

**FREMANTLE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

*Motion*

Resumed from 19 March on the following motion moved by Hon Simon O'Brien —

That this house requests the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority to prioritise the coordination and management of the planning and development of the greater Fremantle area, including all of North Fremantle.

**HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan)** [2.04 pm]: As has already been identified, when considering the plans and requirements of the greater Fremantle area, we must have regard for the presence of the colony's main port, which continues to be a significant driver of the infrastructure and other land use planning environment around Fremantle and indeed the wider metropolitan area. Therefore, it is absolutely fundamental that the Fremantle port and the City of Fremantle among others be actively collaborating in plans for the future. Otherwise, our community will come up very short indeed. I do not believe that they are and I will come back to that point in just a moment.

I invite members to consider, following my remarks from the last sitting Wednesday, what the future is for the inner harbour at Fremantle and the transport task that it will be required to bear in the future. As I already pointed out, it is absolutely important that we plan now for the rail and road links that will sustain a container port into the future. I look forward to hearing from the government about what plans it has progressed for the future of container ship facilities in Western Australia; what proportion is intended to be in the inner harbour; and what plans it has for other locations and how those locations, wherever they may be, will be serviced by the transport links that have to maintain them.

I have already mentioned in the course of this debate the obvious difficulty in retrofitting freight railways into a developed urban landscape and pointed out the absolute requirement that, if we can, we certainly need to reserve corridors for those sorts of purposes well in advance because it will only get more and more difficult as time goes by. Subsequent Western Australian governments will discover this if they do not understand it already; they will have to grapple with it. The planning and coordination needs to be done now so that investments can be coordinated and orderly development of the wider metropolitan area can take place.

It is predicted by some that the total container capacity for North Quay, which, as you know, Mr President, was rebuilt in the past few years, is likely to be about 1.4 million to 1.5 million twenty-foot equivalent units per annum. That is the ultimate likely capacity for that wharf and that will depend on a number of things, including the amount of trade available and whether the handlers and their technology can respond to the demand that might generate such a quantum of activity. The other thing that it absolutely relies upon is the ability to move those volumes of cargo into and out of the port. We have had debates in the past, which I do not intend to revisit, about how much should go by road and whether more should go by rail and all the rest of it. As a member for South Metropolitan Region and a keen observer of these things over many years, there is no way that the quantum of containers moving through Fremantle can more than double with virtually all of it going onto the existing rail network. It simply will not take it going by a single line snaking its way past the west end of Fremantle, down to the south and then up to the northeast as suburbia grows around it or, indeed, in the case of Fremantle, where suburbia already exists. The constituents of the South Metropolitan Region and the East Metropolitan Region will certainly make their displeasure known to the members and government of the day long before we reach those levels of activity, if they are to occur on the existing rail system. The planning needs to be done now.

I do not know if I need to labour that point anymore but I certainly raise it, seeking advice from the government as to what its thoughts are on this particular matter and in the hope that it continues to be proactive. I know that we were being proactive a few years ago and I hope that is continuing.

**Hon Ken Travers:** It was a minister that had a premium optimum ports task force set up, if I remember correctly.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** Indeed.

**Hon Ken Travers:** I do not know what happened to that. Does the member?

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** It is with government. Fremantle port, therefore, and in so far as its inner port operations are concerned, is clearly to be a part of the future of Fremantle and if, as is the case now, there is a significant amount of container operations in the inner harbour, how much? What are the plans for other container facilities outside the inner harbour? How will transition take place? These are questions that need to be answered.

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

In relation to the inner harbour, I would hope that it always remains a working port with, for example, cruise ships, public vessels, small general cargo capacity and so on. It is part of the essential character of the place and I would be disappointed to see that ever disappear from the inner harbour—I do not believe it actually will. Nonetheless, some key decisions need to be made about where heavy operations are going to be located in the future because so much flows from that. It is only when those decisions are made that government, including the local government, can adequately plan for the future. We have to know what the demands are going to be and how much opportunity we have for other development, be it residential, commercial or general public purpose. That is why it is important that the City of Fremantle and the Fremantle Ports work closely and cooperatively on their plans for the future.

Fremantle Ports is authority is an agency of the state government, so that is the first way in which the state government has a duty to be involved with the City of Fremantle. The state government owns the single main asset that defines the place. The state government also has other responsibilities to engage in the greater Fremantle area and not only in its overarching planning role and how that connects with the rest of the metropolitan area and the state. I have already referred to container and rail infrastructure but there is a whole range of other transport-oriented functions that the state government has carriage of—no pun intended—and responsibility for that has to be thrown into the mix as well, whether that is through the Public Transport Authority, Main Roads Western Australia or sections of the Department of Transport. As a former Minister for Finance, I know that as recently as the past few years undertakings were given to relocate the main headquarters of the Department of Housing to Fremantle. Again, that is something that was welcomed by the local community and it would be interesting to know how that is progressing. They are the sorts of initiatives that give hope and substance to plans to refresh and renew a local economy, which in the case of Fremantle is, as I speak, very run-down.

The City of Fremantle itself is, I believe, made up of good people. I have referred to the mayor, Brad Pettitt, in this place before. I am not sure that everyone would agree with everything that every Fremantle councillor would ever have to say—I know I do not—but I have a bit of time for Mayor Pettitt and, as with people in other councils, those who serve are typically those who are committed to improving their community. Similarly, the body of professional officers in the City of Fremantle are, I believe, well motivated and competent, but I do not believe that a relatively small municipality—as the City of Fremantle currently is—can do all of the things that need to be done to make sure that the greater Fremantle area thrives into the future without the active involvement of the state government. At the moment I do not believe that is happening.

I am not the first person to recognise the need for this. Indeed, some time ago, the response of the City of Fremantle was to set up a body to consult with state government. This was chaired by Stuart Hicks, who is a well-respected public servant in this town and one with whom I have had many dealings. That was called the “Fremantle Union”.

**Hon Ken Travers:** The Liberal Party joined a union?

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** Yes, it did. The Fremantle Union was an interesting name for what was intended to be a body of government agencies to have regular contact and help progress the sorts of things that I am talking about. My understanding is that, despite all good intentions, it is not working. It is certainly not working as intended. Stuart Hicks is a good man; he can do a lot and he has done a lot, but what concerns me is that the state government agencies that are meant to be a part of this Fremantle Union are not taking it as seriously as they might. If I am to stand corrected on that, I would love to be corrected. All of the information that has come to me over the past eight or ten months has been that certain government agencies that should be getting stuck in boots and all are not interested. Why? Perhaps they do not see it as an important thing. Perhaps they do not have the drive of the central government or have their ministers pushing them along. Perhaps it is the fact that it is an initiative of the local council and they do not like having to go along and report to it.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Has the member raised it with the relevant ministers?

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** I am raising it right now and I hope I get some sort of response. The Fremantle Union, as a body controlled by the City of Fremantle, clearly is not the answer. It is not going to achieve the dynamic that I say we need to strive for. That is why my motion is couched in the terms it is—seeking the active involvement of the state government in coordinating what is a massive exercise. Without wishing to create any offence, it is an exercise that I would submit is far beyond the capacity of a municipality the size of the City of Fremantle to administer on its own with very little sustenance from relevant state government departments. Unless the state government gets involved in the future direction of the greater Fremantle region, as I have described it, and works out what its future is and how it fits in with the wider metropolitan area, and indeed with transport and other links throughout the state, I do not think we will get the outcomes that our people deserve.

What I do not want to see is a succession of structures erected or roads located in places that they will continue to occupy for the next 100 years or more, constraining our community from achieving what it should be able to achieve, given a lack of planning, a lack of foresight, and a lack of allocation of space for the things that our community will need into the future. Nothing that I have seen at the moment gives me any confidence that that is not precisely the direction we are heading in at the moment. But do not take my word for it. Members should go to Fremantle. We have all been to Fremantle before, I imagine. Go down there. Perhaps, like me, members were there when growing up—to the extent that members and I have grown up! Like me, members could have gone down to chuck a line off the wharf when we could actually get close to ships in those pre-9/11 days! Perhaps some members have worked on the wharf or in the Fremantle town, so they know the area from experience.

