

FREMANTLE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Motion

Resumed from 2 April 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.

to which the following amendment was moved by Hon Helen Morton (Minister for Mental Health) —

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) [2.29 pm]: I want to continue the remarks that I began last week. Before doing that, I need to acknowledge some important people in the public gallery. My mother, Madeline MacLaren, is here from Oregon in the United States, along with her partner, Walter Swain, and our family friends Ann and Larry Anderson. I welcome you to the public gallery and acknowledge your presence. It is great to see you.

Last week, I was talking about the special part that Fremantle has played in my life and the fact that for quite some time I resided in the area, so I welcomed the motion that Hon Simon O'Brien put on the notice paper to discuss planning in the greater Fremantle area. I then went on to support the government's amendment to that motion because I appreciated the fact that instead of giving the planning for Fremantle to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, the government would rather encourage the City of Fremantle to continue with its planning efforts. I know that the City of Fremantle has gone to considerable efforts in recent times to come together as a community and develop a strategic planning approach for that area. I really look forward to hearing Hon Simon O'Brien's response to that amendment when he is given the opportunity to respond.

Hon Simon O'Brien: I'm not hung up about the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority; I want to get the damn job done of fixing up Fremantle. It's not happening now, so that's what we need to be talking about.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Yes, and I think we are of common mind. Certainly, most of the members who spoke on the motion previously have illustrated the challenges that face Fremantle in its planning and the struggles that it has had over the years to achieve positive change.

Challenges that were highlighted during the previous hour or so of debate include pressures due to the ever expanding port. The number of containers is expected to grow exponentially. I think that if the port continues its five per cent growth as predicted, by 2030 there will be something like 1.5 million TEU, which, as we have discussed, is twenty-foot equivalent units—the unit used to measure containers. That 1.5 million TEU is a mind-boggling number to try to imagine. My constituents are increasingly concerned about the number of truck movements in and out of the city and call in ever louder voices for a shift to rail. Moving freight in and out of the port city is a significant planning challenge, so I want to address some of the solutions that I hope the government will reflect on if it does encourage the City of Fremantle to continue to address its planning challenge.

Retaining the heritage fabric of Fremantle is another challenge that I mentioned last week. I would like to point to a solution that I proposed in the pre-election stage because we had an initiative to help retain the heritage fabric.

Another challenge involves growing local jobs and the local economy. We talked about the Department of Housing potentially relocating to Fremantle and providing more local jobs. I also want to talk about other things that the government can consider to revitalise local jobs and the local economy.

Further challenges are transport services for people in the southern corridor, social services for children and seniors and, finally, increasing the housing supply, particularly affordable housing. As we mentioned, in the early days, Fremantle as a port city provided affordable housing for port workers who were not highly paid. Nowadays there is gentrification of the port city and more and more people who move there are in a higher income bracket. Therefore, we need strategies that will encourage students and workers to live in Fremantle. We also have a positive solution for that.

I want to focus members' attention on the range of positive solutions in the hope that should the government embrace this motion, it will proceed forthwith to help Fremantle in its planning challenges. I will start by quoting the Fremantle Society, which celebrated its fortieth birthday a couple of years ago. It is a long-time invested stakeholder in planning for Fremantle. In quoting the society, I want to reflect on how important it is for the

government to continue to engage meaningfully with local people, including the Fremantle Society. I will quote Roel Loopers, who was president of the Fremantle Society, from his blog —

We fought hard to retain the uniqueness of the West End, and also saved Victoria Hall, the Railway Hotel, the now Kulcha/Dome building, and many other outstanding buildings tourists from all over the world come to see. We did not allow Fremantle to go the way Perth was going ...

He went on to state that, furthermore —

Fremantle needs to develop on all fronts. We need more people living and working in the inner city, we need hotels so tourists can stay in town instead of having to commute to Perth, we need student housing and affordable accommodation and we need more things for visitors and residents to do. Fremantle could do with an Aboriginal and cultural centre, we need more, and more creative, public open spaces and parks, more playgrounds, more evening entertainment venues for mature people, etc.

In supporting this motion, I encourage the government to reflect on the views of the Fremantle Society, as I certainly do as a member who represents it.

How do we protect that heritage fabric? Last week, we talked about one of the challenges being the warders' cottages in Henderson Street, which has been a planning blight for some time, as people who live in Fremantle are well aware. This issue has come up at every single election and various promises have been thrown around about how to solve it. We know that \$6 million is needed to ensure that the Henderson Street flats do not fall into disrepair and demolition by neglect. Firstly, something that this state government could do to really benefit the very heart of Fremantle would be to invest some money in renovating those Henderson Street flats and resolve the problem of who is in charge and whose fault it is. Really, we just need to get on and do the job of renovating those very significant heritage buildings right in the heart of Fremantle. Secondly, the Greens proposed in the pre-election period that \$2.1 million over three years be allocated to conservation management plans, which would ensure that everything on the state Register of Heritage Places has a conservation management plan attached to it. That would be a very small investment to retain our heritage long into the future to ensure that those plans are done. Then, of course, there is the issue of ensuring that those plans are implemented, but a small investment of \$2.1 million over three years would cover all the places on the state heritage register.

Another thing that I called for was to change the law so that we can prohibit demolition by neglect—that is, failing to take care of a heritage place. Right now, a penalty needs to be ascribed to that. I have suggested a penalty of \$1 million and \$50 000 a day for demolition by neglect offences. The Guildford Hotel, for example, was a key issue in the lead-up to the last state election. What has been done to save it? Likewise, the Henderson Street flats. If there were true prohibition, if there were a \$1 million fine, we could be assured that people would not allow their heritage properties to fall into disrepair and neglect so that the public loses them forever. Finally, we should also change the law to limit ministerial discretion and to make public the Heritage Council of Western Australia's advice. I am flagging an upcoming amendment in that regard because that is something the Greens have tried for many years. Retaining heritage in Fremantle is a key planning issue that I want the government to take on board.

Planning for the transport problem that faces us is very important. I want to highlight that the Fremantle Port Authority itself in its 2012–13 statement of corporate intent highlighted this issue. It states —

To provide for future trade growth and enable the Inner Harbour to reach its potential, it is imperative that an increasing share of the container transport task be moved to rail and that transport efficiencies continue to be pursued. Key planned investments include the construction of stage 2 of the North Quay Rail Terminal to provide for longer trains and the development of a complementary new inland intermodal terminal in the Kewdale/Forrestfield area.

It flagged at that time that —

Construction works are expected to commence in 2012/13.

Fremantle port is not alone in saying that freight needs to be managed more wisely. There should be fewer container movements in and out of the port city, more rail efficiencies through double-stacking and better management of empty trucks leaving the port. That will help the constituents I represent breath better. As members will be well aware—I have mentioned this a few times—diesel particulates from trucks are a serious health matter. This is notable because my family are here visiting from America and I am reminded that the port of Los Angeles has a levy on trucks that come into its port area because of the health impacts on air quality from diesel particulates. In June 2012 the World Health Organization made the very significant finding that diesel exhaust is a cause of lung cancer. I have not noticed our planning authorities yet respond to that finding, but diesel-reliant industries should be on notice. The World Health Organization raised the status of diesel engine exhaust to a grade one carcinogen when it concluded that longer-term exposure to diesel fumes was a cause of

lung cancer. Reducing truck movements in and out of dense cities where children live is a significant task for the state government. I have not seen it move in the right direction in the time that I have lived in Fremantle, which is almost 30 years. We have seen an increase in truck movements, rather than a decrease, and we have seen an increase in population, a densification of that population and no commensurate response to reducing congestion and truck traffic in the area. The state government should take on board that planning concern, because the City of Fremantle cannot do it by itself. That is the why the state government should be engaged in this planning issue and should commit more resources to completing its transport planning task.

