

**RAILWAY (BUTLER TO BRIGHTON) BILL 2009**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from 17 June.

**HON KEN TRAVERS** (North Metropolitan) [2.10 pm]: I rise on behalf of the opposition to indicate that we will be supporting the Railway (Butler to Brighton) Bill 2009. We do not often have two railway enabling bills following each other through this house. Even though we support the bill, the opposition has one concern. It is our view that there is a need for—it should be constructed by the government—a station at the location of the original Butler station just north of Lukin Drive and also a new station at the end of the proposed new line near what is called Brighton Boulevard and has previously been referred to as Brighton station.

I will recount some of the history of these matters. Prior to the last election, the Labor Party did a lot of work, including the master planning for an extension of the line from the existing terminus at Clarkson through to a new station at Butler. It was our intention that that station would open in 2012. It is worth noting that the enabling legislation had already been passed by this Parliament to allow the environmental approvals and the master planning to occur. It was also our intention as part of the state infrastructure strategy that was being developed that a future extension would occur further north that would have covered a proposed station at Brighton. That would have been completed around 2015. When the Liberal Party was elected at the last election, it initially put the proposal to extend the northern line on hold. That caused a fair degree of controversy in the northern suburbs. Ultimately, the government came back with the proposal that we are now dealing with, which is an extension of the line to Brighton Boulevard that will open around the end of 2014, although I suspect it will be sometime in 2015. Hopefully, we will not see a repetition of the delays that occurred under the previous Liberal government, which kept promising a station at Clarkson but never delivered it. The former Labor government was proposing to build, in a very short time frame, what the current government is proposing—that is, a railway line extension out to Brighton—but with two stations.

The government has tabled documentation in which it suggests that the northern corridor does not have the population to sustain two train stations; Labor rejects that suggestion. When the former Labor government was in power, I always keenly pushed the government to try to bring on the two stations early, but it was pointed out to me that it was not possible to do that by 2012 because the environmental approvals, the enabling legislation—all of the material required—was not available to enable the construction of the station in that time frame. But work was done, and developers and the like from the local Brighton area provided me with information that the population in that area justified the sustainability of two stations. The government's figures state that about 30 000 people are required to live in an area to justify the building of a station, and I note that, by its own estimation, by 2016 there will be some 84 000 people living in that vicinity. It is also worth noting that in the past five or six years government estimates of growth of population in that corridor have always been well below what has been achieved. No-one has ever been able to fully explain why, but a large number of people who migrate to Western Australia go to the northern suburbs, and the population of the northern suburbs grows faster than anywhere else in Western Australia, as has been documented. I am not going to go into it now, but if members want to, they can look at past Western Australia Tomorrow documents released in 2001 to see what the population estimate was for 2006, and they will see that it was well and truly exceeded; and if they look at what the prediction was in 2006 for 2010, they will see that that estimation has been well and truly exceeded.

The material I have relied on for my information was prepared by very highly regarded people—in fact I think the government is using one of the individuals who prepared the material to develop its 20-year master plan for public transport. Those individuals pointed out to me that the population requirement of 30 000 is based upon the existing usage of the Mandurah–northern suburbs line. In the future, further north of Clarkson there will be greater use of public transport, because we already know that the major north–south roads—namely, Mitchell Freeway, West Coast Highway and Wanneroo Road—have reached their capacity. The view I have had put to me by experts in these matters from government agencies is that it is estimated that the Mitchell Freeway reached its full capacity probably about two years ago. Unless more jobs are created in the northern suburbs, the only option will be to travel to the city by rail because there is no more capacity for people to travel into the central business district by road at peak times.

The percentage of trips taken by train in areas such as Maylands and Bassendean are significantly higher than those in the northern suburbs. In Maylands the number of train trips as a percentage of total trips is about 6.3; for Bassendean it is about 8.3. To achieve the sort of patronage that would justify two stations in this area, the number of percentage of trips by train in the Butler–Brighton region would need to increase by four per cent by 2012, and five per cent by 2020. I think that is very easily achievable, and there is a view that the figure could rise to 12 or 15 per cent of trips by train as a percentage of total trips out of those regions. If the two stations were to be built, the patronage figures for the Butler station would be somewhere in the order of 3 000 to 4 500

patrons, and the Brighton station would have somewhere between 5 000 and 12 000 patrons by the year 2020. It is able to be achieved. They patrons will be there.