Members should go and look at it now. They will see what used to be the prime central business district of the colony now at a very low ebb, with shops and offices vacant and sitting idle. The crowds that used to swarm High Street are no longer there now. Myer has moved out, Parry's has moved out. Heck, we cannot even buy whitegoods in Fremantle these days. If Fremantle residents want to buy any sort of whitegoods or clothing, they need to go to Booragoon or somewhere. If members do not believe me when I say that Fremantle needs some tender loving care, some planning and some leadership, they should go and have a look at it now—or let me take members down there and I will show them where it could be so much better. But that will not happen unless the state government accepts some ownership of this problem; that is what I would encourage the state government to exhibit.

One of the reasons we have motions on notice in this house is so that we can raise, as members, issues of concern to make sure that they get a public airing. That is to make sure that people in government, or others, who may have an interest, can respond. That is the spirit with which I have moved this motion we are debating today and we will continue with, presumably, into next week as well. It is because I have identified a problem. I do not know anybody who does not recognise that we have got a real challenge here and that we have to pull together. The senior bureaucrats that I speak to—I will not embarrass them by letting anyone know they have been seen talking to Simon O'Brien, because that is probably a serious offence these days—and the directors general who I have spoken with, who presumably would advise government on these matters, agree with me that there is a challenge here and it is imperative that we address the sorts of things I am talking about.

The City of Fremantle knows that there is a challenge as well. Again, I congratulate Mayor Pettitt and his colleagues for the work they are doing—I think largely alone and unsupported—to try to make sure that we have got a great Fremantle in the future. However, there is no-one who I have spoken to who does not agree that we do have a challenge here that needs to be addressed. I have placed on the record some of my perspectives about the sorts of directions in which we should be heading. I started by indicating that the first thing that we need to know about Fremantle is that there is a great big port there that defines it. So we first need to work out what happens with the port and then work out a whole lot of things around that. Until we do that, we cannot make the necessary decisions.

The government needs to be on its way in planning its entire freight network for the future so that everything else can then be allowed to fall in place to achieve the best outcomes that we can. I would like to know from the government whether it recognises that this is an issue of importance and what it proposes to do about it. I think that is a legitimate thing to raise in this house in motions on notice. This motion has been sitting on the notice paper since 11 June last year, so everyone has had plenty of time to consider their position and decide whether they want to be responsive about it or whether they want to do something else. I know what I would like to see, and I certainly hope that the government can offer us, as well as the greater Fremantle community, some encouragement that we are all on the same page on this issue.

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [2.27 pm]: This is a motion from a government member who asked a range of questions —

**Hon Helen Morton:** There's three hours to go; just get on with it if you want to speak!

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The minister should not be so rude. This is a motion from the government's own member who raised an important series of questions. In order for us to consider how we will vote on the motion, it would have been helpful for us to hear from government members about whether they have addressed all of the issues, because that goes to the things that we might want to ask questions about. It is absolutely extraordinary and, frankly, an insult to the government's own member but I suspect he is getting used to it.

**Hon Helen Morton:** Just get on with it!

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** If someone wants to tell me to get on with it, there is one person in this chamber who can do it, and it is not the Minister for Mental Health.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

Several members interjected.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It is not her!

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Let us just keep the motion in mind and keep our comments around that motion.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It is extraordinary, but to be expected! It is entirely to be expected from this minister in particular. The proposition that Hon Simon O'Brien put before us is one that goes to the heart of issues that have been confronting Fremantle for some time now. He is quite right when he says that the City of Fremantle has done a whole lot of work to address these issues, and I will talk about that a little further. He is quite right when he says that the City of Fremantle, Fremantle Ports and a range of government agencies formed the Fremantle Union back in 2011. He is quite right when he says that there is a degree of frustration that the state government is not participating in the Fremantle Union in the way that was expected when the Fremantle Union was first formed.

The member raises some really useful issues, but I think the solution is to make the ministers responsible for those agencies hold the agencies to account by getting them to the table at the Fremantle Union rather than impose another level of bureaucracy through having another agency take core responsibility for achieving the changes that need to happen in the City of Fremantle. What would have been good this week was if the announcement of the new Hilton Hotel in Fremantle had said that it would be located down at the west end; that would have been a useful decision. Instead, it is supposed to be near the Coles supermarket, sort of in the middle, rather than right down at the most western end. It would be really useful, of course, if the government honoured the commitment it made back in 2012 to move a public sector agency to Fremantle. Members on the other side might recall that back in 2012, the then Minister for Finance, Hon Simon O'Brien, proposed that the Department of Housing be moved to the Fremantle CBD and that the process be put out to tender. The government committed to doing that and therefore announced it in 2012. At the election at the beginning of 2013, the Liberal Party issued a document headed "The Liberals Public Sector Management Policy", in which, under the subheading "Relocating Government Offices", it promised the following —

If re-elected, the Liberals will:

...

- Establish new Government office buildings in Joondalup, Stirling, Fremantle, Murdoch and Bunbury.

Part of that policy document also included the following in a reference to Osborne Park —

Plans are under way for more agencies to move there and to other major centres such as Stirling, Fremantle, Murdoch and Joondalup.

The Liberals make the following point in the policy document on that election promise —

The relocation of Government departments not only provides direct saving in accommodation costs but also valuable economic stimulus for local economies and improved community access to front-line Government services.

That is a good policy and one that we supported but, unfortunately, it appears that nothing has happened since 2012 when Hon Simon O'Brien announced it —

**Hon Ken Travers:** He announced it on 27 June.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** He announced it in June 2012, so that is 18 months now, maybe a little more.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Not far off two years.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Perhaps 20 months.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** Can I say by interjection: please do not make this about former minister Simon O'Brien. I am just raising a community concern. It is not about any minister, former ministers or anything like that. I don't have any axe to grind; I am just trying to look to the future.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It is a good thing that Hon Simon O'Brien does not have an axe to grind. The point I am trying to make is that part of the solution to assist Fremantle would be for the government to honour the promise made, by whoever made it, in 2012 and again at the 2013 election. If the government honoured that promise, it

would go some significant way to assist the revitalisation of the local Fremantle economy. I think it is a good policy and I support it.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** And that was its purpose.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Indeed! It is therefore disappointing that the government, whichever minister is responsible for implementing it, has not proceeded down that path. I know that the government sought expressions of interest.

**Hon Ken Travers:** They did a market-sounding exercise in Fremantle.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Okay.

The member for Fremantle asked the following question without notice of the then Minister for Finance, Dr Nahan, in the other place about the relocation of department officers to Fremantle —

I refer the Minister for Finance to the relocation of the offices of the Department of Housing to Fremantle announced in 2012 ... which was a component of phase 1 of the plan to save a reported \$20 million to \$25 million to the taxpayer by 2015.

- (1) When will the tender process be finalised and the government honour its commitment to relocate the Department of Housing to the Fremantle CBD?
- (2) Is it not true that the tender has gone out and been extended, and that there has been a complying tender that fits the criteria; and, if so, why has the minister not accepted it?

The answer to that question on 4 December 2013 was —

- (1)–(2) ... We have gone out for expressions of interest. Four parties did respond. They are currently being evaluated as to their suitability and costs. No advice as to the conclusion from those tenders has been given to me yet. When it is, we will make an announcement on that.

I hope that the minister representing the minister will be able to tell us today, some four months since that question was asked, that tenders have been assessed, that a tender has been accepted and that the government is about to honour the promise that it said it was part way through honouring when it issued its election promise in March 2013.

The proposal put to us by Hon Simon O'Brien in his motion today is that the house requests the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority to prioritise the coordination and management of the planning and development. It would be right to involve the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority if we were starting from scratch in Fremantle and if there was a complete absence of any plan or commitment by the organisations represented in Fremantle. It would be appropriate in a vacuum to get the redevelopment authority to step in and take control. However, there is no vacuum. The City of Fremantle has done a lot of work on this. Fremantle Ports has done a lot of work on this. The part of the formula that is not working here is the state government agencies that are not committing to sending their people to actively participate in the Fremantle Union. That requires the existing ministers to intervene and to get their agencies to step up to the plate and participate in the existing structure, which is the Fremantle Union. If the parties genuinely engage in the structure of the Fremantle Union and it is still found that the Fremantle Union is not working properly, there would be an argument to say that the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority should come in over the top and take control. However, a lot of work has been undertaken by the City of Fremantle. It has had extensive consultation with businesses, with the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce and also with residents in Fremantle. A lot of work has been done, including by Fremantle Ports. The people who have not come to the party are those in the state government agencies. That is why it would have been very useful to have heard early in the debate about what the state government is actually doing. It might be that it has all the answers in place, that it has recommitted to participating in the Fremantle Union and that all is well. However, I do not know that because the government did not pay the house the courtesy of telling us its position up-front.

