their facility. I took the opportunity to write to the New South Wales Minister for Water, Phillip Costa, to see whether or not he was able to provide any assistance to better resource the Hawkesbury River County Council as they undertake their weed management activities. He wrote back to me on 22 February. This is good news. He has indicated that he has made available some seed funding, the amount of \$20,000, to ensure that further activity can occur in ripping up those weeds out the front of the Nepean Rowing Club so that our rowers can continue to undertake their activities on the river. So that was a good little win. Congratulations to Phillip Costa. I hope that in the future we get a longer term commitment from the state government for funding for those activities.

I recently had the pleasure of attending the opening of the Barnardos homework centre at Cranebrook. They received some funding from the federal government but they also received funding from a philanthropic organisation within the property industry. As result of those funds, a new homework centre has been established in the middle of Cranebrook, servicing a disadvantaged community. Many of the residents in that part of Cranebrook are facing a range of challenges. It is an area that has been typically characterised by a high concentration of department of housing accommodation. Over time, that has created a challenging environment. From working very closely with Barnardos, I know that many of the young people who may have otherwise found themselves going off on the wrong track have been able to be steered back in the right direction as a result of the work of Barnardos. I acknowledge Barnardos, in particular Stephen Cole, who has been the inspiration behind that project. He has done an outstanding job in making it all happen.

It is a great privilege to be in this place, representing my community. One of the things that I am very proud of is that I have been, and continue to be, part of a government that is delivering real improvements and real projects that are making a difference in my community.