I am not sure whether members are aware, but in the lead-up to the federal election Senator Scott Ludlam costed the duplication of the Fremantle Traffic Bridge. He found, through the parliamentary budget office—that is, the budget office the Greens helped establish during its last term in federal government—that there was an amount of \$842 million in unallocated funds that could be used to address our transport problems.

Hon Col Holt: In WA?

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Yes, in WA. We have found that money for WA.

Hon Col Holt: You should have two senators there.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: We needed only the one. We already have one; we actually have two.

Hon Col Holt interjected.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Hon Col Holt, next time we will try for two.

Two hundred million dollars of those federal funds—I am not talking about state government money; I am talking about federal money that is available, money we are trying to attract to the state of Western Australia—is available and can be used for the duplication of the traffic bridge right now. Today, we could double the capacity of that traffic bridge and reduce truck traffic and increase movement of freight on rail.

The other thing I suggested during the state election was to connect by light rail Cockburn to the south and Booragoon to the east to Fremantle. That will reduce cars. Light rail, when it is not powered by diesel, is an improved outcome for transport; so light rail powered by solar or other power sources can reduce the amount of particulates in and around our cities. That is a no-brainer. There are already frequent buses into Cockburn and out to Booragoon and that significant investment for light rail, which again has been costed by the parliamentary budget office, needs to be applied to that doable project. The state government should be working with the federal government to use that federal money to establish significant infrastructure for Fremantle.

Affordable housing is a complex problem. It could even be called a “wicked” problem. There are warehouses and commercial buildings in Fremantle that could be converted into affordable housing. Recently, the Fremantle Cold Stores was renovated and flats have opened there. The flexibility of the City of Fremantle planners to allow granny flats to be built in backyards has also helped boost affordable housing and has demonstrated its innovation by accepting not only grannies but also other people such as students and workers who want small, affordable flats. Those things are now possible in Fremantle, and it is increasing affordable housing in that way. Those are the kinds of things the state government can do, by working with the City of Fremantle on its zoning decisions, to deliver good outcomes for the people of Fremantle. Growing local jobs and the economy is also achieved by boosting the number of local residents. That is why more affordable housing and more housing generally is needed in that area and why Fremantle needs to be accessible by frequent and reliable public transport.

Members have also raised the issue of the location of commercial and government enterprises in Fremantle, and I know that the mayor has dedicated himself to encouraging larger employers to operate in Fremantle so that there is a constant population supporting small businesses. With the ALP, I have argued for the retention of Fremantle Hospital. It should be an employer and a service provider for people in Fremantle so that they do not have to travel outside their area to access health facilities. Fremantle has an ageing population yet some people have to travel to other hospitals to get treatment when there is a perfectly good hospital in Fremantle. The connection with Notre Dame University, which educates doctors, is currently being exploited, with training doctors' practices being set up at Fremantle Hospital. There are great opportunities to localise the population and work and also have services available for everybody. A project very dear to my colleague Hon Robin Chapple is the Fremantle wind farm. That, too, is an employer for the local economy and will also boost Fremantle's aim to be a sustainable city.

Prioritising social infrastructure is important to Fremantle's planning. I note the loss of childcare facilities and some seniors' services, services which are important for Fremantle's ageing population in Fremantle and young families. It is important that we ensure adequate and affordable childcare services and seniors' services are available in Fremantle. As a member for the South Metropolitan Region, I visit a lot of seniors' services facilities throughout my region. There are some fine examples of seniors' services facilities in the City of Melville and the

City of Cockburn, but the City of Fremantle, with its competing priorities, is struggling to maintain a high level of services for seniors.

Finally, I turn to emergency accommodation. Fremantle still operates a women's refuge. Due to the homeless youth who are attracted to Fremantle and the incidence of domestic violence that occurs throughout our city, it is critical that we maintain emergency accommodation in Fremantle. That is something the state government can do. In supporting the amendment moved by the minister, I conclude by saying that in Fremantle, we have a jewel. It is rich in character and heritage. I am looking forward to sharing it with my mother over the next few days and showing her just how much I love that place. International tourists flock to Fremantle, no matter where they go in the city, even if it is for just a day, because of that unique character. That unique character needs two things. On the first hand, it needs to be treasured, valued and restored—heritage places need to be restored—and, secondly, it needs to be enhanced through more people living and working in that port city. These are huge planning challenges in a city that is the main freight port for our state. I am encouraging the state government to get on board quickly in addressing these planning challenges in Fremantle, and if it decides that we will proceed with the development of that outer harbour, it should start that planning process now. As we heard from Hon Ken Travers, it is about a five-year process. The government should get it underway so that these critical planning challenges can be addressed quickly.

The most important issue to my constituents now is the widening of High Street and the proposed extension of Roe Highway stage 8. These two issues threaten very important reserves in the area, yet the state government keeps arguing that they are critical to our transport infrastructure. If we made the decision to build the outer harbour in Cockburn Sound, that pressure would be taken off that area and people who love the trees along High Street, the golf courses and the amenity in and around the area where the Stirling Highway intersection is will continue to enjoy that amenity, and people all over the city who value our wetlands will continue to enjoy the Beeliar wetlands. These are critical planning decisions that the state government must make. I can tell members that they will benefit when citizens in that area no longer have to fight these two proposals to save the things they love most. In saying that, I remind members that I support the motion as amended by the minister.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [2.52 pm]: I would like to speak to the amendment. I think it will achieve what all members have articulated in this very fruitful debate; that is, it will address the issues around the overall Fremantle area and provide some suggestions to make it the vibrant, dynamic city it has been over numerous periods of its long history. I thank Hon Simon O'Brien for bringing the original motion to the chamber. It is an example of an effective local member identifying issues within his area and bringing it into the chamber for parliamentary debate. First of all, I will give the chamber a bit of history about why I feel I have, dare I say, the capacity to speak on this motion, even though I have been in the western suburbs probably for most of my adult life. I grew up in Kalgoorlie; I was a Kalgoorlie boy.

Hon Kate Doust: A flash area!

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, Lamington is a very flash area of Kalgoorlie. That was where I spent my childhood, but I have spent pretty much most of my adult life in the western suburbs of Perth. I went through a period of my life when I was a Fremantle boy and had a fair amount to do with it. It started well back in my Kalgoorlie days. I am providing this information to show that I am not speaking out of context. I am very familiar with Fremantle and the issues there, and I have had a considerable amount of experience in the Fremantle area. When I was a little tacker I used to come down from Kalgoorlie. My grandfather had a small cottage next to the building with the white dingo painted on it—the old flour mill, which I think has been heritage listed for about 20 years. That cottage is a wonderful old place that exists right near that flour mill. Members may not know that at that stage, in the late 1960s, early 1970s —

Hon Kate Doust: Is that the 1860s?

