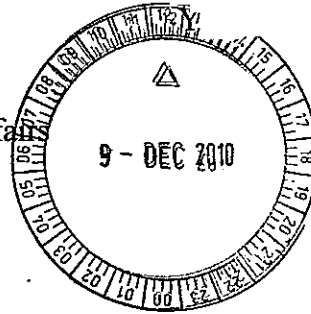


Hon Brian Ellis MLC  
Chairman Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
Perth WA 6000



Hon Brian Ellis MLC

**Re: Petition No 100 – Transperth Changes Bus Route (Number 19) Yokine**

Until 17<sup>th</sup> October 2010, the Number 19 bus travelled from the Wellington Street bus station, travelling through North Perth, Mt Lawley, Menora, and Coolbinia terminating in Raymond Street Yokine. I understand that the Raymond Street terminus has been in this position for over 50 years. During the off peak periods, this bus deviates through what was commonly known as the Carinya Village, which is an area comprising of a high number of retirement units. I travelled on this bus route to and from the city each weekday, finishing my journey at the Raymond Street terminus.

In late July 2010 a passenger who often catches the same bus as me informed me that a bus driver had told her that the bus route was being changed. According to the information given to this lady by the bus driver, all five bus stops in the loop comprising Thurlow Ave, Raymond St and Hayes Ave would be removed from the current route, relocating the terminus to the Dog Swamp shopping centre. The bus driver informed this lady that it was being done as the owner of the house on the corner of Raymond St and Roscorla Ave *“had made a complaint to the government threatening to sue the government if they did not shift the terminus as he had been unable to sell his block of land”* that had recently been subdivided. As this was ‘hear-say’ information, I sent an email to Transperth (2<sup>nd</sup> August 2010) asking if the rumour was true, and if so if any community consultation would take place before this was done. Transperth replied (4<sup>th</sup> August 2010) stating *“Thank you for your enquiry. I have liaised with the relevant department and they have advised me that these changes were considered and investigated, however this isn’t definite and there are no scheduled changes that are due to occur in the near future”*. I sent a reply asking for clarification about the community consultation which was not in their initial reply and was sent a reply that included a detailed list of all the type of consultation they undertake before making any changes.

Following my communication with Transperth, I received an email from someone from the Minister for Transport’s office. Realising that this matter was obviously being given serious consideration, I then wrote to Minister for Transport, Hon Simon O’Brien MLC, my local member of parliament, Hon Michael Sutherland MLA, the shadow Minister for Transport, Hon Ken Travers MLC, local counsellor Rob Willox and while this is a State issue, I also included a copy of the letter to my local federal member of parliament, Mr Michael Keenan MP, to ensure he was aware of the issue affecting local residents, outlining my concerns about the possible changes. I have not taken this complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations.

Following communication with staff from Parliamentarians offices and members of my community I found we were receiving mixed messages about the reasons for the change to the bus route. Some of these included, residents close to the Raymond St terminus asking for the terminus to be removed due to noise and a bus catching on fire at the location several months earlier as well as being lobbied by the residents in the Carinya Village area to have the bus route extended to the Dog Swamp shopping centre to allow for greater choice. If this was the case, this choice has come at the expense of the older people living in my immediate vicinity who use to catch the bus to the North Perth Plaza to do their shopping and now find the walk up the hill too difficult and rely on the good will of friends, family or taxi’s to take them shopping.

Transperth have stated changes have been made as part of a normal review of bus routes which are undertaken from time to time. If this was the case, it is odd to see such a detailed explanation for the change to the No 19 bus route in the advertising brochure they provided which outlined all of the changes to all bus routes in the North Metro region. No other bus route change had such a detailed explanation. If this was done because of possible community backlash to the changes, it begs the question, why they also thought community consultation was not necessary?

My concerns over the changes to the Number 19 bus route include;

1. No proper community consultation was undertaken before changes were made as per Transperth guidelines. I have since been advised by Keetha Wilkinson, Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister for Transport that community consultation is only done '*based on the likely impact of the change*'. I am not clear on how Transperth make this judgement? I understand they did count the number of passengers boarding the bus at the Raymond St Terminus during the month of August which showed an average of 33 people per day boarded the bus. They did not count the number of people who boarded the bus at the next stop located in Hayes Ave nor count the number of people alighting from the bus at the other four bus stops in this loop. It is the return journey that is the most beneficial to passengers, especially the older passengers.
2. One reason provided for the removal of this loop was that '*these stops are no longer deemed necessary given its one sided passenger catchment*'. While it is a one sided catchment, the dwellings that do boarder the "catchment" are in most cases high density housing with most properties having a minimum of three dwellings others having more than 6 dwellings.
3. Statements were made that the changes will result in '*no more than an additional 300 metre walk to access the new stops in Blythe Ave*'. While this is true for some, it is not the case for the residents who live in the vicinity of Raymond St and Thurlow Ave and have the added danger of having to cross busy Woodrow Ave or Blythe Ave, depending on where they alight from the bus. Both stops force them to cross at an area where there is both a bend and incline in the section of the road. Other issues arise for those using Hayes Ave which has a short steep incline in a section at the Blythe Ave end of the street making it very difficult for the elderly to use and Roscorla Ave which has no footpath on either side of the road forcing pedestrians to walk on the road.
4. I understand Transperth considered but discounted the idea of continuing the loop (0.9km) around this area as '*it would be a circuitous route that would be unattractive to through passengers and follows the principles of best practice, designed by bus companies throughout the world*'. The new bus terminus now located in Nangar St at the Flinders Square (not Dog Swamp) shopping centre takes a circuitous route (0.6km) through two residential streets to return to Flinders St on the return journey to the city without having any pick up or set down bus stops which obviously does meet the principles of best practice!

No member of the community I have spoken with has any objections to the bus route being extended giving greater access to the shopping centre. This is particularly the case for those who rely on public transport for their independence. The community has been outraged by the lack of community consultation before changes were made and by the number of different reasons provided for making the changes, all of which have given the impression there has been something underhanded take place. It is therefore hoped that the Standing Committee can look at having this decision reviewed with a view to re-instating the bus stops affected by the change.

Yours sincerely,



Karen Milligan  
7<sup>th</sup> December 2010