

RAILWAY (METRONET) AMENDMENT BILL 2019

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MRS A.K. HAYDEN (Darling Range) [2.46 pm]: Mr Speaker, I will just wind up my —

Several members interjected.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: By popular demand, I will continue!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I want to hear the wind-down, please.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: The wind-up!

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I know that members on the other side love interacting with me. I enjoy it; that is part of the game in this place. I welcome it at any time.

However, what I was saying in closing—to allow the member for Perth to go next—is that thanks to our federal Liberal members of Parliament, this government has received a record amount of infrastructure funding for the Ellenbrook train line and the Metronet program, through to the Tonkin Highway extension and many other road projects.

The SPEAKER: Members, if you want to have a meeting, have it outside, please.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I find it quite hilarious to hear members opposite congratulate themselves on their working relationship with members of the federal Liberal government and say that they are best buddies and they welcome their money —

The SPEAKER: Members, if you want to have a meeting, go outside. I want to hear this, please.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: — but, in the same conversation, they turn around and attack the hardworking local federal members of Parliament who helped them to get that funding. On that note, for the Ellenbrook train line, I would like to put on the record my gratitude to the hardworking member for Pearce, Hon Christian Porter. He has done an outstanding amount of work to make sure that money was available for the Ellenbrook train line. He also did a lot of work in making sure we got the GST share that the state desperately needed. I also thank Hon Ken Wyatt, the member for Hasluck, for the amount of money that he was able to obtain for the Tonkin Highway gap funding, and Andrew Hastie, the member for Canning, for the work he has done to achieve the money for the Byford rail line. I only hope that the minister will now put that great working relationship with the federal Liberal government into action. The government needs to allocate the money, get the costings correct and come clean with the public about when it expects the Ellenbrook train line to be completed and when Ellenbrook residents will be able to step onto a train. We also need to know when we can expect the business case to be finalised and to be told a construction date and a realistic delivery date for the Byford rail line.

On that note, like everyone on this side, we welcome the Ellenbrook rail line on behalf of all the residents of Ellenbrook and the businesses in between for the benefits it will bring. We support the bill.

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.50 pm]: It is my pleasure to speak to the Railway (METRONET) Amendment Bill 2019. I wish to highlight three areas, but I would first like to talk about the incredible value of public transport to Western Australia. I am proud to belong to a political party that has a long history —

The SPEAKER: Attorney General!

Mr J.N. CAREY: I am proud to be part of a political party that has had a long history with and commitment to public transport in Western Australia. Many members have referred to our history. However, I again refer to the reopening of the Fremantle line, the creation of the Joondalup line, the building of the Mandurah line and now, of course, Metronet and the Ellenbrook line. I have to say that as a party, certainly in terms of values, we understand that public transport is absolutely critical to the social and economic development of communities. In fact, public transport is a great equaliser. It creates equality of opportunity. I refer to the “Australia: State of the Environment 2016” report, which states —

Access to transport remains a critical social equity consideration, particularly for the outer suburbs of Australia’s cities and most parts of regional Australia. These areas generally have an undersupply of transport services (especially public transport) and of local employment options ...

The same report noted the following —

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

The type of transport used is directly influenced by location within urban centres: Inner cities have experienced improved public transport frequency and increases in cycling, whereas households on the edges of Australian cities still rely on cars and long commutes to access work.

I use both those points to reaffirm why public transport is such an equaliser.

As the member for Perth, who represents the capital city and inner-city areas, some of my constituents may be perplexed about why I champion Metronet. It is very clear that my inner-city communities and electorates enjoy significant benefits from public transport investment. That is in part due to greater density. It makes sense that where there are more people, there is a greater demand for public transport, and, accordingly, that is provided. That has been the difficulty for the outer suburbs. As we have seen with the member for Cottesloe, who clearly has philosophical issues with investment in public transport —

Mr P.C. Tinley: And public housing.

Mr J.N. CAREY: I am being nice. The argument is that because there is no population there or population growth is not sufficient, we should not invest in public transport. Effectively, it becomes a chicken-and-egg argument. Based on the arguments put forward by the member for Cottesloe, would we ever invest in public transport in outer-metropolitan areas? If we want a truly connected, liveable Perth, we have to understand that that is about not just my community and my electorate, but also the liveability of and services to the outer-metropolitan areas. A healthy, socially connected city is one in which all areas of Perth are serviced by public transport. That is why I am a strong advocate for Metron—for Metron—for Metronet.

Several members interjected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: I just spit it out, then; I am sorry. I am feeling a bit tired today. My apologies.

The SPEAKER: Say it again, member for Perth, with conviction!

Mr J.N. CAREY: Metronet.

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr J.N. CAREY: That will go on the record; thank you very much!

A key part of our plan that does not get a lot of attention and is not highlighted but is something that I, as the parliamentary secretary, and the minister are deeply passionate about is the very clear integration of our plan with transit-oriented development. We are not just rolling out Metronet; a very strong suite of planning policies is coming out that will smartly and cleverly integrate good planning outcomes with the development of rail. I come back to the point that the member for Cottesloe simply missed, given his 1950s way of thinking; that is, the Labor government is developing rail lines, but also, as part of that, we are ensuring that we maximise the opportunity for transit-oriented development at every station. Studies from San Francisco and other cities around the world show that when transit-oriented development is encouraged, there is greater use of public transport. Creating high-density hubs, so that people can easily access stations, is deeply critical to making sure that public transport systems are successful. It makes sense to have high density close to stations, so that people can walk to them easily. There is general consensus that when urban planning is maximised within an 800-metre radius of public transport, that has clear benefits.