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, the late 60s, early 70s. My grandfather was bought out from that home by a group that intended building a residential development. They bought him a home just off South Terrace in Fremantle and were going to knock down the flourmill and build a residential development. That did not happen and that is a good thing. When we came down from Kalgoorlie, I would go fishing with my grandfather on the beach around South Beach and Leighton. He was a very well-renowned fisherman of the time. In fact, I direct members to the January 1976 copy of *Outdoors*, which contains an advertisement for Marlborough cigarettes. I am sure everyone will have a copy of it! If they turn to page 26, they will see a headline that reads "Collier's 'Brine Child'", by Barney Foley. It is a story about my wonderful grandfather.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I know Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich does not like this, because it is a positive story and she does not like that. She likes to nip and carp and moan and groan. It is second nature to her. She should have another lemon for lunch.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The wording of the motion is quite broad. If members just drop in the word “Fremantle” occasionally, I think that will be okay.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I am raising this to give members clarity about the fact that I have considerable experience of Fremantle. This wonderful story about my grandfather and the role he played in Fremantle is tremendous. I strongly recommend members read it. He invented a fishing reel and left me the patent for it, so if anyone is interested in buying that patent, they are more than welcome to see me after I have finished my comments! When we came down from Kalgoorlie in the mid to late 70s—this again goes to the heart of the motion because it shows I have some experience in the area—my parents bought a home in Hamilton Hill, and then they bought a liquor store and a newsagency there. I joined the Fremantle branch of the Liberal Party in 1977 and coached tennis at Fremantle Tennis Club, East Fremantle Tennis Club and Melville Tennis Club. Some very good friends of mine have a business that is an institution in Fremantle called Culley’s Tea Rooms. Maxine and Darrell Culley are very good friends of mine. Their son, Michael, who I taught and coached, now runs the tearooms. It is an institution in Fremantle.

Hon Liz Behjat: They make great sausage rolls.

Hon PETER COLLIER: They do; they are sensational.

As time moved on, from 1981 to 1983, the very first school I taught at was John Curtin Senior High School. I taught there with Michelle Roberts in my first year out. We got on very well and we continue to get on very well.

I have given that bit of background to show that I have seen Fremantle transition from a very average city to a very dynamic city with some challenges, and I think that is the purpose behind this motion of Hon Simon O’Brien. When I first came down from Kalgoorlie and was teaching at John Curtin high school, Fremantle was not a favoured destination for a lot of people. It did not have much that was very attractive in terms of social interaction. There were a few well-renowned restaurants such as the Roma in High Street, which operated until just a few years ago. But, for all intents and purposes, Fremantle was not deemed to be a particularly dynamic commercial, retail or residential area of the metropolitan area. It had magnificent old buildings, and continues to have them, right around the Round House and through into the warders’ cottages and all the way down South Terrace. They were always there, but a lot of them were neglected. The Esplanade Hotel had largely been neglected in the late 70s and early 80s. But then, as members will be well aware, Australia won the America’s Cup in September 1983, and we saw an amazing transformation in Fremantle over the following 12 months. I went away for 12 months and came back in 1984 to find that Fremantle was literally a different city. Residential prices had accelerated, there was enormous enthusiasm and vigour within the community, the retail sector had skyrocketed, and commercial opportunities were profound. Fremantle had become a completely different city in that short space of time, and it went from strength to strength from 1984 through to 1987 when we lost the challenge to the America’s Cup. However, the new, transformed Fremantle was maintained, from the High Street mall right through to the old Walsh’s clothing store, opposite Myer. The whole area became very, very dynamic; a lot of the old hotels became places to be on a Saturday night, particularly for the younger generation. The Esplanade Hotel was transformed into a magnificent, international-class hotel and the new Fremantle was, as I said, retained for a long time.

However, especially over the last 10 years, a lot of the energy around Fremantle, commercially, residentially and in the retail sector, has diminished for a number of reasons, and this brings us to the heart of the motion. We cannot point the finger at any one particular area and say it is responsible; it is not exclusively the state government, successive local governments, or the private sector. In essence, there have been opportunities in other parts of the metropolitan area that previously did not exist, including the vast expansion south of Fremantle through the Rockingham area, and in the northern corridor through Joondalup, Butler and Hillarys et cetera. Fremantle is once again crying out to become the destination of choice. Everything is there in Fremantle; it is a port city with magnificent retail and commercial opportunities and wonderful old heritage-listed homes, and the city is just sitting there, waiting to re-emerge. We need to work together to make sure that that occurs.

My colleague Hon Helen Morton made comments with regard to scheme amendments 38 and 49, which made changes to the Fremantle local planning scheme. Scheme amendment 38 aims to increase the residential population of the east end, which is the area bounded by Beach Street, Burt Street, Quarry Street and Parry Street. These properties were considered to be underdeveloped, so the amendment will provide opportunities for further development of that residential area. Amendment 38 will also 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 about the surrounding land, again, to try to promote, extend and accelerate residential opportunities in that region.

In 2012, the Minister for Planning approved scheme amendment 49 to the City of Fremantle’s local planning scheme. The scheme 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 heritage-listed buildings.

The government has certainly made a start in ensuring that it is part of the process, but as I said, we cannot treat this in isolation and take a silo approach to reinvigorating Fremantle; it must be a collective approach so that everybody is working together. The government has made a start, but there is a long, long way to go. The Minister for Planning has met on several occasions with Mayor Brad Pettitt; I cannot say that I know Brad well, although I have met him on a number of occasions and have always been impressed. I think his heart is in the right place in terms of the development of Fremantle and ensuring that he works for the collective good of Fremantle and is not motivated by political considerations. I know that the Minister for Planning has a very good working relationship with the mayor.

On the commercial front, yes, there have been some challenges in Fremantle; there is no doubt about that. South Terrace today, compared with 20 years ago, has a lot of shopfronts with “to let” signs in the window; previously, they would have been vibrant, dynamic businesses. Again, that is something that can only come about through collective strategies to help reinvigorate the whole Fremantle area. One such enterprise is the Esplanade Hotel, which is a historic building that stands on the site where the convicts were originally housed in the nineteenth century. The current building was constructed and became a hotel in 1895, and went through several successive periods of prosperity and neglect. It reached its zenith after the America’s Cup win; it was expanded and developed tremendously and became a state-of-the-art hotel. Marilyn New bought it in, I think, the early 1990s; it might have been a little later, but she did an enormous amount of work on it. I went down and had a meal and a chat with her a couple of years ago and she was, understandably, a little tired and looking for a way out of the hotel. Originally, I think a Japanese group was going to buy it, but that fell through, and she then sold it to Primewest in 2013. Now Rydges is going to develop and manage it, which is again a positive step forward for the entertainment and accommodation precinct in Fremantle.

Additionally, Hilton has recently announced two new hotels—one in Perth, and one in Fremantle, which will again enhance accommodation and recreation options in the area. That will be at Point Street, overlooking Princess May Park; if members know where that is, it is a lovely area, and a prime place for a Hilton hotel. Yet again, things are starting to occur in Fremantle, which is good.

