



LUCKY BAY SHACKS 20 November 2002

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Can the minister advise the house if the same positive action will be taken to protect the Lucky Bay shacks in the Franklin Harbor District Council area as that taken on the Adelaide foreshore when it was threatened by erosion, or at least reversing immediately the current decision preventing the owners from protecting their own property? Many Lucky Bay shacks have been in families for generations, and some are now being damaged by erosion. When Adelaide coastal real estate was threatened there was an outcry and immediate action was taken to protect it. However, Franklin Harbor council and regional owners are being prevented from protecting shacks at Lucky Play and the government is offering no help, preferring these unlucky shacks to be washed into the sea.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want to find the member for Morphett being washed into the sea, either, or anywhere else.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I thank the member for her question. In fact, I think she has previously asked similar questions. I have had a meeting with her, and we briefed on all the issues in relation to this particular matter, if I recall. The policy in relation to shack freeholding was introduced by the previous government. In my view, it was an unwise policy because it has produced many difficulties for those who thought they were going to get freeholded shacks very easily. We are working through all the problems, at great expense, within my department, as many members on the other side of the house would know, because many of them come to see me about shack freeholding problems. In many locations throughout South Australia there are problems associated with shack freeholding. A strategy was put in place under the former government. I reviewed it and tried to make it more streamlined and we are putting more resources into it. But, essentially, we are working through the policy that the former government put in place to freehold those shacks which can be properly freeholded. The reality is that, despite promises that may have been made by the Hon. John Olsen before he took office, he in fact said, I think, that all shacks would be freeholded. That was an impractical policy position—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Well, if you say that is not true, I will take your advice on that. There was certainly a commitment given to freeholding shacks and many people believed that their shacks would be freeholded when, in fact, for practical reasons, they cannot be freeholded. The Lucky Bay situation is a particular problem and it relates to the change of the beach. A number of shack holders in that particular area have constructed, illegally, barriers to protect their shacks from erosion. The problem with them doing that, of course, is that they cause erosion elsewhere down the beach, and that causes problems with other people. The advice that I have been given by my department is that this is an inappropriate place to have these kinds of sea walls, and that it will merely move the problem further down the beach. I think that was the point that my officers and I made to the member when we had the briefing. It is difficult, I know, for those shack holders who think they have a right to have their shack freeholded, when they see the forces of nature acting in the way that they do. But there is no simplistic or easy solution to this. As I have said to the member before, we are working our way through these problems and we will continue to do so.