

## **WANNEROO ROAD–JOONDALUP DRIVE INTERCHANGE**

### *Grievance*

**MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [9.29 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Transport regarding the Wanneroo Road–Joondalup Drive interchange. I acknowledge in the gallery today the 20 or so dedicated residents from the communities of Carramar, Tapping and Regent Gardens who have taken time out of their day on a Thursday morning to hear this grievance.

In the other place on 28 March 2018, a petition was presented by Hon Tjorn Sibma, MLC, member for the North Metropolitan Region, with 788 signatures. That petition asked the Legislative Council to recommend an immediate halt to activities and requested a community meeting between local members, the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport to discuss the concerns the community has with this project. Since the petition was presented and submissions by both the principal petitioner and the member were lodged, more signatures have been added to that petition by members of the community.

This issue was raised with me after a number of parties attempted to discuss their concerns with their state member and received, as it was described to me, little interest in their concerns. As a result of this apparent disinterest, my office was contacted and a number of residents were keen for me to hear the wide-ranging issues they have identified as problematic with this interchange. Rarely does a single project elicit such a variety of distinct concerns from individual stakeholders, yet that is the case with this project.

Although the federal government has contributed funding, this is, without question, a WA Labor campaign commitment and was campaigned on heavily by the now member for Wanneroo, who waved “Build overpass here” signs on the side of the street. It was identified as a priority by the McGowan Labor government. Indeed, “Build two overpasses on Wanneroo Road” was listed at point 110 of “Mark McGowan’s Fresh Ideas for WA”. It is a \$50 million project that appears to be manifestly unnecessary due to upgrades that are already in place and have been completed, including direct upgrades to the intersection in question, which the Minister for Transport labelled as a waste of money on ABC online news on 8 May 2017. However, hundreds of petitioners and signatories to the petition have said that the upgrades were not a waste of money and have achieved the outcomes they were purported to achieve. The upgrades that impacted this intersection were not only to the Wanneroo Road–Joondalup Drive intersection itself, but also to the extension of the freeway north to Hester Avenue. A lot of the congestion through the intersection has been alleviated because northbound commuters now exit the freeway at a different point. Residents who use the intersection regularly have asked for a count of recent traffic flow through that intersection. They anticipate that there has been a significant reduction in traffic. Some residents believe that there is 50 per cent less traffic going through the intersection in the morning and afternoon peak times as a result of the extension to Mitchell Freeway and the improvements to the intersection. I would be interested to know whether the minister has sought information from the department about traffic flow through the intersection and what that data indicates. If there has been a demonstrable reduction in traffic, why would we waste taxpayer money on this project?

I have been approached by residents of Regents Garden Residential Care, local residents from multiple suburbs, and business owners who do not want to see this flyover constructed on their doorstep. Tapping Primary School, Carramar Primary School and St Stephen’s School will all be impacted by additional traffic flow through those suburbs in order to accommodate the interchange. Elderly citizens, some with disabilities such as blindness or mobility issues, are concerned that they will not be able to safely cross Joondalup Drive. The intersection currently has both visual and audible pedestrian crossings that allow those with disabilities to safely cross this significant road to access places such as the Carramar Village Shopping Centre. It also enables them to remain active in the local community.

Drovers Market Place is a big employment precinct, with over 500 jobs. Businesses in the district fear that they will have less access to customers due to the interchange. The same concern applies to the Wanneroo Botanic Gardens. In addition, there are significant concerns about drivers rat-running to avoid some of the traffic restrictions that will need to be put in place to accommodate the interchange. Nearby primary schools, childcare centres, and public facilities such as Neil Hawkins Park are also fearful of rat-running. These concerns seem to emanate from all sides where this project is centred, but particularly from residents of Carramar and Tapping.

Issues have been raised about the community consultation information sessions, and unacceptable behaviour from department employees or representatives has been reported. The community has the impression that this project is a government priority and will be done regardless of what the community thinks. The community is not impressed and feels that it has not been heard. I believe that the City of Wanneroo has the biggest concern. It has requested that the minister hold a public meeting so that the public can air their concerns about this project. I do not believe that has occurred. The city is concerned that it will have to invest more in local roads to accommodate the rat-running and the problems that this interchange will create. I have spoken to the member for Pearce,

Hon Christian Porter, because this project has a federal funding component. He has said that he is willing to work with the state government if it chooses to abandon this project and that he would help to repurpose those funds towards another priority.

Residents and businesses do not want this project. The local government does not want this project. Schools and the residents of Carramar and Tapping do not want it. It has to be questioned whether this is a commitment that the government needs to walk away from and admit that it has it wrong.