Hon Ken Travers talked about the warders’ cottages, and I am inclined to agree with his comments. I remember when I taught history at John Curtin Senior High School, PLC and Scotch College, that those cottages were a wonderful vehicle for student learning. They were literally originally constructed for warders at Fremantle Prison, which remained open until the early 1990s. They are wonderful buildings but they are unfortunately, at the moment, in a state of disrepair. Successive governments have not done what they should have done in terms of making sure that the buildings can be resurrected to their former glory. All of that area—the police station, the oval, the markets—is a wonderful place, and to have those warders’ cottages sitting there in that state of repair is really disappointing. I spoke to both the Minister for Heritage and the Minister for Planning after Hon Ken Travers made his comments, and they entirely agree. They are extraordinarily mindful of the situation. That is all I will say at this stage. A number of those buildings now have concrete cancer, which is a shame. We will have to do something very quickly because those cottages are magnificent.

There are a couple of other areas where there has been development in recent times. Sirona Capital has formed an investment syndicate. It will inject about \$100 million into retail space in the old Myer building. It was such a shame when Myer closed its doors. It brought people not just into Fremantle but into other retail areas. That was a decision based upon the gradual demise of Fremantle from the heydays of the America’s Cup —

Hon Kate Doust: No-one was going to shop at Myer; it gradually shut down floor by floor. It was not a viable trading entity but it was not prepared to give up the site to another retailer.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is true, but that was its decision—it was not a government decision. That is why I keep emphasising we cannot be “Nigel no friends” on this. Fremantle is not just a government issue; it has to be a collective approach. I talked about the approaches that the government started to make in terms of hotel accommodation and the further expansion of the Esplanade. The development of the Hilton Hotel will provide impetus, and now Sirona of course. That is a good, positive move. Sirona will invest about \$100 million in that area, which really is the heart of Fremantle, right near the town hall. It is a beautiful place.

We have seen significant development in a couple of other areas over recent years, particularly over the last decade. The University of Notre Dame is magnificent. It is a mix of European and northern American architecture. The university is actually built into the community. If any member has not been to Notre Dame—I know they would be very welcome to have a look—it is beautiful.

Hon Mark Lewis: My daughter goes there.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Not just for learning; just to look at those lovely old buildings. That has provided an impetus for all students. I am sure Hon Mark Lewis' daughter is from Kalgoorlie.

Hon Mark Lewis: No.

Hon PETER COLLIER: She may have been, but anyway all I am saying is that it will bring students and their parents from all over the state into Fremantle. Again, it is a positive step forward.

In addition to that, the Challenger Institute of Technology is now in Fremantle. That is a great facility. The institute has a restaurant in High Street. If members would like a cheap meal, the hospitality students present every day. They cook and serve guests as part of their training. It is really, really good. It literally brings thousands upon thousands of students into the Fremantle area. Also, the development of the Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training facility for the mining and resources sector, a little further south, has been funded by some large mining companies, Challenger Institute of Technology, and the state and federal governments. It means that literally thousands and thousands of students are coming into the Fremantle area when they previously were not.

This is something I announced yesterday: we have some problems with education in the Fremantle area. As far as secondary education in particular is concerned, it is something that the government is addressing. It is a very positive, proactive step forward to ensure that secondary education is provided to Fremantle students. For those who are unaware, in Fremantle there is John Curtin College of the Arts, Hamilton Senior High School, South Fremantle Senior High School and North Lake Senior Campus. North Lake deals with senior students; that is, adult students doing their Western Australian certificate of education et cetera. John Curtin College of the Arts is a specialist school for the arts. A very good soccer program also exists within John Curtin. It is the one school that has maintained its student numbers. There are about 1 120 students at the moment. It has a capacity of 1 200. We will build to accommodate about 1 400 students as a result of the transition of year 7s and a capital build that the government has committed to. It is a sought-after destination. However, as a select school, a significant proportion of its students come from out of boundary. Although John Curtin College of the Arts has blossomed, a kilometre or so down the road is South Fremantle Senior High School, which is a wonderful facility —

Hon Kate Doust: It has a fantastic music department.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It has. It is a wonderful school. It is on about 12.4 hectares. It is a magnificent facility but it has only 320 kids. For a high school, that is not conducive to optimum opportunities for students. There are about 60 year 12 students, which limits the number of subjects. Of that number, about 30 are doing their Australian tertiary admission rank. It limits the number of course options. There is much more of an inclination for those students to go elsewhere, and of course there are limited options because of the select intake through John Curtin. It makes it difficult. A very similar situation exists in Hamilton Senior High School, a couple of kilometres east. It is a school that is in need of repair, but it has only about 400 students. In that instance there is a strange situation of one school burgeoning at the seams, and the other two schools—which are very good schools, with very committed staff—have very low student numbers. In anyone's language, 300 to 400 students in a high school is not conducive to the most positive outcomes.

This government has committed to reforming the education system in the Fremantle area. To date, we have had an enormous amount of consultation. I have been to John Curtin College of the Arts on a number of occasions since I have been Minister for Education, for one reason or another—for performances and to have a look at some issues and then to open the new science block. The Premier and I visited Fremantle at the end of last year to meet with the principals, the chairs of the boards where appropriate—if they are independent public schools—and the parents and citizens representatives of John Curtin College of the Arts, South Fremantle and Hamilton Senior High Schools, and North Lake Senior Campus. The feedback was very good. In addition to that, I have met on a number of occasions with either P&Cs or representatives from the various parent groups to ascertain what they want for education. What I announced yesterday, and what went out online, was a request for community input about the way forward for education at the secondary level in the Fremantle area. We will take that on board, in addition to the information that has been received, to ascertain the way forward. That will comprise direct consultation with the public, but ultimately of course we want to make sure we continue to have a dynamic education system throughout Fremantle. That is what we are doing.

To conclude, as the former energy minister I was responsible for injecting \$12.5 million into the Carnegie wave energy project. It is a wonderful project that is centred off Garden Island. It is situated in South Fremantle. It is another opportunity for Fremantle to show that it is innovative and that it is a part of the renewable energy sector and process. If members put all that together, it is a tapestry that is working. We could do more, we can do more, and that is why this motion should be supported. The motion specifically asks members to encourage 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. That is the exact message I have tried to get through today—that the government will continue to work with the local council to provide positive outcomes for Fremantle. That, of course, cannot be done in isolation. If we want to bring in the people, there has to be some leadership. That is why we need people who are in the commercial, retail and hospitality sectors to be part of this process, so that those restaurants, hotels and office spaces that were full 10 years ago will be full once again. Collectively, I am confident that we can do it. The government will continue to work with the council and the Fremantle community to ensure that Fremantle is once again the vibrant, dynamic city it was about 10 years ago, and that is why I encourage members to support the amendment to the motion.

HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.20 pm]: I had not planned to speak because my colleagues have certainly put the opposition's view on this motion. I commend Hon Simon O'Brien for raising this motion and putting it out there for discussion. It is a very important motion, and I certainly sense his frustration at the lack of action that is occurring in that part of our city. I am not too sure whether the amendment moved by Minister Morton provides the remedy that he seeks. It pretty much says, "Let's keep going as we are." I listened carefully to the comments of the Leader of the House, and I am very pleased that he has such a connection to Fremantle, as I am sure a number of members in this place certainly do.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Can you think of a more western suburb than Fremantle?

Hon KATE DOUST: Rottnest Island.

Hon Simon O'Brien: A suburb.

Hon KATE DOUST: Rottnest is a suburb, is it not? It is an extension of the city now. A chamber of commerce is operating out of Rottnest. How much more suburban can we get than that?