The new station at Butler Boulevard will be the first station on the northern line to be developed on a completely transport-oriented development basis. Stations have previously either been built in areas that are already developed, such as Greenwood, Warwick and Whitfords, or, in the case of Clarkson—although there are elements of a TOD—been located in areas where half of the walkable catchment is national park. Although Currambine has some elements of a TOD and higher densities of up to R80 are provided around the station, the actual densities achieved are R25. I think there was an opportunity at Brighton to develop a station on a TOD, and to work with the developers to put in place not only an R-code density but also the mechanisms to achieve that R code. It is disappointing that the government has not sought to try to work with the developers to get commitments to not just have a density but also provide for that density. A lot of the area around the walkable catchment will be taken up by car parks because this structure is the only station. Those car parks could have otherwise been located at the proposed Butler station north of Lukin Drive.

It is for those reasons that the Labor Party not only supports this extension of the railway line but also strongly believes that the government should build two stations. If we do not build the two stations at the time of construction of the rail line, there will be difficulties in trying to retrofit a station when the line is already up and running. It adds significantly to the cost. The pressure will then be on to move onto Alkimos and further north. It will be very difficult to see any future government build the Butler station. It will be a completely missed opportunity. Having said that, the Labor Party supports the construction of the railway line.

I want to make one other interesting observation about the rail debate in this state that particularly relates to the Butler station. We welcome the construction of the Butler railway line but the fact is that this government has not put any money into tier 3 lines to maintain and restore the tier 3 lines in the grain rail network. I looked through some media clippings the other day. I came across an article written on 28 August 2008, prior to the last state election. It is titled “Nats pledge rail rescue”. I hope members bear with me as they hear the relevance of this news article to the Butler extension —

WA Nationals leader Brendon Grylls said the party believed the State component of the Rail Rescue package should be funded through its Royalties for Regions policy.

That is interesting, because we still have not seen any of the royalties for regions money come forward. The article then goes on to say —

“If you let valuable infrastructure like that run into the ground you can never get it back and this is a plan where industry, and the State and Federal governments have been brought to the table,” Mr Grylls said.

“My discussions with the Federal Government are (that) they understand the importance of it and they would like to fund it but they are going to need a commitment from the State Government. If we have an influence over that we would obviously be prioritising the grain rail network above the Perth railway extension to Butler.”

They were the words of the Leader of the National Party prior to the 2008 election. He was saying we need federal government support for the grain rail network, and that it should be given a higher priority than the extension to Butler. I would say that they are both very valuable projects. We should be seeking to do both projects. It is interesting that, prior to the last election, that man ran around the countryside attacking the Labor government for building the Mandurah railway line and said that providing a rescue package for the grain network would be his party’s priority over building the Butler station, yet we are here today debating authorisation to build the new Butler station. In fact, it is going further than Butler; it is going out to Brighton, and we are not building the actual Butler station. However, we still do not see any money being put forward by this government for the grain rail network. I note that one of the issues at the time was whether there would be federal money. We now know that \$135 million worth of federal money is on the table. We also now know that the government has additional money coming in as a result of the deal it has done with Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton. The additional money that the government will get in one year would fix the grain rail network tier 3 lines in regional Western Australia. In contrast, the government is spending \$240 million on the Butler line, yet it cannot find money for the grain rail network, even though it is getting, just for the royalties for regions component of it, an additional \$85 million approximately every year, which would go a long way towards fixing those tier 3 lines. I make those comments as a general observation about this government’s commitment to rail.

It is great to see the Liberal government finally developing metropolitan rail. It also needs to do it in regional Western Australia. The other thing it needs to understand is that the debate has moved on. It is still building railways along the lines of those that were in place probably 10 or 15 years ago. We now need to have transit-oriented developments. We need to develop Park ‘n’ Ride stations in concert with those TODs. That is what this

government has missed out on by building only the Brighton station, taking away half of the TOD for car parking and not building the original Butler station. It is important that we have those matters on the record.

I note that the original Butler station was located on the border between zones 4 and 5 of the Perth rail network. The new station at Butler Boulevard will very clearly be in zone 5. However, I wonder whether the minister could indicate in his response to the second reading debate whether the government, now that it is building only the one station, will make that station zone 4, as I suspect the original Lukin Drive, Butler station would have been, or whether this is another way in which additional costs will be incurred.

