

New social infrastructure makes for a healthy investment in jobs

Today's announcement of new \$528 million Women's Hospital in Adelaide's Biomedical Precinct represents a much-needed shot in the arm for South Australia's social infrastructure and building industry, Master Builders SA says.

Chief Executive Ian Markos said the State Government's \$1.1 billion health commitment – including the new \$528 million hospital due to be completed 2024, a \$250 million redevelopment for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the unveiling of the \$44 million toward a second SAHMRI building – would provide the State with the health infrastructure it needs while also providing a pipeline for building industry jobs.

"These projects will let companies commit to keeping employees in jobs with a defined future pipeline," he said.

"The mix of projects also gives us hope that we won't see one large company come in from interstate, but instead give multiple contractors and their subcontractors a chance across a multitude of projects. It's giving South Australian businesses the opportunity to be part of that investment pipeline.

"There are still essential questions over how this will work – including the potential for a specialist children's hospital in future. We hope we don't see any of these projects fall at the last hurdle like the Courts project, but these announcements have been a positive prelude to Thursday's State Budget.

"If the Government backs the announcements up with improvements to the tax environment and support for first homebuyers to invest in South Australia, it may just have achieved a trifecta.

"This coming Budget will be judged by first homebuyers and industry. These announcements provide opportunities for businesses, but businesses still need a low-cost environment to grow and develop their own business opportunities.

"First homebuyers have seen South Australia lose the crown for affordability to a point where we are now vying with Queensland as being the third-most expensive state. We need to invest in the next generation by allowing them to invest in South Australia."

Ends

For further information

Russell Emmerson, 0422 463 333

Available for telephone interviews

Ian Markos, 0458 062 404