I am deeply proud that this policy is at the forefront of Metronet and has been pushed by our planning and transport minister. That development is happening within the Midland, Bayswater and Forresterfield station precincts. As we know, we will ensure that we maximise the opportunity for density in the Metronet east redevelopment area. In doing so, we will maximise choice and access to public transport, nearby jobs, shops, retail and so forth for residents. The government is engaging in public consultation on how those precincts will look and feel. This is backed by the new policy guidelines that we have introduced. Design WA is about ensuring that density is done well—that we design apartments in these railway station precincts that have natural light, ventilation and good open-plan design and landscaping. This will create liveable buildings for not only those people who live within them but also nearby neighbours. We have come out with a precinct policy design approach so that buildings are liveable and designed well. We will then look at the whole design of the precinct: how the buildings will interrelate, the open space requirements and street interaction. We are addressing these critical questions as part of our precinct design policy. We often hear the debate about density. It is very clear that some members of the opposition are not briefed or informed about the significant reforms we are making in planning and the way we are guiding better density and doing density well.

I also want to talk about the question and challenge of deciding the best route. When a route or an alignment is being chosen, there will always be debate about the choice of stations and route alignment. The New South Wales government is now subject to that debate about its Metro West line. There has been fierce debate, as recently as this week, about the location of stations and so forth. I have to say that we now have a clear plan. We have consulted and have a clear alignment of the routes and now we are delivering on that. I say this sincerely: we compare that

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

with the route and the process for MAX light rail. I was the Mayor of Vincent and we grappled seriously with MAX light rail. We took it seriously as a proposal. We engaged with the state government at the time, which was a Liberal state government, and focused on how we could ensure transit-oriented development in North Perth, because North Perth was to receive a station. In fact, property owners and local businesses all engaged in that and took it very seriously, because we genuinely wanted to maximise the outcomes for economic development for the town centre.

Ms J.M. Freeman: Member for Perth, so did the people of Mirrabooka.

Mr J.N. CAREY: I am very sure they did.

I make the point that once a route was selected, as the Mayor of Vincent, we backed it. We said that if that was the route, we would work to it and maximise its potential. I have to say that it is still deeply saddening and disappointing for the North Perth community that all that investment, goodwill, belief and work done with the previous state government was lost. The potential for it to become an incredible node was lost forever. Once an alignment has been decided and there is a plan—that is what we are doing—it should be stuck to and delivered. We have learnt from past mistakes and failures from the MAX light rail development. I am not having a cheap shot at the opposition. I am showing that there was a significant investment by property owners and the community and a belief in that. Even if I was seen as a Labor Mayor of Vincent, I sought to work constructively with the Liberal state government. All that potential for North Perth was lost. I will give an example from my local community. The North Perth Coles, which some people love and some people hate, would have been redeveloped as a major new potential hub of activity. When MAX light rail stopped, all those plans and ideas went out the door. In fact, I think that the loss of MAX light rail has probably stalled a true redevelopment of the town centre by perhaps 20 to 30 years. That demonstrates that our approach to Metronet and transit-oriented development is critical and that we are doing it as a coherent plan.

Talking about alignment, I want to talk about Whiteman Park. I was out for the government on the day when the Whiteman Park scare campaign was launched by the opposition and the member for Vasse. It is disappointing that we have seen this from the opposition. It says it supports the line, but it does many things to attack it publicly. It says it supports it, but it attacks it here and there. It is a constant range of attacks. The complete hypocrisy of the opposition on this issue was pointed out and all the media reported it on the day, because it had released a plan for Whiteman Park—the five-year strategic plan for Whiteman Park—on 1 February 2017 by the Minister for Planning at the time that included a cemetery. In fact, it was listed in the media statement and reported in the local media.

I will get to the Save Whiteman Park group because that is an interesting group. The member for Vasse showed shock and horror and cried crocodile tears, but, in fact, her own political party had proposed a cemetery.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: It is a cemetery. The facts are there, member for Vasse. It cannot be denied. She should check the media statement. I know that she does not like to read a lot.

The reality is that it was deep hypocrisy. There was a proposal for a cemetery in the same location. It is interesting that on the day of the media activity, Rod Henderson, who is a councillor —

Ms L. Mettam: Re-elected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: Re-elected—good luck to him! He was one of the major instigators behind this campaign. It is funny how it was coordinated with the local government election. There is no relation there at all! Up popped the Save Whiteman Park Facebook page. Trying to work out who organised that page was a mystery. It starred the member for Vasse; there is a nice video there. If members look at a recent post, they will realise that it is run by Rod Henderson himself. It states —

Last night I gave notice of the following at the City of Swan Council meeting. There's a map of the proposed alignment in a post below. Are you angry about this? Say so and please share to your friends.

Notice of Motion for the next Ordinary Meeting of Council

Motion—Cr Rod Henderson, Swan Valley/ ... Ward

He is clearly running this Facebook page. I do not know whether it is with the member for Vasse. Who knows? He is a failed Liberal Party candidate.