Hon Jim Chown: It has its own postcode.

Hon KATE DOUST: It has got its own postcode; exactly. Electoral Commission booths were operating on Rottnest last weekend. It has a hospital, a police station —

Hon Simon O'Brien: Sorry I interjected!

Hon KATE DOUST: The member did. Let us face it; the member and I know that Rottnest is a fantastic place. Under both state and federal electoral boundaries, it is part of the seat of Fremantle. I am happy to have the discussion about what we could do with Rottnest a little later today as well. It is currently an issue for debate out there in the community. I hope that we have the opportunity and the capacity to have a discussion about it in this place, because a lot more could be done to assist families across the state to gain better access to and enjoyment from Rottnest. Like the Leader of the House, other than being a member for South Metropolitan Region—I am very proud and humble to have the opportunity to represent people in south metro—I have personal connections to Fremantle. During the 1970s, I was a high school student at a beautiful school that was located above the Fremantle harbour. We were fortunate enough to be able to spend our lunchbreak and other breaks sitting in the gardens, watching the ships come in and go out.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Are you a De Vialar girl?

Hon KATE DOUST: No, I was an Our Lady of the Missions High School student, not a De Vialar girl. De Vialar College is out in the bush—we would never have seen the harbour from there. We were very blessed to have the opportunity to see a working harbour in its busy time. It is not as busy these days of course—things have changed. When I began work with the shop assistants' union back in the 1980s, for many years Fremantle was part of the area that I was allocated to organise. I used to look forward to visiting our members in the small and large retail shops in that area. I certainly had a very intimate and detailed knowledge of the Myer store that has been referenced by the minister and others. I recall my first visit to Fremantle as an organiser in late 1984, when the building adjacent to Myer—it is now a cinema—was a Target supermarket, which we do not have anymore. That was in its dying days. Fremantle has certainly seen a lot of change. My family has had a presence in Fremantle since the 1830s, and those with a Doust connection have resided and worked in Fremantle since 1842, so it has been a long and healthy connection to that area. I have a very clear desire to see Fremantle continue to prosper, grow and evolve as it needs to do. When anyone goes to Fremantle, be it for work or pleasure, they automatically feel the weight lift off them. It is a place in which people tend to relax a lot more. They can then take the next step and go to Rottnest and relax even more. I am sure that Madam Acting President (Hon Liz Behjat) would have enjoyed that relaxing experience on Rottnest on Monday night when she visited the newly established Rottnest Island Chamber of Commerce—I am sure we will hear all about that in due course.

The issues canvassed over the past couple of weeks have been many and varied. It is important that we understand that advancing the causes in Fremantle is quite complicated. It is not a single issue. Everyone who has spoken has raised different aspects that need to be addressed. I reviewed Hon Simon O'Brien's speech as

reported in *Hansard* and his discussion about establishing an authority to take over the development of Fremantle. That is probably not the answer, and, obviously, the government does not see that as the answer either. I am clearly of the view that the City of Fremantle, through the various individuals who have been involved over a long period, has tried very hard to keep Fremantle vibrant and alive. It has faced a range of challenges. I went to the more recent launch of the Fremantle Union in 2011, which was attended by a number of members. The council has put together a very good team in the Fremantle Union. Although it is an independent team with Stuart Hicks as chair, it certainly needs support. The government talks about engagement, and I note that a number of government representatives are on that committee, so I am not too sure what more those individuals can do, other than have the government deliver on its commitments to Fremantle. Other people have referred to election commitments made by the government about transferring the Department of Housing to Fremantle. We can certainly see that times have changed and that a lot of industry based in and around Fremantle has been lost; therefore, jobs have gone. In terms of a downturn in retail business, a person has only to walk through the mall to see that a number of shops that used to be full and busy have now shut. I was down there recently and saw that Sussan has closed down. Sussan was an institution in Fremantle and employed a number of staff. Admittedly, Culley's Tea Rooms is still going.

Hon Sue Ellery: It has even better egg sandwiches than Parliament House.

Hon KATE DOUST: I would not say that too loudly if I were the member. Let us not go there—that is a tangent.

However, nearly 30 years ago when I was organising in that area, the mall had such a diverse range of retail businesses in that mall that they attracted not just tourists, but also regular shoppers. It had clothing shops, shoe shops, home ware shops and a number of good, solid bookshops. Now, either the shops are closed or \$2 shops are moving in, which is not healthy retailing. The local chamber of commerce and the council have been working together, trying to bring retail trading back into Fremantle in some of the high-traffic areas that used to be so vibrant. Market Street still has diverse retailing and it is still very attractive, but business peaks on Sunday and Saturday when tourists go to the Market Street area to have a coffee, lunch or dinner, and drop in to have a bit of retail therapy on their meanderings through Fremantle. All of that is good, but there need to be more businesses there. The council has been working very hard, in collaboration with a range of other concerned groups in the area, to come up with the answer.

Hon Simon O'Brien: The member has just finished telling us that she has observed more and more shops closing down, and more and more retailers leaving, creating a vacuum, so that is why she ought to consider the state getting involved.

Hon KATE DOUST: But the state will not fix that. At a much more local level, the council has a greater understanding of what needs to happen in that community. My real worry is that if the state takes over, something like Betty's jetty will be built, and a development authority will provide all these vibrant and interesting places for the community to access. We are hearing about office buildings and ritzy hotels being built. Well, that is lovely but they will not be open and available to the general public. While I can talk about that and Hon Simon O'Brien's motion about the government getting more involved, if the government were to put its money where its mouth is and deliver on its election commitments, in the first instance it would be a good start to shift the Department of Housing, enabling jobs to be created in Fremantle. The benefits would flow to those retailers in and around that area as those workers would go out and spend their pay. That is yet another broken promise.

Rather than wasting \$440 million of taxpayers' money setting up Betty's jetty and digging up the inlet into that area, if this is so important to the government, why has it not looked at its priorities? Fremantle is such a great priority, and the government needs to put its energies and dollars back into Fremantle. The government should stop what it is doing at Betty's jetty and pump the dollars back into Fremantle. It should organise its priorities. If Fremantle is that important, it should make those decisions. This government cannot get its priorities right, and we know that because it is pumping money into things like Betty's jetty and the football stadium, taking it away from areas such as education. It is certainly not delivering on commitments in Fremantle. There are issues around health, with the GP super clinic in Rockingham having just been shut down. If the government thinks Fremantle is important—I think Fremantle is really important; it is a significant part of my electorate—the government should get its priorities right and put its money where its mouth is. There are a range of problems. Hon Ken Travers and Hon Simon O'Brien, because of their interest in transport issues, have canvassed those problems. Other people have talked about housing and the wardens' cottages. They are all significant. We must enable the council to be a significant part of that driver. It has commenced that with the Fremantle Union. That needs to be supported because it will be able to network out into the community and hear what the people of Fremantle want to see happen as well. I am sure that the people of Fremantle want to ensure that jobs are kept locally so that those people can be employed and spend their money in the local community.