With the grain rail network, a lot of issues are raised about whether people will use it. It is said that it has to be commercial and that it must be demonstrated that it will be used without government subsidy, if the government were to put money into those rail networks. According to the last lot of figures I looked at, the construction of this railway line will impose a cost of some \$14 million per annum. No-one says that the railway line in the metropolitan area must be built, and that to make it viable, people must be prepared to use it at full cost recovery; however, that is a condition that the government is imposing in regional Western Australia for the grain network. I find that bizarre coming from a government that will then tell us that it cares about regional Western Australia. There is an amazing set of conflicts in that issue alone.

The opposition supports the construction of a railway line to Brighton. We express our extreme disappointment that there is no Butler station, for all the reasons I have outlined. We urge the government to not stop with this, but to also get on and invest in those grain rail networks to ensure that we have regional rail as well as metropolitan rail in Western Australia.

**HON ALISON XAMON (East Metropolitan)** [2.28 pm]: The Greens (WA) will be supporting this bill. I am always happy to be able to be part of facilitating the growth of the urban passenger rail network. It will be no surprise to the minister that the Greens are big fans of rail. However, this bill also provides a good opportunity for me to make some general comments about how far I think we still need to go in this state in providing and also facilitating public transport in Perth—not just in the northern corridor, which is proposed to be serviced by the extension of the Clarkson line, but also across the metropolitan area and, in particular, in my region, the East Metropolitan Region, which the minister will not be surprised to hear me say has been left lagging behind by successive governments for quite some time. The region is probably now due its fair share, when it comes to additional rail.

We know that the northern train line is certainly —

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** You have more railway lines than any other region.

**Hon ALISON XAMON:** And we need more! And we know —

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order, members!

**Hon ALISON XAMON:** We know that the northern train line is particularly well utilised, as are all our train lines, and that there is huge public demand for more rail services. We cannot seem to build fast enough to keep up with that demand. I understand that the northern train line in Perth has effectively been creaking under the strain of its own success for a number of years. Taking the interjection from my colleague, Hon Lynn MacLaren, I note that that is also the case with the southern line. It is also the case with the eastern line. There is no doubt that rail is popular. Apparently the northern line reached its 10-year projected passenger targets within seven years. We also know—Hon Ken Travers has already made reference to this—that the capacity of the various Park 'n' Ride facilities has been shown to be under increasing strain and seriously inadequate. I certainly hope that we do not lose too many people from using trains on a regular basis due to a lack of parking facilities. Obviously, my preferred option is to see a significant increase in the number of feeder services to our train stations, particularly central area transit buses. Hopefully, in the very near future, the government will invest in light rail.

When I was briefed on this bill, I thought of that phrase from a cheesy Kevin Costner film—“If you build it, they will come.” It really seems to be the case that we cannot get enough of rail; the people of Perth certainly want it. I am not trying to be oversimplistic. I recognise that the government needs to facilitate the provision of public transport that is timely and, of course, safe—safety is a big issue for me—and affordable. I suggest that Hon Ken Travers may not want to mention cost-recovery ideas, lest this government get the idea that it perhaps wants to look at full cost recovery for public transport. That would not be a great idea. We do not want to put such ideas in government members' heads. I am not suggesting that that is what Hon Ken Travers said; however, we certainly do not want to go down that path because public transport really does save money in so many other areas—as I know Hon Ken Travers is completely aware.

People are certainly flocking to use public transport in ever greater numbers than the transport planners seem to be able to anticipate, even in the first instance; however, I will get to that point in a moment. The Clarkson train

station is a good example. I understand from the Minister for Transport's second reading speech that in the "Northern Suburbs Transit System – Currambine to Butler Extension: Interim Master Plan" of March 2000 Clarkson station was expected to attract around 3 000 customers every working day by 2006. I understand that the station's opening was delayed until October 2004, or a little later, yet by March 2009 more than 3 500 people caught the train from Clarkson on a typical working day. Apparently this was considered an unexpected success; however, I really do not know why because we seem to find that the number of people who use trains regularly outstrips the number of forecast users.

While undertaking additional research for this bill, I read the *Hansard* from the other place. When debating this bill, the member for Mindarie—who often has some rather interesting things to say, albeit on this occasion I thought he was spot on—described the Clarkson station as a hugely popular station and said that the car park was swamped with vehicles. Of course, the member for Mindarie is right. The second reading speech stated —

The population of the corridor from Clarkson to the north is expected to increase from around 41 000 in 2008 to about 84 000 in 2014 ...