Here is the media statement with the Whiteman Park site chosen for the future cemetery, member for Vasse. I know she does not like to read, but she might like to read it.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr J.N. CAREY: He was a failed Liberal candidate at the last state election, who lost by an 18 per cent swing to the member for West Swan. It was an 18 per cent swing! That is not just a smashing; that is a total wipe-out! What a mystery it is that the Save Whiteman Park page stars the member for Vasse and is run by a councillor who is

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

a failed Liberal candidate and is now spearheading a campaign to save Whiteman Park. It is very interesting that the member for Vasse is working so closely with this councillor. This is the same councillor who does not believe in climate change. An article by Josh Zimmerman, a great reporter from *The West Australian*, states that Councillor Rod Henderson branded it a con that had been “totally dispelled”. It states that he had —

... falsely claimed both NASA and the CSIRO had “changed their mind” about human involvement in climate change.

Instead, he laid blame for global concern about rising temperatures and sea levels at the feet of former US vice-president Al Gore and his “inconvenient lie” documentary.

“(Gore)” has made hundreds of millions of dollars out of a game that frankly has been totally dispelled—totally dispelled councillors,” ...

Ms E. Hamilton: “Nanu nanu”!

Mr J.N. CAREY: You beat me to it!

It continues —

“NASA have even changed their mind because there is no pot of money for it there anymore. That is what it is all about. (It’s) the same with our own scientific body in Australia.

“If you could show me a dot of change, and I mean a dot ... they don’t exist and they’re not real and we’ve been conned by movements that are saying these things are real.”

It is interesting that *The West Australian* noted that both NASA and the CSIRO have said that they still believe in climate change. The member for Vasse is campaigning with the “nanu nanu” brigade and starring on a Facebook page with a climate change denier. That says a lot about her politics. She will do or say anything to stop this line.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Member for Perth, sit! Thank you. Members, just keep a lid on it. Member for Vasse and member for Dawesville, you have had your say; it is time to listen to others.

Mr J.N. CAREY: What we are seeing is the member for Vasse working with a tinpot crowd of climate change deniers and starring on their Facebook page. She is working with a climate change denier who has actually said that the CSIRO no longer believes in climate change. That is extraordinary stuff. I look forward to him running at the next state election, maybe along with Lily Chen, one of the Liberal Party’s other star candidates. She could come back and run as a climate change denier who was also now arguing against the Ellenbrook line and Whiteman Park, and we have the member for Vasse in there with that “nanu nanu” crowd. The point that I take from this is that the opposition has never truly committed to public transport or rail in Western Australia. It clearly demonstrates the lengths at which the member for Vasse will associate with anyone—desperate—looking for any cracks at all to try to stop this railway line. To hang with a climate change denier is just embarrassing for her. It is deeply embarrassing for her. Even the member for Carine believes in climate change. He does; he has told me. The member for Carine believes in climate change. I believe that the member for Dawesville believes in climate change.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Yeah, absolutely.

Mr J.N. CAREY: He does! That is great to hear.

Ms J.J. Shaw: Progressive!

Mr J.N. CAREY: Aggressive!

What I wanted to demonstrate clearly is that we are seeing an orchestrated campaign by a councillor, for whatever purposes, whether it was local government re-election or a particular aspiration to again run for the Liberals at the next election. He should declare, “I’m denying climate change”, and put that as one of his key slogans. I am sure he will be endorsed by the evangelical wing of the Liberal Party, which is, effectively, all of them now.

I am sure that what I am demonstrating right here —

Several members interjected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: We know who pulls yours! Nick Goiran is there with his strings. He has his little puppets. There are the little puppets, Nick Goiran! This here is the member for Carine and that is Nick Goiran. It is a bit like a dance. Nick Goiran pulls the strings! We all know him.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, please sit down.

Point of Order

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Relevance? I think we need to get back to the bill.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): There is no point of order. The member will get on with his contribution to the second reading of the bill.

Debate Resumed

Mr J.N. CAREY: I just want to say, and I will end on this, that we are seeing the opposition take every public opportunity, despite what it says, to can, to attack and to try to stop this project. Ultimately, this is a philosophical difference between Labor and Liberal. We understand that public transport is about access to jobs, health, education and the community. It is a great equaliser. We believe in public transport because it is a critical investment. Whereas, what we have seen, like in the member for Cottesloe's attacks, is that the Liberals do not in fact have a genuine commitment to, or investment in, public transport, probably because many of them do not actually use it. Therefore, I am proud to be part of a state Labor government that, again, is delivering rail to the outer metropolitan area.

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [3.14 pm]: It is my pleasure to speak in support of the Railway (METRONET) Amendment Bill 2019. I would like to begin by congratulating the Minister for Transport for bringing this bill to the house. It is fantastic to see Labor's continued support of public transport.

Metronet is an absolutely transformative public transport initiative and, once again, proves, for the record, Labor's commitment to public transport, generating jobs, improving environmental outcomes and, of course, importantly, improving accessibility and liveability in all our communities. I am also particularly excited that Metronet is well underway in my community of Belmont.

The purpose of this bill is to authorise the construction of the rail line from Bayswater station to Ellenbrook. Progress of this bill is very important to the people of Ellenbrook, as many members have also spoken about, and, of course, to the surrounds of Ellenbrook, as these residents have waited since the election commitment to construct a rail connection was first made by the Barnett government in 2008. It was a commitment repeatedly made but never delivered. This project represents a major step forward for Perth public transport infrastructure that residents who, back in 1992, flocked to the new suburb of Ellenbrook were expecting from the time the suburb was first developed. This billion-dollar Morley–Ellenbrook line will begin on the Midland line and proceed north east from the redeveloped Bayswater station to Ellenbrook, stopping at Whiteman Park, Malaga, Noranda and Morley along the way.