**Hon Helen Morton:** But you won't have to worry about it. You'll hear it before you have to vote, so don't worry.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am not worried about anything you say to me, minister—not one little bit.

**Hon Helen Morton:** But I wanted to hear what you had to say too.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It would have been useful but that is not what happened, so we plough on.

I want to make a couple of other points. Part of the work of the Fremantle Union was to get the government to commit to move the Department of Housing to Fremantle, so it is not a matter of the government not being able to come up with plans itself.

I think the City of Fremantle would say that one issue was getting a key senior person from each of the respective agencies to agree to participate in the Fremantle Union. As is often the case when an agency sends people who are not in a high enough position, those people cannot make ongoing commitments. Often there is a turnover in mid-level management positions in the public sector, and it is important to get the same people turning up to an organisation such as the Fremantle Union. It would therefore be a good thing if the government could make a commitment along those lines as well.

The only other point I want to make is that if there is some proposition—it certainly was not put by Hon Simon O'Brien but it might come from others—that the City of Fremantle is not up to the task, it is interesting to note from the 2011–2015 economic development strategy that it received the 2012 WA Premier's Award for public sector excellence in the category of developing the economy, which was because of the work already done by the City of Fremantle. If there is a view in government—I hope not—that the City of Fremantle is not pulling its weight, why did the government give it the Premier's Award for the work it had done on the economic strategy? It is fair to say that some of the reasons the City of Fremantle won that award include the work that it had already done to promote development in parts of Fremantle that were underutilised or underdeveloped; that is, buildings and sites that were last developed in the 1960s and 1970s that have no current heritage significance or value. It introduced WA's first business improvement district. It introduced WA-leading reform such as the small ancillary dwelling amendment to help improve urban density. I know that was very popular, particularly in inner parts of the City of Fremantle. It is really moving towards meeting its Directions 2031 targets. Of course, it has invested in new civic projects that involve council properties such as the Kings Square project, the upgrade of the Fremantle Leisure Centre and the Esplanade Youth Plaza—although that was not without some controversy. It would be inaccurate to say that the City of Fremantle is not pulling its weight when it comes to planning and implementing changes to revitalise the CBD of Fremantle. I really think it is up to the state government to start pulling its weight to deliver on its promise to move the Department of Housing to Fremantle. I hope we will hear today when that will happen. The tender process is up. We need to get agencies to engage properly at the Fremantle Union.

**HON PHIL EDMAN (South Metropolitan)** [2.41 pm]: I thank Hon Simon O'Brien for bringing this motion before the house. As a South Metropolitan member and also a person who has frequently visited, eaten and partied in the City of Fremantle through my teen years —

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** Are you claiming responsibility for part of the revitalisation?

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** I have fond memories of the City of Fremantle. But it does actually have some problems. I have seen the City of Fremantle. I am not talking about the council but the actual City of Fremantle. It has very slowly fallen away from the time it was really vibrant, especially when we won the America's Cup and hosted it in 1987. At that time a person would be lucky to find a seat to have a cup of coffee on South Terrace.

**Hon Ken Travers:** How old were you then?

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** I was 17, and I was having a cup of coffee on South Terrace.

The City of Fremantle has fallen by the wayside a little. Under the leadership of Mayor Brad Pettitt it seems to be slowly climbing back, with its restaurants. It is drawing clientele, and businesses are slowly starting to make a few dollars. The issue of parking in Fremantle needs to be addressed. The skate park was very controversial. I cannot say that I am a big supporter of the skate park. I do not know if it is the appropriate location for that sort of activity for young people. I am worried that it could become a place for the homeless to sleep, but, regardless, it is there. I do not know whether anybody here has ever gone to Old Shanghai, which is a food hall, but across the road there are state housing units. I do not know how long they have been vacant —

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Do you mean the workers' cottages?

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** Yes. I do not know how long I have seen them vacant. They have fallen into disrepair. It is so disheartening to see that. Any of the South Metropolitan members, or anybody who has been there, will know what I am talking about. From my little experience as a councillor and as a member of Parliament—I have not been doing this my whole life—I note the success achieved through the City of Rockingham and the City of Kwinana combining to form a development office through the state government. That was nicknamed or called the RKDO. That was formed because revitalising city centres is a big job. In my opinion they are just way too big for councils to take that sort of responsibility and leadership on. It was not a redevelopment authority but it still had a lot of benefit. The Rockingham Kwinana Development Office is no longer running. It has now been formulated to look after industry. That is mainly because Kwinana has been revitalised. It has gone through a major transformation. It may have cost \$352 million but Kwinana has been completely revitalised. That is due to all the representatives from different government departments, as well as the local council, sitting on that

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

committee and working through the issues to make that happen. If the City of Fremantle does not support a metropolitan redevelopment authority—I believe, from talking to the mayor, it does not—maybe it should think about a similar model to the south of Perth, such as the RKDO. I can tell members from experience that it is very inexpensive for what we get out of the effect.

**Hon Nick Goiran:** It might help if you explain what RKDO stands for because some members may not be aware.

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** I have already; but it is the Rockingham Kwinana Development Office.

**Hon Ken Travers:** We all know what it is. It was ably led by two brilliant chairs in its life.

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** One of them was, that is right!

**Hon Ken Travers:** Don't be so harsh on yourself. Don't discount yourself!

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** I am talking about the last one!

At the end of the day the City of Fremantle has a big challenge ahead. It cannot do it by itself. I see it as being impossible to do it by itself. It needs something like an MRA; if not, an RKDO. Most importantly, it needs to be driven and supported by the local council. If the local council does not get behind a committee or a body like that, it will not happen. That is one of the reasons the City of Rockingham and the City of Kwinana were so successful with their revitalisation of city centres—their councils were behind them.

When I first became a member of Parliament, the Premier told me at budget time to go to the South Metropolitan electorate to identify what was needed. I knocked on the doors of all the different councils in the South Metropolitan Region. Every single council—I have been doing this every year, except last year—came forward with a list of things that they needed funded or supported. The only council door that has never been open to me in order to get that information has been the City of Fremantle. The Mayor of Fremantle knows that quite clearly. He probably was not the mayor at the time that started. Councils have to be able to work with government. Councils need to open their doors and say, “Yes, we need some help.” They have to be able to work with local members of Parliament in the sense that we have to be lobbied for funds in the first place. There are issues too with the City of Fremantle in the way it is managed and its communication. I cannot point my finger at any one thing, but it has now come to the end of the road. The City of Fremantle needs help and some direction generally. Maybe the council should start looking at some alternative models that previous state governments and current state governments have done. Now is the time to seriously start looking. The City of Fremantle is one of the major cities in Western Australia. It has so much history since the first settlers came to Western Australia and the Round House was built in 1829—it is quite iconic. I cannot believe that it has been left where it is at the moment. We are not getting on with it and making the place vibrant.

I will finish my remarks there. I am still very keen to work with the City of Fremantle. I am very keen as a local member to help the council in whatever it needs in relation to funds or support, or meetings with ministers or getting the Premier down there or whatever it needs in order to make Fremantle a better place to live.

**The PRESIDENT:** The question is that the motion be agreed to. Those of that opinion say aye; those to the contrary say no. I think that Hon Ken Travers just got the call.

**HON KEN TRAVERS (North Metropolitan) [2.50 pm]:** What a bizarre situation we have. A member has come into this house in good faith and moved a motion about serious issues relating to his electorate. As he said, the notice of motion was given on 11 June 2013, almost 12 months ago. He raised a number of very legitimate questions that he was hoping to get an answer to. I was certainly hoping to get an answer to these questions from the government. Yet again, the minister did not seek to take the call to provide —

**Hon Helen Morton:** Not yet.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** No, minister —

**Hon Nick Goiran:** She can't because you're on your feet!

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The President was putting the motion and the minister had not got to her feet. Members opposite should not try to rewrite history. As the President pointed out, I just got the call. He called for the ayes and then he called for the noes. He was very kind to give me the opportunity to say a few words because, in theory, he could have said that he had already put the motion.