This is not the first time that we have heard similar predictions. There seems to be an inevitability about these sorts of predictions, which is of concern to the Greens. It worries us all that on the one hand we are being told that there is a move towards high-density, transit-oriented developments—TODs—around infill opportunities, such as at Stirling station and Bassendean, but on the other hand, as outlined in this bill, we are being told that the corridor north of Clarkson will ultimately extend all the way to Yanchep. What we have been told so far in the debate on the Approvals and Related Reforms (No. 4) (Planning) Bill, which is yet to go through, is that what the Greens believe are heavy-handed planning instruments, such as development application panels, are essential to drive increases in urban density. But at the same time as we are debating that, we are being told with this bill that the Perth urban sprawl will continue to roll on. It is of increasing concern that this expansion of the urban footprint is coming about at not only a great social cost but also a great environmental cost. I keep talking in this place about Perth being the biodiversity capital of the world. I have decided that I am going to say that as often as I possibly can. We need to remember that when we are looking at expansion, we are not just looking at expanding into former farming areas where the land use conflict is more straightforward; we are continuing to bulldoze into the remaining urban bushland. We are continuing to create outer suburbs that are becoming increasingly isolated from necessary infrastructure. A train line is only part of that necessary infrastructure. By building these outer suburbs, we are continuing to populate areas further and further away from schools, police stations and hospitals. I could go on and on, but I am sure that members from regional areas know full well what I am talking about with the additional challenges of being increasingly isolated from necessary infrastructure.

Apart from this, a great many cities around the world are looking to increase their urban density in tandem with expanding the capacity of their public transport systems, because there is a huge social benefit and also because they recognise that it is the key to addressing the two key challenges facing us this century—they, of course, being climate change and peak oil. Perth also has a third key restraint, which is that we are surrounded by areas of urban bushland, which, in many ways, Perth residents take for granted, but I know they also value it. This proximity to the bush makes Perth in many respects the envy of other cities in the world. I raised this in the briefing: in some ways I think there is a bit of a chicken and egg problem associated with expanding the urban passenger rail network out from the CBD. Is this increase in the rail network supposedly a key part of urban sustainability or is it helping to facilitate further sprawl? From the environmental and social perspective, further sprawl would probably be a bit of a perverse outcome, particularly as rail in itself is environmentally and socially desirable. We want rail but we do not necessarily want to see increasing expansion. It is a tricky issue, but it is still the case in Perth that the key reason people are comfortable living so far away from their jobs and from recreational pursuits is the number of cars that people own and the fact that running a car is still relatively inexpensive. However, I think it is unlikely that this will continue indefinitely. We need to recognise that as we move to a heavily carbon-constrained world and as we approach peak oil—although I must note, because I will get in trouble if I say otherwise, that some people will acknowledge that we are past the point of peak oil—if we make planning and transport decisions that place people a long way away from their workplace or recreation facilities, we will have to provide them with accessible public transport. At worst we are stranding them in the suburbs; at best we are lumbering them with major transport costs when they purchase these distant from the CBD blocks on the understanding that they are being offered affordable housing. We are seeing evidence emerge in countries like America of entire suburbs that have been abandoned due to the sheer unsustainability of their distance for residents. Of course we are nowhere near that stage yet, but let us make sure that we do not head down that path. Although this bill will at least ensure that the far northern suburbs will have rail, it could also be the case that the rail is creating those far-flung northern suburbs.

Turning to the specifics of the bill, the naming of the train stations we are considering here has been a bit of an exercise in confusion. I made a little mud map for myself to try to make sense of the history of the various name

changes and the like. I will note my understanding and I am happy to take an interjection from the minister to tell me whether I have got it right or wrong, if that is okay.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** With my pleasure!

**The PRESIDENT:** Steady!

**Hon ALISON XAMON:** There was once a station planned to be built five kilometres from Clarkson to be called Butler, and one that was planned to be built two and a half kilometres from Clarkson to be called Brighton.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Hence the name Butler to Brighton bill.

