



LIGHT REGIONAL COUNCIL MEDIA RELEASE

Freeling Agriculture Multi-Purpose Centre

Light Regional Council is pleased to confirm the Australian Government's announcement of up to \$2.1million under the Building Better Regions Fund for the \$4.8million Freeling Agriculture Multi-Purpose Centre project. The project competed with around 500 other applications for a grant under the infrastructure projects stream. Council will now firm up its commitment to the project, in partnership with the Freeling community, in order to execute a Funding Agreement within the necessary timeframes and commence works.

This project will drive economic growth and productivity by investing in regional Infrastructure, creating jobs and new opportunities for regional South Australia. The construction phase is expected to involve an estimated 95 workers, based on other similar projects.

The centre will also create ongoing jobs, including for a manager and event coordinator, cleaning and maintenance plus casual work opportunities.

The principal objectives of the Centre which are the drivers for the development include:

- increasing the opportunities for local businesses to grow international exports by providing a space for trade shows and events;
- providing a facility with multi-purpose opportunities including training and education activities for the fodder industry;
- providing social benefits for the region and improving community connections through the centre's use for rural shows, events and sports such as basketball, netball, women's cricket and AFL;
- providing jobs in the region, namely as a result of increased production from the use of the facility for agricultural/export orientated trade shows and events.

The proposed scope of the project incorporates:

- a steel-framed building measuring 2,115m² with outside veranda;
- large doors for trade access;
- fitout with the main trades hall;
- training and meeting rooms for agricultural extension and community use;
- amenities including toilets and showers;
- kitchen and store room;
- crèche room for child minding;
- floor markings, equipment and change rooms for sport;
- car parking and landscaping.



Overall site layout of proposed Agriculture multi-purpose centre

Light Council Mayor Bill O'Brien explains, "*The Freeling Agricultural Multi-Purpose Centre will cement Freeling's status as the 'Home of Agriculture,' drawing from its history as the major wheat growing district.*"

"In the early 1900s the region was the largest hay-producing centre in South Australia, where haystacks were so large they could be seen for miles. Today, this new multi-purpose centre will stimulate value-added agriculture and lead to new possibilities in growing export markets like stockfeed and fodder. The evolution of digital agriculture is a key opportunity that can be harnessed through exhibitions, workshops and training held at this centre."

Deputy Mayor Deane Rohrlach said, "*As a country town with a strong sense of community pride, the region's farmers, townsfolk and businesses will maximise the use of the facility all year round for everything from community events to sporting activities and disaster respite/recovery. This project will truly establish our region as a leader in agriculture, expanding on the legacy of the town's pioneers.*"

Council will be working in partnership with the Freeling community and, in particular, the Freeling Community Recreation Park Management Committee to implement the facility.

For further information, enquiries should be directed to Council's General Manager, Economic Development, Kieren Chappell on 8525 3200 or light@light.sa.gov.au

Kieren Chappell
General Manager, Economic Development