The development of the line will open the north east suburbs of Perth and finally link the now considerable area of Ellenbrook and surrounds to the Perth CBD via major public transport infrastructure. The growth that will flow from this rail line will be felt by all areas along this line, and it will be fantastic to see this important component of Metronet finally come to fruition. Importantly, this 21-kilometre line will halve the travel time for those using public transport from Ellenbrook into the city. This saving of travel time for residents will make a major difference to their lives. The line will create thousands of local jobs during its construction. This project is proof of our government's commitment to busting congestion on our roads by expanding the vital Metronet public transport network, which will prepare Perth and surrounds for the expected growth in WA into the next century.

This futureproofing commitment is so important to the growth of Perth as a city, particularly for the north-east suburbs, which have seen huge growth over the last 30 years. In 2011, the Australian Bureau of Statistics named Ellenbrook one of the fastest growing areas in WA, with the largest population growth. According to the City of Swan, 36 000 people now reside in Ellenbrook. This puts Ellenbrook in the same league as Mandurah, Rockingham, Kalgoorlie and Bunbury—all major centres outside of Perth and all serviced by rail. Of the residents who live in Ellenbrook, 70 per cent work in Ellenbrook and 30 per cent are below 15 years of age. Therefore, members can imagine the need to increase employment opportunities and the wider prospects for young people growing up in this area as they proceed into adulthood.

I am really excited for the residents of Ellenbrook and the surrounding areas. This rail line is going to make a real difference to their lives by, importantly, opening up employment opportunities outside of their area, and finally providing them with that important connection they need to the Perth CBD. As mentioned, it will also provide greater opportunity to those in suburbs along the way serviced by the line—Morley, Noranda, Malaga and Whiteman Park.

This project has further justified the major redevelopment of Bayswater station, soon to be a major stop on the Forrestfield–Airport Link. On PerthNow of 8 April 2018, the multimillion-dollar overhaul of Bayswater station, which is the biggest since it was built in 1896, was hailed as a major step forward for Bayswater. It will instigate a renewal of, and major development in, the Bayswater town centre itself, and it will be the first view above ground that Perth Airport patrons will have after coming from the underground Forrestfield–Airport Link tunnel. What a great introduction to Perth this will be.

The Morley–Ellenbrook Line is a major step forward for Perth. I am proud to support the passage of this legislation and commend the bill to the house.

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [3.19 pm]: I have followed this project with interest because I am a bit of a rail nut; I like trains. We see only the odd freight train where I come from. We used to have a train that took people from Geraldton to Perth and back again but, unfortunately, it was withdrawn in the 1970s.

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

From my recollection, what the member for Darling Range said is correct: we did a Me Too on this line in 2008. When we looked at the project, we saw there really was no business case. That was very similar to a project I was involved with in Geraldton for a 339-kilovolt powerline. The Carpenter government said it would build the powerline for \$300 million, but when the Liberal Party got into government, Western Power said it would be \$700 million. That meant we had to go back and re-examine the whole proposal. As it was, we built the first stage of the project to Three Springs, which cost \$440 million and was the biggest Western Power investment for 20 years. What the member said sort of rings true.

I remember in 2009 or 2010 talking to a couple of people in Transperth—the name of the body that runs the trains escapes me.

Mr D.R. Michael: It's the MTT.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: It is not the MTT; give me a break!

I was told fewer people would use this rail line in a day than get on at Cockburn Central, and it is quite a long distance. I am interested to see the rail line built and I look forward to seeing it operate. I am interested to see how many people will use it, because the real proof of the line's viability—I do not think anyone has any idea of how viable it will be—will not be really clear until it is up and running. Members might be surprised, but I have spent a bit of time around Ellenbrook; it is an interesting area. It is quite an attractive place to live.

Ms J.J. Shaw: You're welcome.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I would not go that far. The farmer in me says that one should build where there is nice soil. I know the sort of soil that is at Ellenbrook, and it is not that flash.

As a side issue, I recently shifted house in Perth. I had to get a slightly bigger property. My number one criterion for where I bought my house was that it had to have close proximity to a railway line. I now live in Maylands and use public transport every morning. I come to Parliament on the train every day and I am yet to see another member at any of the stations I go to, including all our great supporters of public transport.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Show us your SmartRider!

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I will pull it out and show it to the member.

As I said, it is one thing for members to say that they support public transport; it is another thing to get on the sardine can at eight o'clock in the morning and stand up.

Ms A. Sanderson: Oh, good for you.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: It is good; I enjoy it. It is a great way to travel. It takes nine minutes to get from Maylands into the Perth central station. It takes about 20 minutes to walk to Parliament.

Members might be a bit surprised about this, but after the former government was re-elected in 2013, I think we should have borrowed money and built the entire metro rail system. We should have borrowed the money over 30 years so we would know exactly what the repayments would be, because one thing I cannot understand about the way government runs its finances is how it effectively puts everything on the overdraft and then pays it off. For things like this, and the example I have used of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, a government should borrow money over 50 years and pay it off slowly, so it knows exactly what its commitments are and does not get the blowout in debt that comes from putting everything onto the overdraft, if you like.

I look forward to having a ride on the Ellenbrook rail line. I do not think I can live out there. I am quite excited to see that we are going back to building railcars in Western Australia. I would like to know, which no doubt we will find out sooner or later, how much they cost compared with those that came from Queensland.