I am sure that the people of Fremantle want to retain the schools in the area. It was interesting to hear the Minister for Education talk about the survey in the Fremantle community asking people what they want to do with their schools. I find it quite disturbing that there is the potential to shut down schools in that area. We should take North Lake Senior Campus off the list because that is a post-secondary educational institution and should not come into the equation when we are talking about access to schools for secondary students. John Curtin College of the Arts has always been a specialist school; it has always attracted students from around the state who want to do dance, theatre or art. It is not necessarily a school that every child in Fremantle has access to because the numbers are restricted to certain programs. When I was at high school, that school was really starting to get itself organised as a specialist school. One of the girls who lived around the corner from me used to do ballet. She travelled from Rockingham to get there because those facilities were not offered in Rockingham. South Fremantle Senior High School has a superb music program. The parents, students and teachers have invested a lot of time and energy into that program. Hamilton Senior High School has a number of excellent programs for its students such as robotics and maths. It has superb relationships with a range of industries along the Kwinana strip. The school provides a range of viable options for those students who may not go into tertiary study post-school. I hate to mention his name again, but Hon Norman Moore's fantastic wife, Lee, was a principal at that school for many years. She was a significant driver in getting those programs set up for those students because she identified their needs. I give her absolute kudos —

Hon Sue Ellery: They do telecommunications there as well, particularly.

Hon KATE DOUST: It offers telecommunications, too. I thank the member. A lot of fantastic work has been done in those areas. Sometimes being big is not necessarily best in terms of school size. Maybe the government needs to continue to support the existence of those schools. I moved to Rockingham in the early 1970s. There was only one high school in Rockingham in those days. Because I was Catholic, my parents decided that I should spend three hours a day on a bus, catching six buses a day, and go to Our Lady of the Missions in Fremantle.

Hon Sue Ellery: Not that you've got any scars.

Hon KATE DOUST: No, not that I have any scars.

Hon Simon O'Brien: At least you're over it.

Hon KATE DOUST: One day I will be over it. It is about opportunities. I think there were only 108 students in the whole school. My leaving class consisted of 12 students. Eleven out of 12 went on to university, which was a pretty good number. Sadly, that school is no longer there; some very flash houses are on top of the hill, overlooking that lovely harbour. That is what happens. In terms of South Fremantle and Hamilton, the government needs to think about how communities change and evolve as well with numbers.

I look to another part of my electorate; that is, the South Perth area. When I first came to Parliament, the student numbers in many of the schools in that area were down. Ten years ago there were only about 60 students at Curtin Primary School, which used to be called Karawara Primary School. Those numbers have doubled. Communities change. Who is to say that over the next few years we will not see an influx of families coming back into the area? Those students will need to access a local high school that provides them with telecommunications courses or a music program. I would always prefer to see children go to a school close to home so that they can build relationships with people who live in that area and with their community. That helps strengthen their links for later on. If students spend three hours a day on a bus, they are not necessarily developing those links with the community because they just go from one place to the other.

I certainly hope that the families in Fremantle send a resounding message to this government that it cannot afford to remove those schools; it cannot afford to shut them down. It should be looking to the future and retaining them. There must be a smarter way of providing the range of programs that are needed for students in that area rather than closing them down. I might put a submission in myself as a member for South Metropolitan Region and share my views with the government; that is, my concerns about what might happen if those schools were to go. That is an important part about what happens to Fremantle in the future. It is not just about roads, public transport, retail and business; it is also about how we build that community from the bottom up. That is where we link back to the value and importance of local access to education in the area. That is why I hope the community sends a strong message.

I come back to that favourite theme of mine—retailing in Fremantle. Even though Fremantle does cater for the tourism trade and it has that main band, how do we bring back the other attractors and get people engaged beyond that market street area or beyond the markets themselves into more mainstream retailing? Part of that difficulty has been the growth of large suburban shopping centres, which are made up of a whole group of national retailers. Fremantle, on the other hand, has always been very adept at providing alternative retailing opportunities. I think that is part of its attraction. We have the fabulous New Edition Bookshop, Bob's Shoes and

a range of places down High Street that have opened up over the years, moving down into the West End. They capture that student market as well as the tourists. There is an opportunity there. I congratulate the City of Fremantle, which has utilised the ground floor of the empty Myer store, enabling local designers and alternative types of retailers—predominantly those selling clothing or art—to set up market-type stores. That is an exciting opportunity and I am sure that once this redevelopment occurs there will be other opportunities for that group because, given Fremantle has a different nature to the rest of Perth, that encourages a different way of doing business and the type of product put out to market. That in itself is a significant attractor for people. We go to Fremantle to look for something different. If we want the same-as, we go to the central business district, a large shopping centre or out to a commercial area. But if we want something different, we go to Fremantle. This comes back to my point that Fremantle needs to determine what it wants to be, where it wants to be and how it pulls together all the components that make it such a great place to live and work.

I know that the council will continue to do its work, certainly work with the various groups, and I am sure that the Fremantle Union will continue to do its work but these groups need government support. It is not just about saying, “Yes, we support you”, it is about how to support them. How does the government underpin that type of organisation to ensure that it can actually get on with the job of consulting with the community, developing a plan and looking at the overall planning around Fremantle and where it wants to be in the next 50 to 100 years? I think Fremantle has amazing potential. I have always been disappointed that even when Labor was in government, tourism in Fremantle was not pushed even further, nor did we look at different ways of promoting the city.

One very interesting thing in particular that did happen when we were in government was to do with the Fremantle Prison and what I would call “extreme heritage tours”. People go on Fremantle jail tours where they go down into the pits of the jail. Personally, that is not something that I would choose to do but it is very popular. The heritage issue is also a significant factor that needs to be taken into account. While we can look at change in the area, heritage has sometimes been a barrier to positive change in Fremantle. I note the amendments to building heights and density in Fremantle. That has been an issue, particularly in the west end area. The west end, where the University of Notre Dame Australia campus is located, is a very vibrant and active area during the day but one of the issues that the Fremantle council has to deal with is about what happens in that area after hours. It can be a pretty dark, quiet place at night. There are lots of challenges in that area.

Hon Simon O'Brien has raised this issue at a very good time. It is a healthy issue to talk about. I have been very concerned for quite some time about some of the negative changes that have happened there. I know that businesses move in and out but it has been a struggle. Sometimes I get complaints from businesses in the Fremantle area about rent issues that push them out of the area. That is also an issue and a challenge that needs to be addressed. How do we make Fremantle affordable for businesses to operate and survive? I have discussed this with the local Fremantle Chamber of Commerce. Some of those things that we have talked about in this chamber in the past about having a lease register set up could be something that might enable Fremantle local businesses to last.

Another challenge that we had a while ago—I am not sure of Hon Simon O'Brien's view on this—was all the discussion about moving the Fremantle Dockers to Cockburn. Personally, I thought that was a dreadful idea and I voiced that with the City of Cockburn, which was very enthusiastic. In some ways it is one of those broken promises from the federal government and I was pleased to see that it would not be putting money into that particular project.

Hon Peter Katsambanis: Why is the member opposed to the move?

Hon KATE DOUST: I am a traditionalist in that way. As a Dockers supporter I have always liked the fact that it is in Fremantle and I would like to see them stay in Fremantle.

Hon Simon O'Brien: The member is an arch-conservative.

