

## ELLENBROOK RAIL LINE

### *Grievance*

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan)** [9.51 am]: I grieve to the Premier regarding Ellenbrook rail line. Today I am seeking confirmation of the election commitment to build Ellenbrook rail line and the answers to three questions: will Ellenbrook get a rail line; what is the time frame for that rail line; and, will it be included in the upcoming state budget? During the 2008 election campaign, the then opposition matched the government's commitment to build Ellenbrook rail line. The Labor Party gave a commitment that it would begin construction of the line in 2012 and for it to be completed by 2015. The Liberal Party matched that commitment. My notes show that on the day the then Leader of the Opposition announced the decision to build Ellenbrook rail line, Colin Barnett was reported in *The West Australian* to have said —

Opposition Leader Colin Barnett declared yesterday he would match Labor's \$850 million pledge to build a new rail line to Ellenbrook but said a Liberal government would try to complete the project before 2015.

On 31 August, Hon Simon O'Brien complained that Labor was taking too long to build Ellenbrook rail line, and my notes show that he was reported to have said —

“Yet they are not even going to start construction until after the next election ... that's not good enough and I think the people of Western Australia in certain marginal seats are sick of being taken for granted.”

According to my notes, the member for Swan Hills was reported to have said on 6PR radio —

I raised it three months ago and I'm pretty wrapped that the Labor Party came out suggesting that they would put out a new rail link to Ellenbrook and the Liberals had promised the same, plus some extra parking to go with it.

Harvey Deegan is reported to have said —

So, you're taking credit for Labor's promise of extending the rail to Ellenbrook?

To which the member for Swan Hills said —

Yes, I am. And, all my advertising and all my leaflets the wording is exactly this: 'campaign for adequate public transport, a rail link and appropriate access road infrastructure for the Ellenbrook regional district.'

As I said, the member for Swan Hills made a clear commitment to build a rail line to Ellenbrook. There was also a flyer, as the member for Swan Hills said on 6PR, committing to building the rail line to Ellenbrook.

**Mr F.A. Alban:** I didn't commit; I canvassed. There is a distinct difference.

**The SPEAKER:** This grievance is not to the member for Swan Hills and I do not want to hear from the member during this grievance.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The flyer states that the Liberal government will build a rail line to Ellenbrook and improve local bus services. That was a clear election commitment to build a rail line to Ellenbrook. Although the Premier has walked away from the start time of 2012, I do not want to argue about the start and finish times today. I want to know whether the Liberal government is still committed to building a rail line to Ellenbrook. As I have said in this place, the Liberal Party costing document released during the election shows that \$53 million was dedicated in 2010–11 and 2011–12 to build a rail line to Ellenbrook, and the midyear review, which was released in December 2008, shows funding for the rail line to Ellenbrook, including the comment that construction of the Ellenbrook rail line is expected to commence in 2010–11. The Liberal Party gave a clear commitment to build the rail line to Ellenbrook and everyone believed the construction was due to commence in 2012 and be completed in 2015. It was a clear commitment. Since the election, we have seen games being played with the people of Ellenbrook in respect of their rail line. The route definition study was all about defining the route of the rail line to Ellenbrook. That was meant to have been undertaken in 2009. Minister O'Brien committed to undertaking the route definition study. Then we saw the cancellation of the route definition study because the rail line was put into the master plan, or the plan for the north east corridor more generally. The north east corridor plan was put in place of the route definition study. However, Minister O'Brien kept that plan secret. He kept it so secret that yesterday the Auditor General complained about the inappropriateness of keeping this plan secret from the community. The people of Ellenbrook deserve better. A 20-year public transport master plan is being developed, and I understand it that is to be released in the next two or three months. I believe that the people of Ellenbrook need to be told the truth now about whether they will get a rail line to Ellenbrook. They were promised it. Commitments were made since 2008 that a rail line would be built to Ellenbrook and now it is time

to see whether a rail line to Ellenbrook will be built. As I said, the people of Ellenbrook and those who live in the north east corridor were given a clear commitment during the election campaign. A flyer was distributed to them that gave a clear commitment from the member for Swan Hills, the then Leader of the Opposition and the current Minister for Transport.

Ellenbrook is a growing community. Over the next decade, 33 000 homes are expected to be built along the Lord Street urban growth corridor. Better public transport is needed in that corridor and the people of Ellenbrook need better public transport. I am asking today whether the Liberal government is still committed to building a rail to Ellenbrook. What is the time frame for its construction? Will the Ellenbrook rail line be included in the forward estimates, as it should be, given the Liberal Party's commitment? I ask again: will this rail line be built? I ask the member for Swan Hills to advance the case of the Ellenbrook rail line and to not walk away from the commitment that was given.

**Mr F.A. Alban** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I gave instructions to the member for Swan Hills that I did not want to hear him during this grievance. If the member for West Swan consistently asks questions of him, it will not make this a better grievance. The member for Swan Hills.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** West Swan, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** That happens all the time in question time, too, as I understand.

The member for Swan Hills should be advancing the case for the Ellenbrook rail line. He should not be running away from the Liberal Party's election commitment. The Premier should be straight with the people of Ellenbrook and those who live in the north east corridor. Stop playing games on this issue. Will the government build the rail line to Ellenbrook? What is the time frame for the construction of the rail line to Ellenbrook? Will the government stand by a core and key election commitment that was given by the now Premier and backed up by the now Minister for Transport and the member for Swan Hills? That commitment was included in the costing document and all the propaganda. Will the government build the rail line to Ellenbrook?

**MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier)** [9.58 am]: I am pleased that the member has raised this issue again. She raised it about a year ago. This is exactly the same speech, but I do not mind that it comes to life once a year. I remind members that we are little over 18 months into a four and a half year term.