Hon Simon O'Brien has effectively raised two issues in the one motion. One relates to the future of North Quay, which is the main working part of the port and part of the North Metropolitan Region. The other relates to the future development of the town centre. The first part of the motion relating to the future of North Quay is interesting. There is obviously a fair degree of history. Those members who have followed this matter will know

that Hon Simon O'Brien has a view about North Quay and what should happen to it. I have a copy of "A Vision for the Port of Fremantle" that was released by Hon Simon O'Brien in 2007. To summarise that document—I am sure if I get it wrong, Hon Simon O'Brien will correct me—he was effectively proposing that North Quay be closed as the working port of Fremantle and its functions be transferred to Cockburn Sound. Although that document was released in 2007, before the 2008 election, it never saw the light of day once the Barnett government was elected.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** We've had several changes of leadership in the interim.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** This is not about who was a minister and who was not; I am just explaining the facts of the matter. The document basically proposed a new outer harbour run by the government. It also proposed the private development of port facilities at James Point. Hon Simon O'Brien claimed that the Labor government had behaved and continues to behave in a reprehensible manner to James Point Pty Ltd. Somehow we deliberately stopped that development because it was prepared to build and operate port facilities at James Point. Hon Simon O'Brien was the then shadow minister responsible for these matters. At the bottom of page 15, the document states —

A future Liberal Government, as outlined in this document, will honour the JPPL agreement and indeed give the consortium or its successor a fresh opportunity to contribute to the future of the state.

We know that the Barnett government rejected that after the election. It ended up with the state being involved in legal action with that company. That was the first part. The second part was a state government proposal for a port to be based in Cockburn Sound, and that work was going on. Eventually, the land at North Fremantle would be turned into a massive housing estate. In brief terms, that is the proposed outline. I am more than happy to table that document if members want to see it.

I then proceeded, over a period, to ask some questions. When we found out in June 2011 by way of a question to the then Minister for Transport, who coincidentally was Hon Simon O'Brien, about what happened to the vision for the port of Fremantle and why the government had changed its view, I was told —

The government has committed to retaining the Fremantle inner harbour as a working port, with expected growth to peak at between one million and 1.4 million twenty-foot equivalent units per annum. The government has also committed to a detailed planning assessment to assist in the development of an outer harbour container facility.

In the usual inimitable style of Hon Simon O'Brien, he concluded by stating —

There endeth the lesson.

There ended the lesson and there ended any further word from the Barnett government about planning for a future outer harbour. We have heard very little. The first time I have heard government members talk about planning for a future outer harbour was after Hon Simon O'Brien moved his motion. I accept that this motion was moved with a genuine sense of long-term interest in the issues and, as a member for the South Metropolitan Region, a general concern about it.

The reality is that I think it is now accepted by all, despite that original vision, that the container port at Fremantle will survive well into the future; it will continue to be a working port and over time some of its functions will be moved out. The wharf itself, particularly on North Quay, will remain as the main working port and when it reaches capacity, overflow facilities will be built in Cockburn Sound. One of the interesting questions is: when will that overflow capacity be reached? I think Hon Simon O'Brien said it will ultimately have a capacity of 1.4 million to 1.5 million twenty-foot equivalent units.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** I think that's the figure.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Hon Simon O'Brien used the figure of 1.2 million TEUs in his original document, which is the figure I have always heard quoted. He then said it could have a capacity of between one million and 1.4 million TEUs. My understanding, from talking to people in the industry, is that the wharf space itself could potentially take about two million TEUs over the wharf. It would be limited only by the space for the service industries that sit behind the wharf. Hon Simon O'Brien would understand that as well as anybody in this chamber. Most, and probably even more, importantly, it is the supply chain into and out of Fremantle harbour. The figure that is probably more realistically accepted by most people is the capacity of about 1.2 million TEUs. One of the difficulties is trying to accurately predict that figure. To achieve 1.2 million TEUs, we would need to significantly increase the volume of TEUs that travel in and out of that port to at least 30 per cent, which was the target set by the previous Labor government for containers moving into and out of the harbour by rail. A total of

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

400 000 of those 1.2 million TEUs being carried by rail is around 30 per cent. Arguably, we may even need to get higher than that to achieve those 1.2 million TEUs.

There have been various debates and we have heard various views about that. My view is that to be on the safe side, we have to be focused on getting up to that 30 per cent. One of the problems for the current government is that for the first four or five years, it never locked into a strategy to achieve that 30 per cent on rail. It often did not have an annual budget for it. After the budget came out, it would insert money to run the subsidy.

For those who want to try to turn this into a Roe 8 debate, the pinch point going into Fremantle is not Roe 8; it is between the port and Leach Highway. Tydeman Road and Stirling Highway are the key pinch points in terms of the maximum volume of trucks that can go into and out of Fremantle harbour.

**Hon Lynn MacLaren** interjected.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Yes, regardless of what we do. That is why the 30 per cent target is absolutely crucial if we are to achieve 1.2 million TEUs. Even more concerning is the lack of action in planning for the future outer harbour. If we sustain the sort of growth through Fremantle harbour that we saw for about 18 years prior to the global financial crisis, then before 2020—in fact, probably around 2017 and 2018—we will hit 1.2 million TEUs. There is still strong debate about whether we can even get over one million TEUs through the supply chain, even with the use of rail, heavily, to achieve that.

I refer again to the point raised by Hon Simon O'Brien. We need to focus on more than just the rail and road links into the future outer harbour. We need to bring on the planning for the future outer harbour. A project such as this would take around five years to get through all the environmental approvals. Hon Simon O'Brien has said that at some point between 2017 and 2020, the Fremantle outer harbour will reach capacity. Therefore, we need to know within the next year or so, if not earlier—we should know now—exactly how we will progress the future outer harbour. That was the original time frame that people were working upon. The planning that Hon Simon O'Brien put in place with the Fremantle optimum ports task force seems to have disappeared into the ether. I think he said it was being considered by government. I do not know for how long it needs to be considered. This is just another example of how important infrastructure in Western Australia has been neglected by the current government, and particularly the former Minister for Transport, at the expense of projects that do not underpin the future economy of Western Australia. That is putting this state at grave risk. That reminds me very much of the problem that we have had with railcars, when the government got advice to order more railcars, but it did not do it and ordered them only when the problem was on our doorstep. We are facing the same problem with the lack of planning for the Fremantle outer harbour. I completely agree with Hon Simon O'Brien that that work should be taking place now.

What is fascinating about this is that back in 2008, the then federal Labor government committed to a program called the Perth urban transport and freight corridor. That was a \$750 million program to provide improvements into and out of Fremantle harbour. One of the measures that was included in that program was the upgrade of Leach Highway between Carrington Street and Stirling Highway. That was due to be completed this financial year. That project is still in dispute because the previous Minister for Transport was completely intransigent in trying to find a compromise with the local community on that issue. The government did achieve a number of the projects on Roe Highway and Kwinana Freeway. The program also included an intermodal terminal to be constructed at Kewdale. Two of the projects that had significant funding attached to them were the construction of new road access and new rail access to the proposed Fremantle outer harbour. That money was put in the budget and was there to be spent on those projects. However, not only was that money taken out of the budget, but, from what I can tell, any serious planning for those projects has been dropped. Therefore, Hon Simon O'Brien is completely correct in saying that the planning for those projects should be taking place now. We should never forget that there was once money in the budget for those roads and, importantly, for that rail, not just to be planned for, but to be built and be part of the solution to the issues facing the working part of Fremantle port.

I therefore completely agree with the comments by Hon Simon O'Brien about the lack of action and the urgent need to plan for the future overflow of Fremantle outer harbour. I am very worried that in the next five to 10 years we will reach the point at which our port is at capacity and we have no alternative. That will then constrain the economy of Western Australia, because our port will have reached capacity. We will be like the coal ports of Gladstone, where the economy wants to grow, but because we are a state—and a nation—that relies on trade, we will be restricted because of the lack of foresight and planning by this current government. I reiterate that this was occurring five years ago, and this government has completely dropped the ball on it.