**Hon ALISON XAMON:** Yes, that is what seems to have led to the name of this bill. The originally named Butler station will be cancelled for now—I will come back to that in a moment—but may reappear later, at which time I understand it will be called Nowergup. The station referred to as Brighton as recently as 24 October last year is now to be called Butler. I understand it should probably have been called that to start with, given that it is to be built in the suburb of Butler and at the intersection of Marmion Avenue and proposed Butler boulevard. Is that correct? Do I have that right, or have I just made that even more confusing?

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** No; it is pretty straight up.

**Hon ALISON XAMON:** I have it noted as being situated at the intersection of Marmion Avenue and proposed Butler boulevard. As I said, there has been a bit of unfortunate toing and froing with the planning for this part of the urban passenger rail network. I note that the second reading speech went into a fair bit of detail on that. I will not retrace that now. What the second reading speech did not outline was the politics that led to this bill. Importantly, we understand that it was Labor's promise to build a station five kilometres north of Clarkson by the end of this year, and another one two and a half kilometres north by 2014. But we understand that when LandCorp and its joint venturers subdivided the suburb of Butler, the blocks were relatively small and the target residents were both first home buyers and those in state housing. The people who bought lots there were told that there would be a station five kilometres north of Clarkson and later a station two and a half kilometres north. It is reasonable for the broader community to expect that people on low incomes living in such places, in particular those in public housing, will have reasonable access to public transport. However, I suspect that a few years from now—because, of course, I will be re-elected!—I will be in this place discussing a future government's intention to build the station at Nowergup. I hope at that future stage I am not speaking about how we could have saved a lot of hassle and taxpayers' money by building that extra station at the time we built Butler station.

I described Clarkson railway station as being an unexpected success. However, as I said, we continually find that a number of stations end up attracting more people than was expected. I therefore think that we should expect to find a higher attendance at Butler, because attendance at Clarkson is turning out to be not unexpected at all. I believe the attendance will become even higher as petrol prices and costs such as parking continue to rise. These factors suggest to me that in building an extension to the rail line, we should put in more stations than current passenger numbers suggest are viable because we should expect that they soon will be higher. Planning for growth would allow for only one lot of disturbance associated with the line and station construction, and surely that would save taxpayers more money in the long run as well as provide necessary transport services now.

I would like more detail today about how much money the government expects to save by deleting the station formerly known as Butler. I am expecting the minister to respond to that in his reply. I note that in the other place the member for Mindarie was bandying around the figure of \$25 million. The parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Transport said at the time that it was not right. He gave an explanation that was less than convincing. I would like the minister, either in his response to the second reading debate or in the Committee of the Whole stage, to outline whether there will be a more expensive bus service for the new Butler-near-Brighton station that will partly offset the savings associated with not having the Butler-now-Nowergup station.

The goal is to have as many people as possible feeding into train stations by foot and on public transport. Surely, as Hon Ken Travers mentioned in his second reading speech, the government should be looking at having the stations on the northern line closer together, similar to the density of the stations on the Fremantle and Midland lines.

**Hon Ken Travers:** I did not suggest having the stations any closer together, because that actually decreases the efficiency of the line. I was talking about having greater density around the stations.

**Hon ALISON XAMON:** I beg your pardon, Hon Ken Travers. I thank the member for clarifying that. I misunderstood what he said.

I do know that Hon Giz Watson's many, many supporters in the northern suburbs would be very keen to clearly understand the state government's position on both its short-term and long-term public transport options. They will certainly be interested in that next time we go to the polls.

I conclude by making a similar point to the one that was bandied around in the other place; that is, that this bill is delivering only 2.5 kilometres more rail than the Australian Labor Party said it would deliver before the next election if it were in government.

I am not convinced that overall the government has been a great friend of rail transport. Although this bill is a positive for rail, which is the reason we are supporting it, it is really only a small fraction of the commitment to rail that this city needs. I have said many times in this house that the Greens live in hope and will continue to push for and, hopefully, get a great deal more rail and light rail solutions for Perth. As I said at the beginning of my speech, sections of our main roads are becoming congested. As more roads are constructed, those roads simply become congested, usually within a five-year period. Rail is a huge part of that solution. It is more economical and environmentally friendly. It is a more enjoyable way to travel around the Perth metropolitan area.