Mr K. Michel interjected.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: We could build cars, aeroplanes, nuclear reactors or anything here, because our people are clever enough to do these things, but taxpayers have to pay for it. If those railcars cost twice as much as we could buy them from Queensland, it is our taxpayers who will have to find the money to pay for them. I would appreciate it if the government could tell us how much it will cost per railcar to build them here versus in Queensland, Victoria or somewhere else.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [3.25 pm] — in reply: I thank the member for Geraldton for that unexpected but kind of interesting contribution that posed a few questions. I will start with his questions. I thank members for their contributions to the debate. I must say that I really enjoyed this debate; not that I do not enjoy every debate. It stirred a lot of memories from my term in government. I will go through the history of this legislation.

First, I want to acknowledge some of the points made by the member for Geraldton. The member referred to Maylands station. The good thing is that under our proposal there will be more trains per hour at Maylands station.

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

With Metronet, more trains will be on that line and there will be greater capacity for people in that inner-eastern corridor. The member also asked about the cost of railcars. I cannot provide all the information today, but when we finalise the contract, we will provide those statistics.

I want to make the point that because there was no long-term commitment to purchase or construct railcars, we were purchasing small numbers of railcars in an ad hoc fashion. As a result, we were paying a premium price. When I was in opposition, I took the time to analyse the cost per railcar to purchase extra railcars for small additions to the network. I compared the costs. I looked at a Public Transport Authority document on the cost per railcar and then sought some information from over east, particularly in Victoria, which has a local content or local manufacturing policy. I realised that we were paying a lot more per railcar than Victoria, where there is a local manufacturing or local content requirement. The reason for that is that industry and companies need long-term contracts and long-term certainty. I like industry policy and microeconomic policy; I think we can really change the economics of an economy by looking at some key levers. All those students of industry policy, from when governments used to do industry policy, would know that there are some key requirements to get industry or parts of the economy going. One requirement is long-term security for the private sector—the contractor—and that is why when we announced our commitment, we announced the commitment for the Metronet expansion. When we came into government, we saw that we could add the A-series railcar replacement to the Metronet expansion. Internally, we worked our hearts out to prove to Treasury that a bigger and longer-term contract would deliver benefits for taxpayers over the longer term. We did a lot of work on identifying the railcars required for the expansion through Metronet, which we knew about, and the railcars we needed for the A-series replacement. We then looked at the state's maintenance needs and combined that into a contract to take to the market. I always strongly believed that we would get a better deal per railcar than we had on those we had been purchasing. I will be able to confirm that in a bit more detail when we make the final announcement on the contract.

As I have said about that part of the industry, I saw that we had the three key components we needed to make sure that the industry would be successful: a long-term contract for a relatively large volume compared with other states, assistance and training—we have made announcements about our Metronet trade training centre—and of course infrastructure, which is why we are providing the factory—the shed—for manufacturing and assembly in Bellevue. That addresses that part. What was the other key one? The member raised three key points.

Ms L. Mettam: The numbers?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The numbers. A full feasibility study was not undertaken on the Ellenbrook rail line.

Ms A. Sanderson: It was an election commitment.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes. We can go through this history again. I lived it and breathed it every day on my two terms in opposition. There was a commitment. Many refute the fact that there was an election commitment to build that rail line. I remember it very well. I always remember the day—I will go through this—when I said that the Liberal Party made a commitment to build the Ellenbrook rail line. The Premier of the day said, “No, we didn’t make a commitment.” I always remember that day, which was the last straw, when he went on morning radio—I think it was with Hutchison, if he was on morning radio at that time. The former Premier said, “We never made a commitment to build the Ellenbrook rail line.” The member for Dawesville is nodding. I am not saying he was the cause of it, but he was probably watching it unfold. The former Premier said, “We didn’t make a commitment to build the rail line.” Meanwhile, I had the flyer. I will always remember the person who sent me that flyer. I thank that person every day. He sent me the Frank Alban flyer that states, “We will build the Ellenbrook rail line.” It was something that was fed back to us too. We knew there was a commitment. This was the last straw. I will not go into the internal machinations of the party at the time, but I was not a key spokesperson for the opposition; I would say that I was not a key spokesperson whatsoever. I did not have a big role in the opposition at the time, but I was very frustrated by this and, to be honest, I was told to leave it alone. I was so frustrated that the Premier was on radio saying, “We never made a commitment” that I took it upon myself to go directly to the media and say, “Here it is. Here’s all the information. Here’s the pamphlet. Here’s the election costing. Here’s the midyear review document.”

Ms A. Sanderson: We don’t condone that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We do not condone that! But history judges me well on this one, and history will not judge others well on this one. It was finally written and confirmed that there was an election commitment. From that point on, the Liberal Party tried to get out of it; that was all it tried to do. There was all this stuff about doing a pre-feasibility study that did not stack up. The Liberal Party should have just come out and made very clear what it was doing, but it did not. The former Premier tried to say that there was no election commitment. Then he said that it was a second-term commitment, and he just went on and on and left, I hate to say, little Frankie out there, trying to take everybody on. It did not work.