The second issue that was raised by Hon Simon O'Brien, and a number of other members, is the decline in the city and town centre of Fremantle. Like Hon Simon O'Brien, until I became a member of Parliament, I had spent

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

a considerable part of my working life in Fremantle, either working for Senator Chris Evans, or working as a customs officer. So I am very aware of the vibrant past and sense of community that existed in Fremantle compared with what we see today. Members may recall that during the retail trading hours debate, one of the things that I brought to the attention of the house and warned the house about is that back in the 1990s, after the America's Cup, Hon Phil Edman, there was a decline in the way in which Fremantle and the retail trading centre was growing. Places like Garden City Shopping Centre were drawing away from Fremantle its traditional role as a service centre for the south west metropolitan area of Perth. Garden City had become the focus for that area, and a number of department stores had self-located to Garden City. The same thing was happening in the CBD of Perth. The retail heart of the CBD was dying. The solution of the Court government at the time was to allow for Sunday trading and late night trading on Fridays in order to maintain and stimulate the retail centres by giving them a competitive advantage over the rest of the metropolitan area. That is why we saw Myer continue to operate in the Fremantle CBD. However, members will recall that I said to the Court government at the time that if it wanted to change the retail trading regime in Perth, that is fine, but it needed to put in place a strategy to maintain the retail part of Fremantle, otherwise it would die. Unfortunately, those words clearly fell on deaf ears, except for one person, and I will come to him later. We have seen that decline in the retail part of Fremantle.

However, a new body of councillors was elected to the council of the City of Fremantle, led by Mayor Pettitt and Deputy Mayor Josh Wilson, and they are very committed and have been able to work together as a group across political divides—they are not all of the same political faction or group—to attempt to revitalise the heart of Fremantle. They had done a lot of hard work within their community. Some of the proposals that they have put forward to revitalise the centre of Fremantle have required great political skill and have caused great debate in the Fremantle community. Although I could probably argue at the margins about a couple of things, my personal view is that they have got it pretty right. What they have done is not dissimilar to what the City of Stirling has done at Scarborough. That is why I believe councils such as that need support from the state government. I do not disagree with that.

**Hon Phil Edman:** I do not know whether they have got support for the skate park from the general community in Fremantle, though.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I am making the point that they have the plans and the vision. It is a contentious issue within the Fremantle community. I accept that. But often the things that we need to do are opposed by others in the community. That is why these councils need good leadership. What they do not need in that debate is a state government that is undermining their leadership by suggesting that they should have that role taken from them and have the MRA come in. That will make the community even more nervous. It will lose control of that body and will not be able to recognise community values and wishes. If we want an example of how wrong the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority can be in understanding the community, we need only look at the responses of people last week to the signatures around the belltower.

**Hon Phil Edman** interjected.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** My point is that we need to be supportive, whether through the Fremantle Union or not. I do not disagree with Hon Phil Edman, but I always wondered why Cockburn was not included, because if it were, we could have come up with the song title, "R-O-C-K in the South West"!

We need to support that council. I do not disagree with Hon Phil Edman, but there are plenty of models other than a model that says that we, as the government, are going to step in and take away control and put in place a body that does not have any directly elected community involvement. My other point is that Fremantle is an activist community and it has a community that is actively involved. More people will turn up to a public meeting in Fremantle than would turn up anywhere else in the metropolitan area of Perth. That is the nature of the Fremantle community. To propose a model that removes the people of Fremantle's ability to have that say will undermine that community. A body, such as the Rockingham Kwinana Development Office, which works with the local council but which still allows it to have the control that it has had traditionally in planning matters—it has lost a lot of that in the development assessment panels—can still set the structure plan at the local level, and that is where the community would be keen to ensure that they have that involvement. There is a role and a need for the government to be involved in the Fremantle area, but it will not happen by imposing things and taking control. Hon Simon O'Brien said that they need to have some ownership, and that is true, but that ownership will come because they are directed by their ministers to take ownership not because they try to engineer a takeover that removes and attacks one of the things that makes Fremantle a very special place. If a council was standing back and saying, "We do not want to be a part of the future", then there would be every right to say that maybe we need to step in; but we do not need to do that. We actually have a progressive council that is prepared to work with governments to achieve something good for the community. In fact, I would argue

that it has already done a fair chunk of the hard work in the planning. We now need to move into the applied part of the process—that is, to start to deliver.

I said that one person understood what was required to try to revitalise the heart of Fremantle, and that was a former Minister for Finance, who made an announcement on 27 June 2012. It is no surprise that this Minister for Finance was also a former Minister for Transport and understood the benefits of decentralising transport for the people of Western Australia. That minister on 27 June 2012 announced plans to relocate 80 000 square metres of government office space from the central business district to Stirling, Fremantle and Murdoch in the second stage of the state government's office accommodation reforms. Later on in that press release, the then minister went on to state —

Under the plan, head office functions of the departments of Commerce and Housing would relocate to Stirling and Fremantle respectively, as anchor tenants for Government office centres in these areas. Key divisions of WA Police would relocate to a purpose-built facility at Murdoch.

That is all very good. They are the commitments this government took to the 2013 election, along with a commitment to move not a whole department but a number of government officers—500 from recollection—to Joondalup, which also made me a very excited person. The government took that commitment to the 2013 election. The government started to implement that plan. It went to tender for an office location for the Department of Commerce in the Stirling area and it went to market-sounding exercises in Fremantle and Joondalup. What do we know at this stage? We know that the government has rejected the proposal to move the Department of Commerce to Stirling. That is now off the table. We know that because that is the advice given to the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations—that the government does not intend to move the Department of Commerce. That was the most advanced proposal, which had gone to a formal tender, to build the offices.

We are now told that with respect to Fremantle and Joondalup the market sounding is now being considered by government and we will hear an answer at some point in the future. I hope we hear that answer today, because I am very concerned that the government is walking away from its election commitments to relocate offices to Fremantle, which would be, as Hon Simon O'Brien pointed out at the time of the announcement, a great boost to revitalising the heart of Fremantle. If we want to get things happening again in Fremantle, moving the Department of Housing or any other government agency will get it going again. When I was a customs officer in Fremantle a lot more people were employed in customs and in the port industry and Fremantle was humming and a vibrant community. We need to get that back. Getting people working there is part of that process. I think we will find that over time people will relocate to Fremantle, just as they did when the Labor Party moved the then Department of Lands to Midland. People who work in those departments will want to move to those areas so that they are working and living in the same area, and that is why a former Minister for Transport, who understands the transport tasks, so readily put forward such a proposal. We now know that Stirling is off the agenda, and that was the most advanced proposal. What will happen to the office relocation of the Department of Housing to Fremantle? I hope that the minister is in a position to assure us that the government will do something about that.

There is also a need for momentum and energy. The Rockingham Kwinana Development Office is a very good model—and I mean that in all seriousness. Its first chair was the member for Rockingham, Hon Mark McGowan, and then Hon Phil Edman replaced him when there was a change of government. There might have been someone between Hon Mark McGowan and Hon Phil Edman when Mark became a minister.

**Hon Phil Edman:** That is when I had to get the Mundijong Road up.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Is that finished yet?

**Hon Phil Edman:** Just a bit more to do.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It is not built, though, is it? How long has the government been in office now? Five years! We are still waiting.

**Hon Phil Edman:** If Mark had actually done the job he was supposed to do, it would have been built well before now. Don't start that with me today.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The member knows as well as I do that Mundijong Road has been a battle for him to get through, even though he had the federal money for it. What I do know is that two Rockingham restaurants won awards the other day: Rustico Tapas Bar and the breakfast and lunch cafe on the foreshore, which are owned by the same people. I have been to Rustico and I can assure members that it is a fantastic place to go and I can recommend it. The best part is that you can catch the bus or train there and have a few red wines and not have to worry about driving home, as I have done with the member for Kwinana. I am making that point not just to

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

provide a travelogue but because today Rockingham is a very different place than it was before the establishment of the Rockingham Kwinana Development Office.

**Hon Phil Edman:** Wait till the Mangles Bay marina is built. It is going to be a pearler!

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Hon Phil Edman, the point I am making is that Rockingham is a very different place today from what it was before the Rockingham Kwinana Development Office was established, and it has achieved that through partnership. Rustico Tapas Bar is located in a building on the foreshore that takes advantage of and expands on the natural assets of its location, is a great venue for a world-class restaurant and is part of the vibrancy of Rockingham now. The Rockingham Kwinana Development Office is one model. The Fremantle Union is another model. I went to the launch of the Fremantle Union, which has the independent chair of Stuart Hicks and the leadership of a number of government agencies and the port authority. Hon Simon O'Brien did not name the agencies that he felt were not participating. He said he was using this debate as a way of informing the ministers, but I am not sure how they will know when he did not name those agencies.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** I researched this quite some time ago. There may have been some changes in attitude.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Right. I went to the launch of the union and a number of the department CEOs who were at that launch indicated their willingness and keenness to be involved in the Fremantle Union. Some of them commented to me that it was a novel idea and their staff and union representatives found it quite amusing that their CEOs had finally joined a union. Nonetheless all the CEOs were at that launch with Stuart Hicks and expressed their eagerness to be involved. We need to get to the bottom of why they have not become involved. As Hon Simon O'Brien pointed out, why are they not participating? My view is that all that requires is a direction from the minister to say, "Get involved and make a difference down there. Work with these people". If we need to set up a Fremantle development office to bring that all together because we do not like the concept of being in a union, we should do that. But we do not need to take it over. We have to get the will. Even a metropolitan redevelopment authority will not be able to do it on its own.