I am looking forward to the next rail bill, which I hope will deliver improved rail services to the East Metropolitan Region, irrespective of whether that will be an expanded Midland line; the Ellenbrook extension; an extension to Byford; a line through the north east corridor, through West Swan; or a light rail link between the Midland and Armadale lines. The population is concentrated around these areas and they need rail. We should not be putting in large-scale infrastructure simply to appeal to developers and expand the metropolitan boundaries even further. We need to make a serious and concerted commitment to those people and communities already living on the existing fringes

**HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan — Minister for Transport)** [2.49 pm] — in reply: I thank members for their support for the Railway (Butler to Brighton) Bill 2009. As members have observed, this is a bill to authorise the construction of an extension of the Joondalup line beyond the current authorisation to a new terminus at a location which, for the purposes of this bill, is known as Brighton. I might come back to that in a moment. The bill actually does not do more than that; it is a requirement under the Public Works Act. However, rail bills do tend to excite discussion and anticipation and I welcome that. It is not surprising that members contributing —

**Hon Ken Travers:** In the old days it used to get opposition as well!

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** Members who contributed to the debate canvassed a range of related matters. My second reading speech for the Railway (Butler to Brighton) Bill 2009 actually canvassed an amount of detail on the question posed by Hon Ken Travers about the need for stations at Butler or Brighton or both locations. I do not wish to revisit my second reading speech; those remarks are already on the record. However, it needs to be pointed out that a considerable amount of consideration went on at the time the new government came in as to whether we should have either or both stations. The considerations that were brought to bear postdate some of the considerations that occurred during the time of the previous Labor government, which shows that the evolution in the experience of public transport designers and operators in Western Australia is developing very rapidly indeed. If members care to refer to my second reading speech they can see something of the history of that. However, I can tell members that at the time this government came to office, I arrived at my new desk and almost simultaneously was presented with a master plan to build a railway to Butler. The ink on the signature block bearing my name was marginally fresher than the ink on the rest of the document; it had clearly been a work in progress at the time the election was called. At almost exactly the same time as the detailed master plan arrived, I received some further advice that reconsidered some of the expectations upon which the previous work had been based. I referred in my second reading speech to the so-called Brighton charette and other discussions that occurred over the first half of the first decade of this century from about 2001 to 2006. Indeed, by 2008 there had been some serious reconsideration by government advisers as to the rationale for stations, their spacing, questions of catchment and all the rest. Briefings have been made available to members, so I will not go into that sort of detail. However, I can tell the house that the serious appraisal by the incoming government in 2008 was not based on a lack of decision or indecision, but on the basis of further advice that was being compiled and consolidated at that time for my presentation to the cabinet.

Some of that was put about in the public domain as a pall of uncertainty over the intentions of government to extend the Joondalup line at all to Butler or anywhere else. Those are the sorts of games that local members tend to play, and I remember the member for Mindarie, as is his style, would certainly play it to the hilt. I do not object to that; that is the sort of thing that opposition members do when they see a glimmer of opportunity to raise some uncertainty in the public eye about a government's intentions. However, if there was any sense of hiatus, it was about making those rather expensive decisions to proceed with further extensions beyond that which had previously been decided upon by the former government—decisions that are very important and should not be made lightly. It was a question of three options: whether a rail line needed to be built to Butler only; whether a rail line had to be built beyond that to Brighton; and whether there should be a station not only at Brighton, the ultimate destination, but also at Butler. This is the only real detail that I intend to go into for the

information of members, and it is the sort of question that was asked by Hon Alison Xamon: what is the capacity of a place like Clarkson in its planning stages and what is its ultimate capacity?

We also need to consider what we are experiencing now, which is its interim capacity. Let me briefly explain what I mean by that. If one were to examine a map of our ever-sprawling northern metropolitan area as it goes up the coast, at some point, of course, we can identify the end of the passenger railway line and that railhead then becomes the immediate point of access not only for those in the immediate catchment area—which in the long term are those for whom the rail station is intended—but also, by definition and by default, at least in the short term, for everyone north of that as well because there is no line further than that. Therefore, we get a much larger catchment coming to the active railway station at the top end of the line. That is what we are seeing at Clarkson, and both previous speakers relayed some figures on that in their contributions. What happens when we extend the line and build a new station at the end of that extension? It will take a lot of pressure off the other station—we will call it Clarkson—because the people who are coming from well north of Clarkson will now go to the most northerly rail station—let us call it Brighton—and the catchment area for what is now the second station, Clarkson, reduces to that for which it was originally designed and intended. That will relieve a lot of pressure on the Clarkson station and it can acquire the pattern of normality that was intended. Meanwhile, the new station of Brighton will become the local railway station for the people of Brighton and, of course, for people north of Brighton, so the pattern tends to continue. Under our plan, Brighton is designed as a very substantial station, both in the long and in the short term. Indeed, part of the planning is that the parking there, which is needed, will reduce after a period when further stations—or a station—are created further north in the following years. I am sure it will be a brave Minister for Transport who takes away one-third, or whatever, of the parking at the very busy and, I am sure, successful Brighton station. That will be part of the evolution —