I know the history; everyone knows the history. People can stand up and say who they think is responsible for the Ellenbrook rail line, but I think we knew from day one who is responsible for the Ellenbrook rail line. I want to say that our commitment to the Ellenbrook rail line has been clear from day one. We committed to it in 2008 and in 2013,

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayne; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

and we lost those elections. The idea that we could somehow deliver a rail line from opposition is not quite correct. To all those who stand up and say that somehow we did not deliver a rail line between 2008 and 2017, I say that there is a clear reason for that: we were in opposition. When we won government, we did everything possible to get this project underway as soon as possible. The pre-feasibility study was not correct on the 2 000 patronage figure. It was said that the 2 000 patronage figure was a reason that it did not happen, but if the member for Geraldton looks at the pre-feasibility report, he will see that that is not technically correct. It was one number in a document, but it was not the number that the previous government needed to use. They are the three points.

The member for Darling Range stood up. As I said, the opposition has found this a bit tricky to handle. Is anyone a fan of *The Lord of the Rings*? It was like Gollum and that ring. Sometimes Ellenbrook rail is good, but sometimes Ellenbrook rail is bad. People did not quite know who they were as they headed towards Mordor. The opposition does not really know where it is landing on this. The route is bad, but Porter is good for doing all the work. If he did all the work, why did he do a route that the opposition does not like? Then the member for Cottesloe undermined public transport in general. The idea that people do not associate WA Labor with Ellenbrook is completely false, because we have been the biggest supporters of this project and we are delivering this project.

I want to go through some comments. The member for Darling Range was a member for the East Metropolitan Region for, I think, eight and a half years. That encompassed both Ellenbrook and Byford. A key point to note is that even though that member was the member representing the area of Byford for eight and a half years, that member never mentioned the Byford rail line during that time. She went out there and said that people did not want the Ellenbrook rail line.

Mrs A.K. Hayden: They wanted roads.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will go through the roads, too.

When the member for Darling Range was in the upper house, she stated —

The idea of a rail line to Ellenbrook was not even a thought for many residents of Ellenbrook ... However, I want to inform fellow members of the real transport issues that have been affecting the residents of Ellenbrook for many, many years.

In 2012, she said —

I can stand here hand on heart and report to the house that the people of Ellenbrook are intelligent beings. If the cost and patronage were explained to them with all the facts ... they, too, would come up with the same scenario ...

...

A rigid rail line will not and cannot cater for these demands. The Ellenbrook community has different needs, and flexibility is required. That is why an enhanced bus service was the preferred option ...

She never spoke about Byford. When it comes to roads, the only reason Gnanagara Road was widened is that we campaigned very effectively for many years. We committed to it, and a contribution was matched by the then government. Those road projects and NorthLink WA were supported all along by Labor, both federal and state. It was actually the federal Labor Party that put in the initial funds for the start of the NorthLink project, which is the three overpasses through Morley Drive, Collier Road at Noranda, and Benara Road. There is no history of support from the other side. The member then mentioned Midland station. We have been in power for two and a half years. We are going through the Infrastructure Australia process and the federal environmental processes, which I might outline soon, and she asks: where is everything? We are delivering to the people. I look at Midland rail station. When we announced our commitment in 2016, the member for Darling Range, the local member of Parliament at the time, criticised the opposition's Midland train station redevelopment, announcing it as a copycat policy because the previous government had been working on it since 2010. Ms Hayden said that in 2010, the relocation of a new Midland train station was identified by the then government, yet for the next seven years, nothing happened. That is a clear history of non-delivery.

I want to go through the issues to do with the legislation. Interestingly, unlike for roads, we need enabling legislation for every rail line. This is the enabling legislation for the Ellenbrook railway line. But for projects like NorthLink, there was no legislation; we used the existing Public Works Act.

NorthLink goes right through my electorate and from day one I was an advocate and a supporter of it. If members go through the records, they will find that I have never said anything in relation to it. We tried to address local access issues in Bennett Springs when we won government and because of the nature of the project one key issue was that the Bennett Springs community did not have good or easy access to Tonkin and Reid Highways. That is the nature of the project. There were some issues to do with Lightning Park, which we were able to address with the help of the member for Morley. When we won government, we worked to try to address some of the access issues, and we did that. But I never, ever opposed it. I actually supported it; I was an advocate.

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

The key thing about NorthLink is that it goes through Whiteman Park. The construction of NorthLink, in a sense, excises 182 hectares of Whiteman Park and actually divides Whiteman Park into two parts, to the west and to the east. It has bipartisan support. Many people on the Liberal side of politics, however, are concerned about a rail line going through 12 hectares of Marshall Road lands—I will go through the history of that in a minute. They are the ones trying to claim credit for NorthLink. I do not understand how they can do that. We have already seen absolute hypocrisy in comments about the Beeliar wetlands.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am going to say this, member for Vasse: you made a tactical and strategic error going out on the Whiteman Park issue, because it made the Liberal Party once again oppose the Ellenbrook rail line. She has spurred a councillor into action. That councillor now has a motion before the local council, which would, if adopted—it is the Liberal Party's view of the world—delay the Ellenbrook railway line for another four to five years.

Ms L. Mettam: Rubbish! What spin!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is what has happened, member for Vasse.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: She has strategically, yet again, put herself and the Liberal Party on the wrong side of this debate.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Member for Vasse, I call you for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: She got sucked into it. The other thing was the misleading nature of it. The member for Vasse took the media to a children's playground and said that the playground would be torn up by the Ellenbrook rail line. The rail line is nowhere near the children's playground. She made a tactical and naive error. In a sense I am glad that the Liberal Party has yet again underestimated the public support for the Ellenbrook rail line. Through the council, the member for Vasse, the Liberal Party and the Liberal members of that council are lining up against the Ellenbrook rail line. They are lining up for delays.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is what you have done.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Member for Wanneroo, a motion will go to council next week that says that a different route should be adopted. I will tell members what that means. The member for Vasse will have to tell all those people that their houses will be demolished because she is now backing that councillor who wants the Reid Highway route. All those new homes—how many will need to be demolished because she is backing a change in the route by aligning herself with that member?