Hon KATE DOUST: That particular broken promise from Mr Abbott is probably the only one that I find acceptable. Of course, it is disappointing for Cockburn council. The other issue with Fremantle—I have mentioned the City of Cockburn—is local government amalgamations. It is very difficult for Fremantle to know where it is going to be if it does not know what it is going to be. The state government needs to get its act together about how it is going to properly deal with the issues around council amalgamations. At the rally outside Parliament last night we saw from people across the community the level of anger at the mangling of the local government amalgamation process by this government. That also has an impact.

Unfortunately, on this occasion, we on this side will not be supporting Hon Simon O'Brien's motion. I understand why he has moved it and, given that he is a member of the government and given his former position, I hope that he will be able to exert a fair degree of influence upon his ministerial colleagues and get them to put their money where their mouths are. This is indeed a significant issue for members for South Metropolitan

Region and we certainly want to make sure that our constituents in the Fremantle area have a say in what is going to happen in the future rather than have that dictated to them by somebody else. If the government delivered on its promises, there may be a better future for Fremantle. I hate to think that in five years, when Hon Simon O'Brien is sitting on this side of the house, he would raise this motion again because his government did not deliver.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Do not expect me to be sitting there in five years.

Hon KATE DOUST: Does the member want to tell us something?

So that we understand what I am saying: unless this government is prepared to bite the bullet and deliver the dollars to support and underpin the work that the Fremantle Union is doing and deliver on its election commitments, my great fear is that we will indeed be having this discussion again and again. My view is that Fremantle certainly needs all the support it can get. It is a significant part of our state, a part that is very attractive to people in our community and we want to make sure that it retains its vibrancy and diversity and is able to continue employing and housing people and growing and thriving as it should.

HON PETER KATSAMBANIS (North Metropolitan) [3.49 pm]: I rise to make some brief comments on this motion in order to allow the mover, Hon Simon O'Brien, to have his right of reply, which I think is very important. I will speak to the amendment and the motion. When I first read this motion I was not quite sure whether I agreed with it or not. In particular, I noticed that it was referring to North Fremantle, which is in the North Metropolitan Region. I thought, here we go; here's a member from south metro getting involved in north metro and I wondered whether this was a land grab that he had occasionally railed against when people tried to cross the river the other way, to cross that moat, to get into the South Metropolitan Region. However, listening to the debate, I overcame my objection. This sort of motion goes to the heart of the type of planning that we need to make our city—Perth, Fremantle and the greater metropolitan Perth area—an even better place to live. We need to forget about some of these artificial divides. Sometimes we need to acknowledge that not only one side of the river might be different from the other, but also there will be better outcomes if we look at precincts and do not worry about whether roads, rivers, streams or other such impediments are within them. Listening to this very interesting debate, I came to the conclusion that this is a motion that I can support because I think it will lead to better planning outcomes.

I do not have a lot of time today, but I want to address a couple of issues to which I bring perhaps a unique perspective. I am not one of these people who have some emotional sentimental attachment to Fremantle from a long, long time ago, but perhaps I am one of those people whom Fremantle needs to attract on a more regular basis. The first time I went to Fremantle was about 14 or 15 years ago as a tourist to this city. The boat trip to Fremantle was terrific. I have to say that that boat trip leaves the Manly ferry for dead. It was one of the best boat trips on a waterway that I have experienced. It was wonderful. However, once people get to the other end, to Fremantle, the initial experience—I have had this confirmed by other tourists who have arrived there, whether by train or ferry or on a big ocean liner—the initial impression, the first moment that they step off the boat or train, is really underwhelming. The first questions are: Where is it all? Do I turn right, left or go straight ahead? It is those small touches that need to be addressed to make it a better tourism experience from the first moment people get there, rather than have them wander around, eventually find their way through the streets and think, "Hey, this is not too bad." We need to get those initial things right, perhaps by having some tourism guides available at the jetty or brochures or the like. We could perhaps articulate marked walking paths, as they do in many cities in the world, where people can follow, say, the yellow line to see the heritage trail or the red line to go to the cafe strip or whatever. All that, I think, could really encourage a better first impression and make people stay longer. As we know, the longer people stay in a place, the more money they spend. Perhaps that can be taken on board and looked at as part of the principles outlined in the motion that Hon Simon O'Brien brought to the house and in the amendment moved to the motion.

Another discussion was about the change in retail in Fremantle. A lot of members spoke about that. Hon Peter Collier and Hon Kate Doust spoke about it in their contributions. Hon Lynn MacLaren lamented the fact that there was no longer an appliance store or a butcher in the local street. I think that is really sad, but it does not have to be so. Simply accepting it and saying that everyone will go to the big malls is, I think, a very defeatist attitude. I grew up on what I still consider to be Australia's premier retail and entertainment strip—that is, Chapel Street in Prahran, South Yarra and Windsor, which are three distinct zones, may I say, in Melbourne. My dad was a shopkeeper there and it is where I lived until I was 11 years old and we moved up the hill a bit. I watched that place transform over the years and it continues to transform. It fought the big shopping centres. At the heart of Chapel Street is a market, just as at the heart of Fremantle there is the Fremantle Markets. I think the offer at the Fremantle Markets is quite good. Sometimes I go to Fremantle because I want to wander around the market for a little while. It is basically unique in Perth; there are not too many offers like those at the Fremantle Markets. Looking at other markets across Australia, there are three really great markets in Melbourne—namely, Queen Victoria Market in the city, South Melbourne Market and Prahran Market. There is a really good market

in Adelaide, although I read that it is now having a few problems; it has been functioning for a long time in the centre of the city in Gouger Street. The markets in Sydney are often referred to as Paddy's Markets, which are in the Chinatown region of Sydney. These markets seem to have a vibrancy that perhaps is lacking a little in Fremantle. I think that the shopkeepers do the best that they can, but sometimes it is a combination of how much money they will spend given the foot traffic that they are getting. This is really about elevating what we have to a better offer, which will encourage locals to shop there. It will encourage more visitors to come, be they tourists or people from other parts of the greater metropolitan area, and it will allow for shops, such as a butcher shop or an appliance shop, to have the clientele that will help them keep their doors open or, even in the future, to encourage someone to take the risk to open a butcher's shop. There are butchers in Northbridge, North Perth and other parts of Perth. I will not give them an advertisement, but there are butchers in shopping strips who do a great job and have a great clientele. Perhaps with that mix of tourists, local visitors and local people, Fremantle people may have a local butcher come back into the area one day soon. I think that would be a terrific thing.

I have to say that what has often been an impediment to achieving great things in places such as Fremantle is the piecemeal approach that is taken. Some things are the council's responsibility and some things are the government's responsibility, whereas other things are rightly left to the private sector. However, we do not have to operate in silos. There needs to be a little coordination and the bringing together of the various people to compare notes and perhaps find a way through to encourage more investment and greater growth in the area. I think that is at the heart of this motion. We need people to coordinate an approach to Fremantle that recognises it as a premier part of the Perth metropolitan area and the state of Western Australia. Importantly, we need a coordinated approach that recognises and understands that there is a very important working port at the heart of Fremantle. Unless someone comes up with a grand plan to remove the port, which I do not think anyone has discussed with any seriousness in debating this motion or has even contemplated, we should not be planning for the greater Fremantle area without planning for the fact that the working port needs to continue to exist and be viable. It is funny that this morning there was an incident on the roads around the port in North Fremantle that caused massive traffic disruption.