A range of projects in the Fremantle area need some action from the government. They have been left languishing.

**Hon Phil Edman:** Don't you think I've been knocking on their door for four years asking them for help and they will not? That is the CEO Mackenzie's fault too.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I do not know why Hon Phil Edman has such a poor relationship with them. I am sure it is not because of him, because I think he is a good bloke.

**Hon Phil Edman:** I met with the mayor on Saturday night, so I've got a good relationship with him.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I do not know why that is, but I will tell you what! I am happy to sit down with Hon Phil Edman afterwards and we can call them. Why cannot the two of us meet with them and see what we can get going? In that area is the South West Group of Local Authorities, which pulls together proposals from across the whole region. There are a number of issues, including the Fremantle Traffic Bridge. If we want to keep Fremantle operating as a centre, we have to keep the Fremantle Traffic Bridge going. We have to keep it up. We know it is at the end of its useful life. We know money was allocated in the budget for it to be upgraded, but where is that money today? What is happening about that? As I understand it, the Public Transport Authority is putting in place a warning system to ensure that if a vessel runs into the rail bridge, the trains will be stopped from going across the rail bridge. I want to know whether we also need the same thing for the Fremantle Traffic Bridge to stop traffic going across it should a vessel run into it. It need not be a particularly large vessel; I am not talking about an ocean liner missing the passenger terminal and running into the bridge. I am talking about vessels that regularly go under that bridge. Rottneest ferries running into that —

**Hon Phil Edman** interjected.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Mate, read the reports about the engineering problems with that bridge and the fact that it is getting to the end of its useful life! I can get them for the member. They are about this thick. Work is constantly being done to maintain the Fremantle Traffic Bridge, but all the advice is that it needs to be replaced. It was funded, yet —

**Hon Sue Ellery:** It nearly got some money and then something went wrong.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The money was in the budget and then it was taken out. I have mentioned other issues, such as the rail subsidy. I note that that now has a four-year allocation to it, but it took five budgets from this government to get to that point. Members have talked about, and I agree with them, the former Fremantle Prison warders' cottages, which are an iconic part of Fremantle. I do not really want to remember the number of times I have been to Shangrila and had meals there or wandered through that corridor at various times past those

cottages. They are an absolutely magnificent part of Fremantle's heritage. To see them falling into disrepair and literally crumbling brings tears to my eye. The longer we leave them —

**Hon Phil Edman:** The more expensive it's going to get.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** That is right; it will be harder and more expensive to repair them.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** We will get to the point at which we cannot.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** That is absolutely right. Just as the people in Guildford are screaming about the Guildford Hotel, which is privately owned, the people of Fremantle are watching their heritage die and be destroyed by this government because of the lack of action on those cottages. Still to this day I do not understand why the original tenants were moved out.

**Hon Helen Morton:** Who owns them?

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The state government owns them. They were held by the Department of Housing. I am not sure whether they are still formally within the Department of Housing or whether they have been moved to another agency.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** The Premier looked at them with the member for Fremantle.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The Premier has been down there. This is not a new issue; this has been going on for a number of years. There have been a number of reports about it in the media. I do not even represent the South Metropolitan Region and I cry about it, so I can understand why members for the South Metropolitan Region get upset about this. What does that say when someone walks past a building in such disrepair? What message does that send to the community? What do we know about the theory of broken windows? When we allow a place to look like it is rundown and unloved, antisocial behaviour will be brought to that community.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Thousands of tourists go there because it is right on the edge of the food court.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The cottages are next to one of the entrances to the market; people walk right past them.

**Hon Phil Edman:** The tenants also put them in disrepair when they moved out too.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** The City of Fremantle put a proposal to the state government about how to fix it—nothing.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The reality is that it is the owner of the property—the government—that has to do something about it. Rather than coming in with this idea of taking over the management of Fremantle, the government should just do these things that it should be doing as a part of its day-to-day operations as government. If the government cannot do those things, what confidence will it give to the people of Fremantle that it will take over and control it? It is not as though there is a massive area of landholding that can be put into the control of the MRA and will generate income. It is not as though there is a massive government-owned piece of land that can be redeveloped, unless we go down the path of Hon Simon O'Brien's vision for the port of Fremantle, which would see North Quay closing and that land becoming available for redevelopment. I think we have established that none of us, neither Labor nor Liberal, is of that view. We want to keep North Quay as a working port. Putting an MRA in place will not result in the authority having a whole swag of government-owned land that it can use for redevelopment. The government owns land down there, but the Fremantle Port Authority will not forgo control over the working port, even Victoria Quay, because of its importance. The authority will want to maintain and control the ownership of that land. The government would have a fight and a half from the Fremantle Port Authority if it said it wanted to take Victoria Quay off it and give it to the MRA. The authority will want to ensure that everything done there is done in a way that does not compromise the working port of Fremantle.

Fremantle Prison is a great heritage asset; it is not land that can be redeveloped for commercial purposes. We may be able to improve the commerciality of the project, but I do not think anyone would suggest we could redevelop it into a housing estate. Where is the big parcel of government land that the MRA could realise value out of? There is none. All the government would do is try to take control without having the ability to do anything more than it could do today to make Fremantle once again a vibrant living centre.

It is fair to say that Labor completely agrees with the sentiments behind Hon Simon O'Brien bringing in this motion. A number of very important issues in Fremantle need to be addressed and dealt with. It is one of our major centres in Perth and it has great heritage significance. It is a place that is held fondly by many people in Perth and it should rightfully be restored to its pre-eminent place. People used to think of the greater Perth area as Perth and Fremantle, and my view is that that can occur again. My view is that the council has the capacity and has demonstrated the capacity to be the body that can provide leadership, but what it now needs is a state government that is prepared to partner it—not take over, but partner it—to do its fair share and to do the things

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

that it is primarily responsible for doing, including fixing the warders' cottages, planning for the future outer harbour, fixing the Fremantle railway bridge and getting freight off roads and onto rail. There is a long list of tasks that the government could sit down, draw up and get on with to assist the people of Fremantle and their local council. We have in this case a dynamic, vibrant council, although I do not always agree with all of the councillors; some of them hold views that I disagree with strongly, and some I think might even be members of the Liberal Party! The interesting thing about it as a council is that it is not one in which there is massive factionalism along party political lines.

**Hon Peter Collier:** It's not a divisive council.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** No, and there are plenty of councils we could point to that have those problems, but Fremantle is not one of them. Hon Simon O'Brien is completely right to have brought this matter to the attention of the house—that we need action from the government on this. The opposition cannot support the motion in its current form, with the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority as the solution. We believe that the solution is for the government to genuinely get involved with Fremantle council and partner with the local community to create solutions. As a starting point, the government should do the things it said it would do—find a solution for the warders' cottages, move the Department of Housing to Fremantle, fix the Fremantle railway bridge, get freight off road and onto rail, and plan for a future outer harbour.

**HON HELEN MORTON (East Metropolitan — Minister for Mental Health)** [3.32 pm]: I start by saying I think it has been really valuable for me as the speaker on behalf of the government's position on this motion to have heard the debates that have taken place. For as long as I have been a member of this place, the President or Deputy or Acting President has always given the call from one side of the chamber to the other and back, so concerns that have been expressed by members opposite that somehow I should have spoken directly after Hon Simon O'Brien are, I think, unfounded. I think it is better for us to continue the tradition of debate going backwards and forwards across the chamber, given the benefit to me of having listened to the arguments of other speakers; that has been excellent.

It is actually quite difficult for me to ad lib on this motion, mainly because I do not go to Fremantle very often; I go there maybe two or three times a year. It is not an area I am that familiar with, and I do not understand the local politics or the issues that some people have been talking about. For that reason, I have prepared notes because I have been asked to provide these comments on behalf of the government.