**Hon Alison Xamon:** There will be lots of light rail going there!

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** It will be part of the evolution of that station to its full potential and maturity. That is part of the realisations that have occurred with experience about the development of a major metropolitan passenger rail network, which is in many ways the envy of those who operate systems in other states. Hon Ken Travers made some valuable comments about the capacity of the Mitchell Freeway. I simply acknowledge that; he was taking advantage of that opportunity to make those observations

**Hon Ken Travers:** It will have a direct effect on the number of people who use this rail.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** It will have a very direct effect. That is why I acknowledge Hon Ken Travers' remarks as being pertinent to the debate. He and I are in favour of this bill—as is everyone, it seems—to enable construction of more railway line. However, it means a lot more than simply laying several kilometres of track and related works. Hon Ken Travers is quite right to remind us of that. Indeed, I am looking forward to a great deal being done in government and I hope to initiate things to ease the pressure on the Mitchell Freeway, which is most certainly under very substantial pressure. One of the ways we can do that is by increasing the capacity of the rail network. We can do that in a number of ways. We can continue to increase the amount of rolling stock available. We have both short-term arrangements in place and longer term arrangements in train—no pun intended—to do that. Also, we can make it more accessible to those who would otherwise commute long distances by car. That is what will be enabled directly today by authorising this extension of the Joondalup line.

Hon Ken Travers spoke also about the problems of retrofitting a station at Butler if one were not to be built at this time and, indeed, it is not proposed for one to be built at this time. After serious consideration, the government made decisions about whether we needed both stations. Hon Ken Travers will recall the question I posed before. Based on the expert advice that was available to us, a synopsis of which is in my second reading speech, it was clear that the future for the northern rail passenger network lay with the construction of a station at Brighton. That decision was made. I feel that if we had made a decision to also build one at Butler, it would have helped to address some of the public criticism that occasionally arises about that decision, but it would have been a decision made for the wrong reasons. As the public transport network expands, along with our experience of public transport, we want to at least retain the option of a possible station at Butler in future. For that reason, the land that was obtained there is reserved for potential future construction of a station. In light of that, I have resisted suggestions from some quarters that that land be used as a government asset in land swaps for some other parcel of land. It is important that we retain the options for a future Butler station should it be needed. I do not believe it will be.

I return to my earlier remarks about catchment areas, particularly at the frontier of a passenger rail network. Experience will tell. At this stage, clearly, the desirable option is to go a bit further, in this case into the centre of a developing residential area, and locate a major station in Brighton rather than on the periphery, where, in the case of Butler—as I think Hon Ken Travers put it about another station—on the eastern side, 50 per cent of the catchment area is in fact fully reserve so it is not available for development.

**Hon Alison Xamon:** And we like it that way!

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** And Hon Alison Xamon is very happy about that.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Under your proposal, minister, 25 per cent of the Brighton station catchment will be for car parking.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** Under the considerations that we gave —

**Hon Ken Travers:** Car parking that could have been at the Butler station.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** Hon Ken Travers has made his points, and I respect that. I do not dismiss any of them. I advise the house that all of these considerations and more were weighed carefully in the balance, but, ultimately, decisions have to be made and they have been made with the right intent and based on the most up-to-date advice, which, frankly, was not available at the time to the former government.

Hon Ken Travers also discussed the question of priority of the Brighton extension versus the tier 3 lines. This is probably not an issue that I want to spend a great deal of time on, but I acknowledge that he raised it. Decisions have to be made about respective priorities. On this occasion, we are focused on the public transport requirements of the northern corridor as a separate issue and no doubt we will visit questions about the tier 3 lines on another occasion. I noted with interest the comments attributed to Hon Ken Travers in, I think, last week's *Countryman* in which he even went so far as to suggest that the building of this railway to his electorate in the northern suburbs should possibly be delayed by a year or so and moneys applied to upgrading tier 3 lines in the Wheatbelt, but that is an issue for another day.