Hon Darren West: I don't think "funny" is the word that motorists were using!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I think it is coincidental that that happened, but it highlighted again that it is a challenge to have a port at the end of a road that travels through massive residential areas of a large, sprawling suburban city. Those challenges can be shoved away or they can be faced. I do not think that it is fair for the City of Fremantle to face those challenges alone. I do not think it is fair for the state government to face those challenges alone; nor is it fair for the port operators, whomever they may be in the future, to face those challenges alone. These challenges need to be discussed. Our approach to these challenges needs to be coordinated in the same way that we deal with how to revitalise the Fremantle shopping strip and the tourism precinct and how we capitalise on the fact that a new hotel investment is coming into the area. Finally, as we heard from Hon Lynn MacLaren and Hon Peter Collier, new retail investment is being encouraged into the old space that Myer had probably mentally abandoned for a long, long time—ever since I can recall—and physically abandoned not so long ago. That is all well and good, but some coordination is needed. We need an approach that will facilitate growth whilst respecting the heritage of the area, promote the area to a bigger demographic, make the offer that is available to tourists and visitors even better than it is today, and make it a vibrant and attractive precinct for everybody to visit. That is what Hon Simon O'Brien wants to do in his motion. I commend him for bringing it to the house. I commend all members for the way in which they have discussed these issues in a non-partisan political way. They have really talked about how a good place, a place that we think is a jewel in the crown, can be made even better so that it continues to grow and provide better opportunities for the people who live, work and visit there. I commend the amended motion to the house.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [4.01 pm] — in reply: I thank members for their participation in this debate. I thank them also for their courtesy to provide some time for me to make some brief remarks in response.

Last June, when I set out to do something, I did it by way of putting a motion on notice calling for a Fremantle redevelopment authority, knowing that it would kick a bit of a hornet's nest—and it did. That was my purpose—to get people talking about something that is not being talked about and to give some consideration to a matter that is going to pass us all by if we are not too careful. Hon Peter Katsambanis gets it. He spoke about the need to make sure that we maximise opportunities or, more to the point, that we do not let opportunities pass us by, and that we are all involved and take some ownership in the planning that is necessary for an important regional centre into the future. That is what I set out to do. I did not set out to get the matter onto a front page or two in the local Fremantle press. I do not care about that. It got people talking down there. Members should have heard some of the tut-tutters who were writing letters and articles to the *Fremantle Herald* and other newspapers for my daring to challenge the comfort zone of the people who are involved at the moment, who want to retain all

the ownership for themselves and who do not want to see Fremantle as anything other than a backwater. My purpose, however, was to get people thinking about it, because not enough people are thinking about it.

Again, I thank members for their contributions. Whenever the subject of a debate is about Fremantle, everybody goes all “Freo” on it. Member after member gets up and tries to outdo the last six speakers on their links to Fremantle. I do not bemoan that at all, because I can participate fully in that, but it does show how everyone has a soft spot for and wants to be associated in some way with Fremantle and its traditions and what have you. That is great. I put it to members again that if they care so much about Fremantle, why are we not actively engaged in securing its future?

That brings me to the amendment moved by the government to delete the words after “house”, thereby not leaving a heck of a lot of the original, and inserting the words —

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.

When this motion is passed—or not—in whatever form, it does not matter a hill of beans. As I have said before, I am raising this matter because it needs to be raised for discussion. I do not care whether or not motions of this sort get passed, because they do not have any binding effect.

I am quite happy to accept the amendment because I do not want the debate to be about technicalities; that is not what this is about. Members can make the motion whatever they like, because I am more than happy to go along with it. I would query the word “continue”, as in the government “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”, because I am not sure that we are fully engaged. If the government thinks that we are fully engaged, it is a pretty poor standard of engagement that it accepts. That is why I am standing up and bringing it to everyone’s attention. That is why member after member is getting up and saying, “I remember when Fremantle used to be really good and there are glimpses of it here and there.” We heard Hon Kate Doust bemoaning the fact that the Sussan clothes-horse shop in Fremantle has shut down! Is Betts & Betts still going in Fremantle?

Hon Sue Ellery: It is Betts now.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It is already half gone then!

Hon Kate Doust’s school is gone and all the department stores have gone. A number of other members have mentioned things that have shut and is that not a pity. They say, “Gosh, we hope that something will come back one day.” Myer has gone. The council has decided to turn that big old gigantic, barnlike mausoleum into something better. I wish it every success with that. Member after member has betrayed through their words an acceptance that Fremantle is running down, continues to run down or, at least, is in a process of transition of renewal. I think Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, who we have not heard from in this debate, gets it as well.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: Absolutely spot on.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Hang on, please! I have limited time. Allow me, through you, Madam Acting President, to express my appreciation to Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for once in 17 years remaining silent in one of the debates that I have started and for sitting there and nodding at me. I think she gets it. She notes that Fremantle is in a process, at least, of total transition from the late nineteenth century, urban, river mouth, bustling port, with all its manpower and everyone living locally, and having pubs and butcher shops and all the other things that have gone now. It is in a process of transition. The point is that we want all of the potential in this location built upon for the future, not allowed to lurch from one unhappy outcome to another, to go rudderless and leaderless, without direction, in making decisions that will dictate through its physical structure, as much as anything else, the future amenity and functionality of this prime piece of the Perth metropolitan area.

As I say, I am quite happy to accept the amendment; I am not worried whether the house does. My purpose has been achieved simply by getting people to talk about the issue; that is, the first purpose has been achieved. I want also to see some action generated from that. As I have indicated before, I do not think the state government—perhaps successive state governments if people want to get precious about it—is properly engaged in the way it needs to be through its several key agencies that should be engaged. I would not be raising this matter if I thought it was fully engaged.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: You’ve come to the wrong place for action.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Perhaps I have. I hope not; I retain some confidence.

Hon Lynn MacLaren also contributed to the debate and I thank her for that. In the future, she wants to see all the containers going in and out of Fremantle port on rail. I do not know whether she is contemplating a 20-fold, 30-

fold or 40-fold increase in the amount of rail freight traffic going through the west end of Fremantle, but that is what she is talking about. I do not think she and the people she is advocating for understand that. When we get to that stage, which is only a few years away, when the road approaches to Fremantle or the rail approaches to Fremantle, or both, are choked, I do not want to hear the government of the day say, "Oh, gee, we ought to do something about it." It takes years and years to plan for that future and I do not know that that planning has occurred. We are not hearing anything in the transport space. Nothing I have heard so far gives me any confidence that there is any recognition at all of this looming issue, and that concerns me. I do not want to hear the attitude: "Hang on, it won't come to crunch time this year or in this term of Parliament; therefore, let's not worry about it."

I think I have made my point. I have expressed my concerns and if people are not going to take it up and accept some responsibility, at least I have tried and, hopefully, I will not be condemned over the changes that may occur in the future due to a lack of planning. Again, I thank members for their participation in the debate. I am glad they feel something for Fremantle and what it represents, and I hope I have encouraged people to start thinking about whether they are asleep at the wheel and, if so, hopefully, some people will wake up. In all of this, though, I accept the point made several times by colleagues that the City of Fremantle leaders do not deserve to be ridden over roughshod by our taking things out of their hands. I willingly accept that point and that is the reason I support the amendment. Again, that is not what this issue is about.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 2317.]

Sitting suspended from 4.14 to 4.30 pm