The last time I was in Freo was about two weekends ago, for the annual Music to Open Your Mind event.

**Hon Ken Travers** interjected.

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** Music to Open Your Mind; it is around mental health and mental health awareness. A substantial number of people came through the stalls and attended the music event, held in Kings Square. The feedback from participants was that around 60 to 80 per cent talked about how much more they knew about getting support and assistance for mental illness as a result of the event. If the member is asking me whether the event was successful and whether it opened people's minds, then yes, it did, according to the feedback received.

As I say, it is not an area that I am especially familiar with. Even though I go only about two or three times a year, I have noticed a change and a reduced vitality, and a need for more renewal. Because I am usually focused on Kings Square when I do visit, the closing of Myer was a bit of a shock for me. I thought, "While I'm there I'll whip into Myer's and pick up a few things that I need", because it is sometimes quite hard to get to the shops, but when I got there this time, there was something else there, but it certainly was not Myer. That was a bit of a concern to me, to see that happen.

The government, in almost all respects, supports the intent of Hon Simon O'Brien's motion. The government agrees that Fremantle is an important part of the metropolitan area's cultural fabric, and that economic development and planning for continued renewal and revitalisation is important for the future of Fremantle. The City of Fremantle has been proactively pursuing redevelopment and revitalisation initiatives within the Fremantle city centre, and that is a point that has been made by members opposite: one has to work with the City of Fremantle on this, and that is certainly the way that the government would prefer this to develop—that any further work that the government takes on in this regard is done in conjunction with the City of Fremantle, rather than the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority taking over.

**Hon Ken Travers:** So are you going to vote against the motion as well?

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** The member will find out what I am going to do very shortly.

We would like an outcome in which the City of Fremantle plays a far more significant role in planning and continues to be involved in the renewal and revitalisation of Fremantle. As far as the government is concerned,

the City of Fremantle has been proactively pursuing redevelopment and revitalisation initiatives within the Fremantle city centre. The Minister for Planning notes and commends the City of Fremantle and the Mayor of Fremantle for their proactive approach in considering development opportunities. Over the past several years, the Minister for Planning has approved two scheme amendments to allow for residential and commercial development. In 2011, the Minister for Planning approved scheme amendment 38 to the City of Fremantle's local planning scheme. That scheme amendment aims to increase the residential population of the east end, an area bounded by Beach Street, Burt Street, Quarry Street and Parry Street. I might just add that I do not know where any of these streets are; I assume that those people who are familiar with the area know precisely where we are talking about. Properties there were considered to be underdeveloped. Amendment 38 will provide higher density housing options in close proximity to transport nodes and the services of the Fremantle city centre, which takes into account the built form, heritage issues and other local concerns of the surrounding land.

In 2012 the Minister for Planning approved scheme amendment 49 to the City of Fremantle's local planning scheme. That amendment aims to increase the residential and workforce population of the Fremantle city centre by allowing increased building heights to be approved on certain sites, subject to meeting design criteria. Heights of between four and nine storeys may be approved on 12 strategic sites, including four sites owned by the City of Fremantle. The sites do not include any heritage-listed buildings. The increases in residential and commercial development are consistent with the government's Directions 2031 strategy, and its activity centres state planning policy, and will assist with the revitalisation of the city centre. There was some local opposition at the time of the scheme amendment and revitalisation plans, including from former local member Adele Carles. However, the minister was committed to this scheme amendment, to provide greater flexibility for revitalisation.

The government understands that other areas within Fremantle are suited to redevelopment or infill development. A precinct with significant redevelopment potential that people have talked about is the North Fremantle port area. Some major private sector redevelopment initiatives have been put forward in the past. It is understood that one of the main reasons behind this motion is the desire to see the state government lead redevelopment in this area. Consideration could be given, for example, to involving LandCorp in the development of this precinct. The Minister for Planning is aware that Sirona Capital Management has entered into an agreement with the City of Fremantle for the redevelopment of Kings Square. The Kings Square project is an integrated redevelopment of key sites in Fremantle's Kings Square precinct. The \$220 million project includes the redevelopment or refurbishment of a number of properties currently owned by the City of Fremantle, and the former Myer building owned by Sirona Capital Management, as well as a major revitalisation of the Kings Square public space surrounding Fremantle Town Hall being undertaken in partnership between the city and Sirona. The project will create a civic, retail, commercial and community hub that is a vibrant, active and safe place that reflects Kings Square's unique place in the heart of Fremantle. An article that I have with me, which was published in *The West Australian* newspaper website recently on 2 February, highlights the importance of innovative ideas to drive development and indicates that revitalisation of an area is not necessarily just about the investment of big money. The article details that Fremantle is climbing back into the hearts and minds of the discerning public and reinventing itself as the destination of choice for food, drink and nightlife. It states that in the past six months, more than a dozen businesses have opened in the port city, including the creative use of shipping containers as pop-up restaurants. It goes on —

These places will hopefully be the building blocks of a “new” Fremantle—a city of young, modern and hip business owners who aren't afraid to experiment, invent and innovate.

Successful redevelopment projects, such as those in the East Perth and Claisebrook areas, the revitalisation of Perth Cultural Centre in William Street and more recently the announcement of the state government partnering with the local government in Scarborough, have been made possible due to local and state governments and the private sector getting on board, working together and realising the opportunities that an area offers, and having the will to explore these opportunities. An example of local government resistance stalling planning and development has been seen in the past in Cottesloe. Fortunately, this attitude is changing and appropriate development will soon be able to progress when the relevant scheme comes into effect. An essential component in redevelopment of any precinct, along with private sector investment and innovative ideas, is the will of local government and the community. Redevelopment needs to be embraced by the local community for it to work.

The government's position therefore is that it acknowledges the importance of Fremantle and its need for some revitalisation and the significant potential for redevelopment in certain precincts. Should the government choose to pursue a redevelopment project for Fremantle, it is not considered appropriate to establish a separate statutory authority. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority Act 2011 was established to amalgamate the individual redevelopment authorities across Perth. The act provides for new redevelopment areas to be added to the MRA portfolio as needed, as has recently occurred in Scarborough. The Minister for Planning understands that the City of Fremantle is not seeking the involvement of a redevelopment authority in revitalising Fremantle. However,

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

should this change, the government would be happy to have these discussions. Should the Fremantle local government and private sector investors be keen to look at planning and development opportunities in Fremantle, the state government would certainly be willing to have a discussion about the opportunities that Fremantle offers. Any commitment to develop Fremantle would require a capital investment and, similar to Scarborough, it is expected that financial support would need to come from the local government and the private sector. A Fremantle redevelopment project is not currently scoped or budgeted for.

With regard to the redevelopment of the North Fremantle port area, should state government oversight be required, there are a number of ways to do this other than through a redevelopment authority. This could include any rezoning of the land overseen by the Department of Planning, the Western Australian Planning Commission and the Minister for Planning. Any subsequent structure plans and subdivision proposals would need WAPC approval. Another alternative is that the Department of Planning could work with the local government to prepare an improvement plan for the area and, if needed, an improvement scheme. These documents, which require the Minister for Planning's approval, would enable significant state government oversight and would include land acquisition powers, if so required. Alternatively, the state government could declare a planning control area over the site and call in development applications. However, it is expected that any redevelopment of the North Fremantle port area would require the considerable involvement of other state agencies such as the Department of Transport, the Environmental Protection Authority and the Department of Environment Regulation.

Given all of those comments and the comments I have already heard from the other side, the government proposes to amend the motion.

*Amendment to Motion*

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** I move —

To delete all words after “house” and insert instead —

encourages the government to continue to engage fully with the City of Fremantle in meeting the planning challenges for part or all of the Fremantle area, including North Fremantle.

**HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan)** [3.47 pm]: I will speak to the amendment to the motion to enable the debate to continue, because I understand that the motion will conclude if the mover stands to comment on the amendment.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** No. I was going to speak only to the amendment.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Is it possible for the member to actually speak to the amendment or does he have to address that in his concluding remarks?

**The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson):** It is not possible under the standing orders for the mover of the original motion to speak to the amendment.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Thank you, Madam Acting President.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** It's my motion!

**The ACTING PRESIDENT:** Hon Lynn MacLaren has the call.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Thank you. I understand that I am speaking to the amendment, and in speaking to the amendment I will make my substantive comments about the motion itself.