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I just make that point.

**Mr P.B. Watson** interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** The member for Albany does not even look after his constituents.

*Point of Order*

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I find that very offensive. I have been re-elected three times when the Liberal Party thought it was going to win.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Warnbro! I call you formally for the first time. Member for Albany, you have not made a point of order.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** If this is a delaying tactic, I will formally call you. This had better be a point of order.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Indeed. The standing orders require an allegation against an individual member of Parliament to be made only by way of a substantive motion. The Premier has made an accusation against the member for Albany that he does not serve his community. That is an allegation against the member for Albany and it has not been brought to the chamber by way of a substantive motion.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Cannington; I do not find that to be a point of order. I am interested in progressing this grievance.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr P.B. Watson:** So we can say anything we like.

**The SPEAKER:** I formally call you for the first time, member for Albany.

I will formally call anyone else who wants to speak at this point. The member for West Swan has a genuine grievance before this place. I do not believe she needs any assistance from anyone else, and the person she wants to hear from is the Premier.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think most of us remember during the September election campaign in 2008 how the then Premier, Alan Carpenter, I think with the now member for West Swan, went out with a star picket.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** You're wrong; I didn't.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Okay, I am wrong.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Yes, you are. That's the third time you've got it wrong.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I have a new policy now.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** To be as arrogant as possible.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Mandurah, it is not your grievance; I do not want to hear from you. Member for West Swan, I also advise you that I observe that the Premier listened to you without interjection. You might not like the answers you are getting but that is the process of a grievance in this place.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** We remember former Premier Alan Carpenter banging in the star picket with the sign "Rail for Ellenbrook" and it fell over—a bit like the whole campaign. It was one of those moments when it fell over in front of the camera. However, fair enough. The map of the Perth rail network shows a rail line going out to the western suburbs, one to the coastal northern suburbs, one through the southern suburbs and one through the south eastern corridor. There is not one, of course, through the north eastern corridor. It is therefore not that hard to work out that the next logical major extension of the rail network is into the north eastern suburbs. I agree with that. This government made a decision, firstly, to extend the northern coastal line further, and we have allocated \$240 million to that. Some preliminary work is underway and that will happen during this term of government.

That brings me back to Ellenbrook. When the issue came up, as issues do in election campaigns, I made it very clear that I supported a rail line to Ellenbrook. I also said that if a Liberal government was elected, it would be a second-term project, and it is.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** You didn't say that.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** The member for West Swan just told us she was not there. That is what I very clearly said to the media.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** The media didn't report that.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I am sorry; I do not write the articles. Maybe I should. Given the quality of some of the articles, maybe we should both say it and report it.

**Mr P. Papalia:** So you didn't promise to build a railway?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I do not mind interjections; I like Parliament. But if members cannot raise the quality of their interjections, I will not respond; I will just sit down.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Is that the new policy?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Good interjections are fine, but not if they are drivel. I will talk about Ellenbrook.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Did you match our commitment?

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan, I have already spoken to you.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Mr Speaker —

**Mr P. Papalia:** The Napoleon of Cottesloe!

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warnbro, you might be enjoying this process; some people in here are not. I formally call you for the second time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** As I said, the north eastern corridor rail line—the next logical major extension of our rail system —

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Did you match our commitment, Premier?

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan, I formally call you for the first time. You have given a grievance in this place; I expect that, at some point, you might want to try to listen to the answer. You might not like the answer but that is the process of a grievance.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** As I said, that is the next logical major extension. I said that if a Liberal government was elected, we would look at some planning work on that, which needs to be done because it has not been done, and if we are elected for a second term, it will be a second-term project. We are 18 months into what is now a four and a half year term. We will commit and do the design and planning work. Members opposite might look forward to the budget when they can look at that. We are going to do that properly. As members might start to realise, this government puts commitments into budgets and into forward estimates when it has made a decision to do something.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** You made an election commitment; that was your decision.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** That is what we do.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** That was your decision.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** My new policy will come into effect very quickly.

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** It is my new policy, sorry.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Who cares?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** You don't care; maybe the member for West Swan cares; I don't know.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** This is not about you; this about the electorate of Ellenbrook.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** This is pointless.

**The SPEAKER:** If members on both sides of this place want a grievance process to be held in here, they need to have an understanding. A member makes a grievance to the minister and the minister responds. Whoever you are in this place, it might not be that you are getting the answer you want, but that is the process. It is not going to be improved at all by consistently interjecting and asking the same question. I do not know whether the Premier has finished.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I will have one last go.

The cost of the project is being looked at; it will probably cost in the order of \$1 billion to build it. Any rail extension project is expensive. The population of the area is about 17 000 and there is great potential for future population growth. But the population expansion of Ellenbrook has not been as quick as we thought it would be. The key issue on the timing of the rail line will be the size of the population and the expected commuter usage of that line. A good government assesses projects. In this case it will look at the population growth and the preferred route and deal with some short-term issues. Public transport is inadequate in that area, so we will give immediate attention to public transport and, in the longer term, attention to the construction of a rail line. That is not going to be in this term of government. I made that very clear during the 2008 election campaign. It will be a second-term project if we are elected for a second term. In the meantime, during this term of government, we will commit funds, do the necessary planning and make the decisions. We will do it properly. At the moment, some major projects are underway in the Perth metropolitan area. I mentioned the extension of the northern rail line, and preliminary work on that is already underway. We are sinking the rail line through the city centre to enable us to create a major town square and develop the bus port below, and we are developing a waterfront project.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Key election commitment —

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** That is it—stumps! An immature member of Parliament.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan, I formally call you for the second time.