As I said, the Liberal Party has come in here and tried to say that somehow it is the creator of the Ellenbrook rail line. It tweeted that the Liberal Party is the only party that has ever backed the Ellenbrook rail line—you really think people are stupid—and then it went out and campaigned against it. That was a tactical and stupid error. Look at us in relation to rail projects and road projects: we absolutely supported the Forrestfield–Airport Link.

Ms L. Mettam: No, you didn't; you criticised it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: When did I criticise it?

Ms L. Mettam: I referred to it in my speech in 2013; during the election campaign.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Me? In 2013?

Ms L. Mettam: I am talking about WA Labor; you did criticise it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am talking about me. Go find where I criticised it.

Ms L. Mettam: Now you're getting —

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Well, I am the minister!

I am not talking about what the former member for Vasse said about things. I am not going to sit here and talk about former transport ministers, because I could go on forever.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Minister!

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: But I will go through what the member for Vasse has done. She has aligned herself with the opponents of the Ellenbrook rail line. That is what she has done.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Ms S.E. Winton: Bad move.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is a bad move. It is a tactical error, because out there, again, everyone knows there is only one party that can deliver it.

The Leader of the Opposition has also been saying that there are some projects that they are going to cut to build Roe 8. What Metronet projects are they? The member for Darling Range thinks Byford is important. Is that the one they want to cut? All their reports say that we do not need it for 20 or 30 years. That is what the former government said about Byford.

The member for Vasse made a tactical error in lining up with the Liberal opponents of the Ellenbrook rail line. She stood there and discredited herself with the media. As we know, when in opposition there are only so many times that you can lead the media to a stupid stunt. That was a stupid stunt which, as I said, will backfire in the community, and it already has.

A week later I was out there cycling with some constituents, experiencing the new Drumpellier Drive cycleway with the member for Gosnells.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, that is enough.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Do members know what they all said? They said, “Why do they oppose building a rail line to Whiteman Park?” I said that I did not know. I said, “Look, it’s the Liberal Party. They’re opposed to the rail line.” It was a tactical error to align with someone who has opposed the rail line from day one. Now a Liberal councillor is saying that he has a better route even though the Liberal Party opposed it for 11 years. It actually campaigned against it. Now it is saying that it has a better route.

In the meantime, everyone is running around trying to claim credit for NorthLink. It went through without a metropolitan region scheme reservation, which we now have to fix. Excising 182 hectares will basically cut the park in half. Someone has talked about water quality issues—the member for Cottesloe. Where do members think NorthLink goes? What priority water mound will NorthLink go on? Any student of this issue over many years understands that NorthLink was rerouted in around 2014. The original route of NorthLink, the Perth–Darwin Highway, was Tonkin Highway. Then it was to basically turn right on Reid Highway and then head up the Lord Street corridor.

The planning was done. Again, I thought it was a good outcome. I never opposed it. But there was a new route and that went through Whiteman Park. I supported that as the more direct route seemed like a more efficient path to link it with Muchea. That was all done without any change in the reservation and people applauded it. The Liberal Party applauded it and tried to claim as much credit for it as possible. I will go through the history of the Marshall Road lands in a minute, but when they came up with the new route through what was classified as a priority water mound, they realised that the Department of Water had reclassified it and that, as a result, the Department of Water allowed that to be done. Again, those are the basic facts. I would have thought that the opposition would have done its research.

Let us go through the Whiteman Park issue. It goes through the Marshall Road lands, identified in 2017’s strategic plan as degraded lands to be used for other purposes and not for parks and recreation—sporting complexes and also a cemetery.

When we came to government, I stopped the cemetery. That is what happened. That was in the article. In 2016, it was announced that the cemetery was going to be on those lands. Where was the “Save Whiteman Park” group then? They were in council supporting a cemetery; that is what they were doing. We stopped that because I knew the route that we took to the election was a reasonable route to take. The member for Vasse went on television and tweeted and said that the route we announced in this legislation was different from what we took to the election. That is completely false.

Mr T.J. Healy: Did she say sorry?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No; in fact, she stood up in this place yesterday—members opposite cannot remember what they said yesterday, let alone a month ago—and said, “The route you have outlined in this bill is the route you took to the election”, even though she said the exact opposite in the media.

Ms L. Mettam: No, I didn’t.

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, you did. I have the tweet and the picture—I will hold it up in a minute—in which the member said that we lied about the route during the election, which is completely false. During the election, we took the media on a bus ride to outline the route that we were taking. We took the media on a bus ride and showed them the exact route. It was on the news that night. It was everywhere. Then she says that we never took that route to the election. Everyone in that area knows that was the route we took to the election!

Ms L. Mettam: You did not take the excise of Whiteman Park for rail and urban development to the election.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What are we doing today? Are we doing urban development there? The member went out and said that this is all going to be housing development. We are building a rail line—that is what we are doing—and the member has set herself to oppose it.

