

FORRESTFIELD TRAIN STATION — NAMING

Grievance

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield) [9.07 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Transport regarding the naming of the Forrestfield train station. As we know, the Forrestfield–Airport Link is a major infrastructure project that is currently underway and nearing the completion of the tunnelling part of the project. It is an incredible project. The technology, effort and everything else that has gone into making this come to fruition are a credit to everyone involved. When we came into government—I think the term was used previously—there was a contract to do the job, but there was no project; therefore, we have pretty much managed the project through its entirety. Along the way, we had to make some changes to what was originally proposed. One of those changes was re-identifying how the land around the station could be used, which resulted in looking to move the ginormous car park that was originally put out the front. We looked at better land use when redeveloping that land, which we were able to do. There was a previous announcement about building a new multi-storey car park so that land could be used as a transport-oriented development. It has recently been identified as one of the Metronet project areas, which is really good for the whole project. One concern with the project has been the working title of the station. It was originally known as Forrestfield train station and has morphed into the Forrestfield–Airport Link, which has become the known reference pretty much throughout the community. The concern raised by my constituents is about the name “Forrestfield”. As we know, the location of the station is near the Forrestfield marshalling yards, but it is a fair way from the Forrestfield suburb. It is very close to the suburbs of High Wycombe and Maida Vale. There are a number of other names that people think should be considered for that station. I have been told that the area used to be referred to as “Newburn” as well; I think that was a family from the area. There is a lot of speculation on whether we are going to continue to call it Forrestfield train station or we are going to undertake a process similar to that undertaken for what was called Belmont station but was renamed Redcliffe station.

Over the years, I have discussed this issue a number of times. I raised a grievance in November 2017 in this place, and I have had multiple conversations with the City of Kalamunda on this issue. I let the city know that at a point in time, the Public Transport Authority would undertake a process similar to that undertaken to rename Redcliffe station. The city undertook its own naming process. I thought that was a little bit unusual, because I had explained that the PTA would do that. The City of Kalamunda undertook a consultation process to rename the area. With the development in the area, there will be a new suburb developed around the station, and there was some consideration at the time that the new suburb might have a new name, which would probably then lead to a new name for the station. The city went through a process of coming up with a new name for the suburb, which was a fairly extensive and lengthy process, which culminated in it conducting a survey of local residents. From that survey, the city short-listed a number of names, and Katadjen, Koorliny, Munday, Quenda Grove and Smokebush were determined as being the most popular names for the area. After that, the City of Kalamunda determined that it would not change the name of the area. Technically, the area has been known as High Wycombe. The recommendation from the City of Kalamunda was not to change the name and to continue to call it High Wycombe. The area has now become predominantly known as the Forrestfield–Airport Link station. I am not sure why the City of Kalamunda went through the naming process and then decided not to pay attention to that and made the decision to call it High Wycombe.

Part of the delay in getting to the point of the PTA running its own naming process and community consultation, as it did with the Belmont or Redcliffe station, was waiting for the City of Kalamunda process to run its course, which took an extraordinarily long time. But the other reason it is important to change the name at the right time is the public knowledge of the project. Everyone knows it as the FAL—the Forrestfield–Airport Link. It has had some challenges; everyone is aware of that. There have been delays and we have put back the opening of it; everyone is aware of that. There is concern that if we were to change the name midstream, so to speak, people might think that we are trying to hide something. Now that we are getting towards the end of the tunnelling, it is the perfect time to look at renaming the station.

Can the minister please provide any details on whether and when the Public Transport Authority will undertake public consultation on the name of the station, and what this consultation might entail?

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [9.13 am]: I thank the member for Forrestfield. I think he outlined the history of this naming situation very well, but I will go through in particular some correspondence between me and the City of Kalamunda on this.

