



**KANGAROO ISLAND HOSPITAL  
21 March 1996**

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** I wholeheartedly support this motion. Eight hospitals are within my electorate of Flinders, and Kingscote Hospital was, in my view, in the worst condition. I commend the staff for their patience and tolerance while putting up with conditions that must have been and still are very trying at times. They must be delighted that, at last, the end is in sight. The redevelopment of Kangaroo Island Hospital is another of the major works neglected by the former Government and picked up by the Liberal Government. The estimated redevelopment cost of \$5.1 million will provide a facility catering to the needs of residents as well as the many tourists and visitors to the island.

The proposed 30-bed public hospital will be a vital component of health care for the relatively isolated community of Kangaroo Island. Not only does the hospital provide in-patient care but it is the centre for outreach services, using facilities at American River, Parndana and Penneshaw, and it is also the centre for the organisation of domiciliary care services that enable older people to stay longer in their own homes. Redevelopment is necessary as the present buildings, in addition to being inadequate, no longer meet current health and safety standards. The first stage of the work (at a cost of \$2.5 million) includes a new kitchen, staff dining room, patient day room, palliative care room, two double share wards (each with shared en suite), a birthing suite, a relatives' lounge, upgraded bathrooms on the lower ground floor, new stores, gas and generator rooms and a lift to the upper floor.

The kitchen, in particular, needed upgrading. It is a credit to staff that they have been able to provide the number of high quality meals for both the hospital and the Meals-on-Wheels service from the present cramped and ill-equipped facility. The Cook Community Health Centre adjacent to the hospital serves a variety of functions, being used by visiting consultants, the Children and Family Services nurse, and as a day care centre for elderly residents of the hospital and the Carnavon annexe. The redesigned centre will have a new consulting office, podiatrist suite, a covered walkway to the hospital at the lower ground level and air conditioning, plus a courtyard and landscaping. This work is scheduled to be completed by November 1996 and will certainly address many of the occupational health and safety issues that currently exist in the present building. It will ensure proper staff facilities.

I believe it is vital that stages 2 and 3 should proceed as soon as possible. Those stages have been included in the building design, although detailed floor plans are not yet available. Stage 2 covers the administration block and a new entrance from Wheelton Street, while stage 3 caters for aged care facilities—a very important component of the hospital which serves an ageing community. The upgrading of this section is a progression of stage 1 and naturally is reliant on the completion of the first stage. A verbal commitment for stages 2 and 3 has been made. However, it is most desirable that floor plans for the next stages be made before the builders go off site to ensure that the next stages proceed without delay.

Kangaroo Island is described as a 'jewel in the crown' of South Australian tourism. Certainly, the natural features and clean environment justify the title. To promote tourism further, careful planning has expanded the racing carnival to a week-long celebration with a two-day racing program and related functions—a bowls tournament, a street food fair and a display of island goods—culminating in a sports day at Emu Bay featuring gymkhana, sailing and golf on the beach. Plans are also under way to promote settlement day on 27 July to increase the number of tourists visiting the island in the winter months. Recent accidents involving serious injury to jockeys have been reported in the media. Wherever people gather, whether for sport or recreation, there is always a possibility of an accident. A constant complaint by tourists, as well as the local population, is the state of the dirt roads. Many travellers are unaccustomed to driving on dirt, and the situation is exacerbated on Kangaroo Island by the ironstone rubble occurring there. The number of accidents involving tourists bears testimony to this.

This Government, through the Department of Transport, has promised to fund the sealing of the South Coast Road, to which \$500 000 has already been committed for stage 1. This is from the end of the present bitumen to the Seal Bay turnoff. Through a tourism grant of \$350 000, the road into Seal Bay has been sealed, thus providing much improved access to this world-renowned attraction. An interpretive centre, funded jointly by a Federal ecotourism grant and DENR's general reserve fund has been built at Seal Bay, adding to the interest of the area and bringing yet more visitors. Upgrading work through capital works funding is being carried out at both Cape de Coudie for \$70 000 and at the Remarkable Rocks area for \$85 000, thus ensuring that the environment is protected despite the increase in visitor numbers.

Another road of concern to local residents is the Emu Bay road, given the increase in the number of day visitors. A visit to Emu Bay, just 18 kilometres from Kingscote, is increasingly popular. The present winding road is a single width of bitumen, and roadside vegetation restricts vision. This is a serious problem, because many bus drivers and visiting drivers will not move off the sealed section, thus forcing passing motorists onto the gravel verge. If this occurs on a corner, it is exceedingly dangerous.

An amount of \$40 000 has been allocated for road maintenance on the sealed road from Kingscote to Parndana and the Kingscote to Dudley sections of the Hog Bay Road due to increased heavy traffic caused by freight arriving at Penneshaw via the *Sealink* ferries. Extra funding will be provided to cover the cost of roadside vegetation treatment. These works are being carried out in a joint venture with the District Council of Kingscote. The maintenance of sections of the Hog Bay Road has been let out under private contract because of the workload undertaken by the local council on the South Coast Road. In the Dudley council area, the Government has contributed \$200 000 for a tourist information centre and \$40 000 for a penguin interpretive centre, providing additional reasons for tourist visits to the area.

The road works demonstrates the past neglect of Kangaroo Island by the previous Government, and it is now being rectified. However, accidents happen no matter how good the road. A hospital that can cope with all except the most serious accident cases is a basic requirement, which the redeveloped hospital will provide.

Funding for schools on Kangaroo Island has meant that badly needed maintenance work can be carried out and occupational health and safety issues addressed. Kingscote Area School plans to spend its back-to-school grant on recarpeting the secondary block and two senior primary classrooms and laying new vinyl floor covering in the art room and the theory room of the tech studies centre. At Parndana Area School, grant money will be spent on the continuation of the recladding program. The administration, junior primary, art and primary block and the resource centre were recladded last year. This school, opened in 1959, was in a very poor state of repair. However, with recladding to be undertaken this year, the whole of the eastern side of the school will have been recladded. A new equipment shed has been built and the pool shed will be replaced during the winter. Under a \$50 000 health and safety grant, the science area is to be upgraded, and a further \$110 000 allocated to catch up with a backlog of neglected upgrading and maintenance. Recladding is also on the agenda for Penneshaw Area School's grant money, along with general classroom upgrading to meet health and safety standards. Further areas needing attention are the technical studies, home economics and art areas. Through the country areas program the three area schools on the island pool about two-thirds of their capped grants to support shared programs, such as music, the observatory, arts and education, an aquatics program, the Rock and Roll Eisteddfod and a social justice program. Excellent well-maintained schools all help to make the island a more attractive place for people to bring their families to live permanently. Hospitals and medical facilities, such as the redeveloped hospital, will provide part of the essential safety requirements for these school children.

With so much development on the island, the drawing up of a draft amalgamation proposal document by the two local government councils, Dudley and Kingscote, is a step in the right direction. The assistance of an appointed facilitator should enable the process of amalgamation to proceed rapidly. One council area will be not only cost effective but will also enable unified planning for the island. All these developments point to an increased population that, again, will be looking for adequate health facilities. The redeveloped Kingscote Hospital will give islanders health protection similar to that enjoyed by mainland residents. The redevelopment is an urgent issue being addressed by a Government that cares for rural and urban dwellers. I strongly support the redevelopment of this hospital.

Motion carried.