In relation to zone 4 versus zone 5 locations for a rail station, it seems that the house is in unanimity about favouring an extension of the rail line to Brighton. I understand that that takes the line from zone 4 into zone 5, and that is where the new station at Brighton will lie. I assure members that this is not a \$240 million contrivance to slug some passengers with a higher zonal fare when commuting.

**Hon Ken Travers:** I think I noted that I didn't think it was. The significance of it, minister, is that because the Currambine station was in a different zone from Joondalup and Edgewater stations, people did not use the Currambine station; they drove down to and complained that there was not enough parking at Joondalup and Edgewater, while parking remained available at Currambine because it was in a different zone. Don't underestimate the effect on behaviour.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** I am well aware of it, Hon Ken Travers, and we will no doubt have a chance to chat outside the chamber about some of the other nuances that I have seen in the responses of people to parking issues in a range of places. It is curious how human beings respond to different circumstances. In this case, the station will remain in zone 5, so long as the current zoning system remains in its format, which it certainly will for the foreseeable future. To gerrymander the boundary, as it were, of course would not be fair to people who are near zone boundaries in other zones in other areas, whether it be the Mandurah line or wherever. I can tell members that my office is near Canning Bridge on Canning Highway close to the CBD, and just a little further up Canning Highway there is a change from zone 1 to zone 2. People who commute to Perth have been quite upset by the fact that their bus stop is just inside the zone 2 boundary rather than in the zone 1 boundary. That is just where it lies and a line has to be drawn somewhere.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Because the previous Park 'n' Ride station at Butler would have been in zone 4, people would have transferred from Clarkson up to it. I think that now, having only a Brighton station, you will see that people will continue to go to Clarkson station and keep pressure on that station and not use the Brighton station because of that difference in fares.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** Similarly, people might use a different form of psychology and actually travel north to obtain a Park 'n' Ride space to ensure that they get a seat on a train at peak times, as happens in some major centres already. I certainly do not have an argument to make about the point the member raised about parking, but it is just one of very many considerations and is not to be viewed in isolation in deciding whether to site a station at Butler alone or at Brighton.

I thank Hon Alison Xamon for her very warm and indeed overwhelming support for the building of the railway. She will be pleased to know that in addition to the extra train services, 11 new buses will be purchased as part of this program to provide a range of feeder services to different stations, including Clarkson. That is above and beyond the regular base load for our construction effort under contract here in Perth. I am looking forward to other new orders in due course. Those 11 buses and the services they will provide are factored into the total cost of the project, as are some other significant costs—they were significant costs—to extend the railway beyond Butler to Brighton. The extra cost was a significant consideration, particularly in the economic climate that the government encountered upon coming to office. It was our view that we should do the job properly rather than have a false economy. The total cost of the project was increased when the power supply had to be upgraded. Some members, possibly Hon Alison Xamon is one, know what a clean source of power electricity is. A train

can be plugged in and off it goes, without emitting any smoke. Of course, power supply costs money, and that cost must come from somewhere. An extra service was required at that point. Again, that is an investment in the future that will serve the future expansion of the line well beyond the station to Alkimos and other places further north. Hon Alison Xamon also asked me what the indicative cost was to build a station at Butler. The figure of \$25 million was quoted somewhere.

**Hon Alison Xamon:** It was quoted by the member for Mindarie in the other place, not by you.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** As a ballpark figure, the cost for a station located at a similar location would be about \$25 million. It is a very expensive exercise. However, the government did not consider making savings by not putting a station there. It was about getting the whole package right and making sure that we invested in a major station at Butler.

**Hon Ken Travers:** In your supplementary master plan, it was \$25 million in 2009 dollars, but in out-turn dollars it was predicted to become \$42.2 million. However, I suspect that the building index has slowed down and that it will not be that much as a result of escalation.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** That demonstrates what a moveable feast that matters of capital works are.

I conclude by thanking members for their support. I hope I have taken sufficient time to address their concerns so that with a bit of luck we will not have to delay the house by going into committee to consider any amendments. I thank members for their support for this most welcome bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Hon Simon O'Brien (Minister for Transport)**, and passed.