As the member noted, he has raised this with me, and he raised a grievance in this place about the renaming of Forrestfield station. But I want to point out that, as the member outlined, the station is known as Forrestfield–Airport Link, which is a bit different from the situation of Belmont station. “Belmont” was never in the name, so changing it to “Redcliffe” did not necessitate a change to all the signage and everything on that project. The station is known as Forrestfield–Airport Link; however, as the member has rightly pointed out to me on a number of occasions, the station is not in Forrestfield. Although it could be called the Forrestfield–Airport Link,

that station is not in Forrestfield. The member has asked that we undertake our own proper public consultation process similar to the one we undertook that resulted in the name change from Belmont to Redcliffe, and I was very keen to make that happen. However, we also talked to the City of Kalamunda.

The City of Kalamunda wrote to me in July 2018 stating that it wanted to look at renaming the area around the station currently known as the Forrestfield North precinct. Again, as the member outlined, there are two areas of redevelopment: the area right around the station, which is part of the Metronet precinct, and the area over which the City of Kalamunda has been running its structure plan process. Although the city is running the structure plan process, it is not dealing with any of the hardships in that area; it leaves that to the state government. As the member outlined, the City of Kalamunda said to us, “Look, before we look at renaming the station, let us do the public consultation on that suburb name.” The area is loosely known as Forrestfield North, and the city asked us to wait until the suburb is renamed before we look at renaming the station. I received a letter from the City of Kalamunda on the naming of the station. It reads —

Consultation with the Public Transport Authority ... has revealed the naming of the station is a task undertaken by the Minister for Transport. It is important to note the geographic location of the future Airport Link station has a significant bearing on the name of the station. It is envisaged should a name change occur for the DSP area and surrounding land then the station name would generally follow.

The city basically said that if the name of the area changes, a station name change should follow. The letter continues —

The City is proposing to recommend to Council an extensive community consultation be undertaken to ascertain ideas for the naming of the DSP area.

The letter then states that the outcome of that consultation would lead to the renaming of that area and that the city would seek our advice or cooperation to rename the station. The City of Kalamunda wrote to me in July 2018. I responded later that year thanking the city for its letter and asking it to please keep me informed on what the City of Kalamunda is doing in naming that area. I wrote —

... please continue to keep me informed as the City of Kalamunda’s planning and community consultation develops.

I was surprised to see local media reporting that a councillor had urged and demanded that I do something straightaway after that November 2018 letter. I never heard back from the city about the renaming process, but we did some investigation. As the member outlined, the city did go through a public consultation process about renaming the area, and Quenda Grove became the most popular name put forward by the community.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Quenda Grove?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, Quenda Grove. It is interesting. That was the outcome of the community consultation, but then the city went back to 54 respondents and said that the name should not be changed to Quenda Grove and that it should be High Wycombe. That was the public consultation process. I think there was a resolution in February that the city should write to the Premier asking that the name of the Forrestfield train station be changed to High Wycombe.

As I said, I saw this in the media. No-one from the city contacted me about this public consultation process. Meanwhile, we have given a commitment, as we said in this Parliament, to undertake a consultation process similar to that undertaken for Belmont and Redcliffe, and we will do that. But this whole idea that it was somehow one councillor’s idea to have this done is absolutely wrong, misleading and false. When it comes to hardship for individual landowners, the City of Kalamunda says that it is all the state government’s responsibility, but when it comes to consulting on a name, the city believes it has sole responsibility. That is what we have with that city.

We are keen to undertake a public consultation process similar to what we did with Redcliffe and Belmont. We will do it properly; we will try to engage the Forrestfield and High Wycombe community and we will do it very soon as we establish what we believe would be the best way to have people complete that survey. Of course, it will be online. We will not conduct forums at this point. We are keen to engage with the community and work with the member for Forrestfield in a proactive way, with him cooperating with government. As he said, this is a magnificent project. We are nearly at the end of tunnelling. I hope some of the issues in the community do not affect the completion of that tunnelling. It has been a challenging project, but we are nearing the end of tunnelling. In particular, TBM *Sandy* is not too far away. We are very keen to undertake that consultation in conjunction with the member for Forrestfield to make sure that we get a clear answer. I would really like the City of Kalamunda to work with us on these issues and not just play political stunts and political games.