Let us go through the Marshall Road lands area. Again, I like doing my research. I have always heard the stories about the Marshall Road lands. First, I went to the previous government's strategic plan, just to see whether I got it right when I saw it back in 2017. Again, I surveyed the public about the cemetery. People said they did not want a cemetery; that is fine, and that is why I did not support the cemetery. People said they wanted sporting complexes and other sorts of uses. That is why I never ruled out a sporting complex in that area, because it seems like a good use. There is ongoing dialogue between the Department of Sport and Recreation, the City of Swan and my Metronet team whereby we are looking at two options for a major sporting complex in that area, so we are doing that. As I said, this area was always identified as a different area-type from the true Whiteman Park.

Mr P.J. Rundle: Is that why you're trying to force Tennis West out to Ellenbrook, about 40 or 50 minutes away from the central location?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am not trying to force Tennis West anywhere.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr P.J. Rundle: That is what we are hearing: "I do not want to go out to Ellenbrook; I want to stay in a central location."

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Roe.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Maybe the member should have worked that out when the previous government built the stadium, as much as I like cleaning up all the loose ends that were left when the stadium was built. I am not trying to force anyone anywhere; I am trying to build a rail line. But if they end up moving it, we are going to have really good connections with rail lines.

The whole issue of what was and was not Whiteman Park started in 1977, when improvement plan 8 basically identified the recreation area of Whiteman Park. It is actually quite fascinating and interesting. It identified the recreation area of Whiteman Park but then identified what it classified as improvement plan 8. Future urban development in relation to the Whiteman Park expansion was proposed under improvement plan 8. Therefore, back in 1977, it identified this land for future government requirements. That was when the land was purchased. There were a number of different purchasers. Can I say, I absolutely commend the Whiteman family and their contribution to that area. They contributed a lot of farm machinery and other machinery in particular that is displayed in the museum. Lew Whiteman in particular is still one of the great contributors of farm machinery. The Whiteman family made a key contribution back then. There was also a transfer of funds for the purchase of land along Marshall Road. That was from a number of families—the Whitmans, the Marshalls, and a compulsory acquisition from another family who did not want to sell at the time. That was under improvement plan 77. That is an interesting note. As I said, the state purchased the land—I will not disclose the amount of money—for a substantial sum in 1977. Other land was purchased such as the Marshall land, Whiteman land, and, as I said, some compulsory acquisition for improvement plan 8. The Marshall Road lands were identified in improvement plan 8 for future government requirements. In 2000, the Court government approved a Whiteman Park strategic plan that proposed to increase the park, but exclude Marshall Road for urban development. It was described as degraded land at the southern end of the park and not essential for future conversation needs. That is the history of that area.

All that being said, we just want to build a rail line. We are proposing a rail line through that area. People have asked—I will go to the motion that is going to the local council—why we could not have done it along the Reid Highway. There are a couple of reasons. The design of NorthLink WA did not facilitate a right turn at the Tonkin-Reid intersection, and to re-dig that completely would cost hundreds of millions of dollars. The curvature required for that rail line to turn right would have impacted significantly on new family homes in the area. The Marshall Road alignment also serves a bigger catchment, which helps with the benefit-cost ratio and the business case. It facilitates not only the Malaga station, which services the Malaga employment district, but also the entire Ballajura area and the west side of Alexander Drive. If one is heading from north to south, there is Lansdale, Alexander Heights and Girrawheen. As I have said, this plan was created by a group of engineers and planning experts. On all the indications, this made the right alignment.

Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr John Carey; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Rita Saffioti; Acting Speaker

Again, what we are doing is building a rail line. The scaremongering and claims are about something that we are not committing to do in this bill and we are not doing. It is the Liberal Party, which, again, in history, has put itself on the wrong side of the debate. As I said, the Liberal Party is now seen as an opponent of the Ellenbrook rail line in that area. That was a quick snapshot of some of the history.

As I said, I acknowledge the role of Lew Whiteman. We are improving that park. As soon as we were elected, I committed to the Pia's Place nature playground, which is a beautiful all-access playground—a truly wonderful place that is being built. We see the concept of a train station servicing Whiteman Park as an incredible asset into the future. We believe it is the Kings Park of the north. We are also working with the volunteer groups on linking their train line to our train station—imagine that! We are working with the volunteers, and I know that the volunteer groups are really excited by this—a train station servicing Whiteman Park, one of our key tourism destinations, and acknowledging the rich history in that entire area.

Other claims were made that night on television, such as that the public would lose access to the area that we are putting a rail line through. The public does not have access to this area. There is just wrong claim after wrong claim. As I said, this is a bill to build a rail line. In relation to the future uses of that area, our focus is on a sporting complex. The local government is a key part of this. We believe that whole corridor needs a new regional sporting complex. With the growth of Ellenbrook, and the pressure on Kingsway to the west, a future sporting complex would be a good thing for the entire area. That is a key point that I wanted to go through.

I think I have addressed the comments made by the member for Darling Range and the member for Geraldton. I now want to reflect on some other comments that have been made. I will start with the member for Cottesloe.

Mr D.A. Templeman: That's when everything went wrong.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is when it really deteriorated. The member for Cottesloe devalued public transport to a significant degree. I think the issue with public transport is that people always look at the subsidy for travel. They do not look at what would happen if the rail line had not been built. They do not look at, for example, how many more lanes on the freeway would need to be built if we did not have that major rail line, the maintenance costs for the roads, and the road trauma that might occur. All these things feed into that.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.