I ask the minister to consider the citizens' concerns. I ask her to provide them with an opportunity to engage with her in a public forum to advise her of their concerns and for her to take those concerns on board.

I acknowledge Rohan Criddle, Barry McEloney and Sue Bray, who have made tireless efforts in advocating for the community and have tried to stop this monstrosity of an interchange being built in an area where they say it is no longer required.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport)** [9.36 am]: I thank the member for Scarborough for that grievance. I also acknowledge residents of the local community who are here in the gallery today, and the member for Wanneroo.

I could be very political in my response, but I will take the issues at hand seriously. New road projects—interchanges in particular, rail lines and other infrastructure—cause concerns in communities. There is no doubt about that. Interchanges and overpasses cause particular concern. The member for Bassendean saw this at very close hand with the NorthLink project. When the NorthLink project cut through my electorate and had an impact on local residents, there was legitimate concern. That happened in the member for Morley's electorate, the member for Bassendean's electorate and my electorate with the NorthLink project. Those who are close to those intersections have concerns. We try to address those through community consultation and engagement. The issues include the height and location of noise walls. These issues are not easy, and different people have different views. For example, I am surprised by the height and some of the colours of the noise walls that were chosen for the NorthLink project, but people choose those things and we work with them on that.

This issue has been raised with me and I want to go through its history so members understand where it came from. I want to continually engage with the community on this project, let there be no doubt about that. The member made some comments about the member for Wanneroo that I think were unfair. The member for Wanneroo has engaged with me and my office about this issue, if not on a daily basis then on a weekly basis. She has brought these concerns to my attention. As a result of my work with the member for Wanneroo we are looking at not only the interchange, but also the entire area to make sure that the final proposal addresses all the issues that have been raised.

Cheriton Drive, Clarkson Avenue, St Stephens Crescent and access to Drovers are all serious issues, as are bus route connections. We have discussed underpasses and overpasses. There is reluctance for an underpass, which surprised me because I expected that people would want an underpass in that area. However, that has not been welcomed. The member for Wanneroo has worked with us and put forward the community's view—if not on a daily basis, on a weekly basis. I would say that she has contacted daily either myself or my office about this issue. I understand these are serious concerns. We are trying to find a traffic solution that is not just for today, but for the next 10 or 20 years. I accept that the freeway extension has reduced traffic through the interchange, but we have been advised that if we do not build this interchange, it will create massive congestion issues in a short period. The planning that commenced many years ago resulted not only in the north–south corridor expanding, but also the east–west corridor expanding, and because the suburbs to the east are expanding, people will continually be using that intersection. We have to make sure that we think about not only today but also the next 10 years. We are making sure that we deliver infrastructure solutions for generations, and this is part of that approach.

I will go through the community consultation. First of all, the member for Wanneroo has been out doorknocking and talking to the community. The member for Wanneroo on a number of occasions has raised all the issues that the member for Scarborough has raised today, in particular access to local streets and making sure there is a traffic solution for the whole area. I have gone through the history of this project. All the matters about safe access to Joondalup Drive have been raised for the past 10 years, even before the interchange was on the books. Issues about safety and access to bus routes have existed for a long time. I know that the Drovers site is a difficult site; that has been the case for years. I know that the owners of Drovers have been trying to get better traffic solutions for years. They have also been trying to get a better planning outcome for that area. That is something I am trying to facilitate too. I am very keen to work with the community to find a proper solution, but I will not accept the comments the member for Scarborough made about the member for Wanneroo, because she has been working her guts out.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** That's what the residents have said.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The member for Scarborough has come in here trying to politicise it.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey** interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The member for Wanneroo has been working her guts out on this project, more than anybody I have ever seen.

As I said, this is about working with the community. Community forums have been held and a community reference group has been set up and there will be more community meetings. As part of the overall approach, we are looking at investing not only in the overpass and interchange but also in the entire network. I have sought a meeting with Mayor Tracey Roberts to go through the entire network. The member mentioned the federal government, which is funding this project by 80 per cent. This is what Mr Porter said on 5 May.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman):** Member for Scarborough!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Last year when the program was announced, the federal member for Pearce said that as someone who knows firsthand how congested the Wanneroo Road and Joondalup Drive intersection can be, he was pleased to help fund that vital infrastructure. The federal member for Pearce has said that this year. He talked about the virtues of the overpass. I am sorry, but everyone who is committed to this project needs to take responsibility for the project, to work together, to meet the community concerns and try to get a traffic solution for the entire area, which lasts for not only tomorrow but also decades, otherwise we will be creating traffic mayhem if we do not seriously address those traffic concerns.

I again commend the member for Wanneroo. She has worked her guts out and will continue to work her guts out for the public in that area.