I congratulate the government for the amendment it has moved. It is an excellent amendment. I will support the motion as amended, if it is amended. I would probably take it a bit further. As we have heard already from some speakers, the greater Fremantle area is worthy of government support in its planning and redevelopment efforts. So rather than just encouragement, I might have—had I had some time, and maybe in concluding my remarks in a subsequent sitting—suggested a further amendment, because I do not think it goes far enough. However, I do believe that amending the motion and making it about encouraging local planning rather than bringing in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority is a very good move in the right direction. I would like to comment on the motion, given I am a Fremantle resident of some time and have a commitment to improving not only our community, but also the sustainable planning in that region.

**Hon Ken Travers:** When did you arrive in Fremantle?

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** I arrived in Fremantle in about 1990; that is when I moved there.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** It's been declining ever since.

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Yes, it has not been good. There have been successive governments; of course, state governments and local councils have changed in that time so I have seen the highs and lows of planning in that area. Working for the former member for South Metropolitan Region, Hon Jim Scott, I was able to comment quite substantially over seven years on planning developments as they occurred, including the deletion of the Fremantle Eastern Bypass, which was a significant change in the planning direction in that region. So I think I have something to offer in this debate on the quality of the planning changes that need to occur.

In addition to commenting on the substance of how the Fremantle area will develop, I will also comment on the motion's form and implementation. The implementation suggested by the mover of the motion, Hon Simon O'Brien, was to bring in the extraordinary powers of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority. Most people who have been researching this motion would have seen that the immediate reaction to that in the newspapers and online blogs by the community was quite considerable concern that there might be a possibility of bringing in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority to achieve the goals we want to achieve in Fremantle. I think it is unnecessary. As the deputy mayor, Josh Wilson, has said recently, Fremantle has the capacity to achieve planning redevelopment in that area. There is no need to bring in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority to achieve it. However, it is appropriate that the state government recognise the regional significance of Fremantle as our main port, and as a heritage hub of great character in our state.

Although the Minister for Mental Health, representing the Minister for Planning, admitted that it might be infrequent that she visits Fremantle, it is true that most people in the state have been to Fremantle for some reason or other, whether to bring visiting relatives or to hold or attend functions, such as weddings, as well as the great festivals, such as the chilli festival, which happened recently. There is quite a lot happening in Fremantle because it is a place; it is a destination. It has character that is really unparalleled throughout the state. That is why I make it my home. I love the port city. I love the sense of history that I get of Western Australia's architecture, its migrant populations, its fishing community, and various multicultural contributions that make Fremantle a welcoming place.

Right now we have the Western Australian Maritime Museum; it was dramatically revitalised in the time that I have been living there. It is a significant architectural landmark on the entrance to the harbour. There is the redevelopment of the wool stores and the cold stores, which are major industrial, iconic port buildings that remind me of Seattle—the grunge nature of a waterfront. We have that massive passenger terminal, which, for many people who migrated to Western Australia in the 1950s and 1960s as ten-pound Poms or whatever, was the first place that they saw.

**Hon Liz Behjat:** It's the first place I saw in 1966.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** In 1966, Hon Liz Behjat came through that port, so she knows what I am talking about. Some of my friends who came as children also speak fondly of that entrance into our city. I have a particular fondness for the Fremantle passenger terminal because that is where they counted the ballots at one of the elections in which I stood. I spent many days there. I think it was 2009, when Hon Mia Davies was elected; that election was in 2009.

A government member: Are you speaking to the amendment?

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** Yes, I am speaking to the amendment insofar as I am trying to explain the social significance of Fremantle as a place, because that is important when we are talking about planning; that is why it is worthy of state government investment. There is a controversial premise that Fremantle needs revitalisation, and I think this speaks to the heart of what Hon Simon O'Brien was intending in his motion. Recently, in Fremantle we are hearing more and more voices debating this; namely, does Fremantle really need revitalising? What does it actually mean? When I reflected on this, I thought about the main street of High Street, which has changed dramatically. The west end has really been transformed into mostly a campus for the University of Notre Dame. We have lost the suit maker down that street; we have hung on to the bootmaker but we have lost the butcher. We have lost the local appliance store. It has dramatically changed, but I think no more than any other town or city in Western Australia, because we have seen a general modernisation of cities. Therefore, what does it mean when people say that it needs revitalising? What is the revitalisation that needs to occur?

That is when I speak to social infrastructure because we have lost the Stan Reilly Centre. We have lost the childcare centre that used to be sponsored by the City of Fremantle. We still retain one of the women's refuges, but many of the services that were provided to the Fremantle community over the years have disappeared. Now sporting infrastructure—namely, the Dockers' home ground in Fremantle—will be lost as well. With that loss of social infrastructure, we are seeing a transformation toward cafe culture. That cafe culture attracts tourists, so we do see the benefit of it in attracting the tourism dollar. But it is happening with a kind of ad hoc approach. What the minister has highlighted in her response to the motion is that there are these amendments to the planning schemes that have an intention of bringing revitalisation or a planning focus into particular neighbourhoods. That

Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Phil Edman; President; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Helen Morton; Hon Lynn MacLaren

---

is where I have seen quite considerable success in Fremantle's planning development. In particular, my office is on Wray Avenue, which is not far from the hospital. Wray Avenue has really become quite a hub for the local community. It has different cafes; it also has local businesses —

**Hon Ken Travers:** Great residents!

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** And residents such as the local member, who actually lives on Wray Avenue, as well as the federal parliamentary member who has an office on Wray Avenue. Wray Avenue has Replants, one of my favourite businesses because it tries to rescue xanthorrhoeas and bush plants that are being cleared in redevelopments. They are able to rescue them and replant them; it is a very sustainable business. There are other sustainable businesses, such as Galati and Sons, which is a local grocer, and we have Frank's butcher. So on Wray Avenue, we have been able to create the hub, the village atmosphere, the main street atmosphere that many places in Western Australia are working hard to create in order to have that activity centre.

That is an example of success in revitalisation for Fremantle without bringing in external assistance from any redevelopment authority or, indeed, the state government. However, that is not to say that that is not necessary, because in order to achieve the goals that we have for Fremantle—to be a place where residents can not only come and buy high-end housing and enjoy the walkable neighbourhood in that dense village, but also find affordable housing—we need assistance. That is the key issue for Fremantle residents today—to find enough affordable housing in that city centre. This is something that Hon Ken Travers mentioned about housing for the workers. If we bring in the public servants from the Department of Housing, for example, to work there, ideally, we would like them to be able to walk to work. The amount of affordable housing in Fremantle has changed dramatically since I moved into that area in 1990 and we now see fewer and fewer homes to purchase that are within the family budget.

That is something that the mayor and councillors are constructively working on to deliver in Fremantle. Trying to find areas where we can increase density and bring the price of housing down is something that they are working on very successfully and although it is a time of change and there are considerable amounts of controversy around that, I believe that they are moving in the right direction in revitalising our housing in Fremantle. It is also fair to say that in order to maintain the character of Fremantle, which rightly was acknowledged by Hon Sue Ellery as partly a heritage character, we really do deserve and merit state government investment in places such as the Henderson Street flats. For the benefit of those members who are not so familiar with Fremantle, these are the flats right next to the Fremantle Markets. Right in the heart of our city are some heritage terrace buildings that are currently in a planning blight. Yes, the Premier has been there so he knows the issue well. Every resident in Fremantle knows the issue well. It has been in newspapers for at least three successive state election campaigns and each time there has been a promise to somehow resolve the issue.

This is one of the issues that go to the heart of the motion brought forward by Hon Simon O'Brien, which is that the state government has the responsibility to invest some money in Fremantle for assets such as this in order to ensure that we can continue our growth and maintain our existing heritage character for generations to come. We do not want to find ourselves redeveloping Fremantle into something that it is not, such as Ellenbrook. We do not want to create a new city when we have a perfectly wonderful, rich heritage village in this port city.

**Hon Ken Travers:** That is why the Greens oppose the Ellenbrook railway line.

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** We have never opposed the Ellenbrook railway line.

**Hon Ken Travers:** They do; all the member's greenie mates in Fremantle oppose it. It is appalling!

**Hon LYNN MacLAREN:** That is not true and we certainly need another motion on that. What Hon Simon O'Brien has mentioned and is really significant is the future of the port. He brought that home when he said that that is the main purpose of his motion.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.