

To the Honourable Members,

On 4th July 2019, the Honourable Rita Saffioti MLA, Minister for Transport delivered the following beautiful statement to the media, and I quote:

“The careful planning and co-ordination of infrastructure is fundamental to the economic and social wellbeing of any community.”

In fact, it is so well crafted, the City of Busselton refers to it on its own website, verbatim.

A quick internet search reveals numerous references to many of the keywords contained within, and from websites at all levels of government.

This concept is certainly not new, and we reflect on the wisdoms contained within the *Guideline for Preparation of Integrated Transport Plans*¹. Including that of Mr Gary Prattley, the then Chairperson of the WA Planning Commission who succinctly wrote in the foreword:

‘The purpose of this document is to assist local governments to produce effective integrated transport plans, enabling high quality transport decisions that improve accessibility, amenity, safety and functionality in communities and centres; and to facilitate more sustainable transport outcomes.

Both State and local governments play key roles in transport planning and maintenance of transport infrastructure. I encourage key decision-makers within local and State government authorities to embrace these guidelines, and strive to adopt integrated transport plans that are consistent and aligned with national and State objectives for economic, efficient and sustainable transport planning and services delivery.’

Furthermore, that document highlights the ‘*need to account for diverse economic, social and environmental objectives and outcomes for transport projects*² and goes on to say:

For example, major road projects will often state objectives in relation to:

- *Transport - such as reducing traffic in congested areas, improving access by other means, **reducing traffic on local streets** and reducing road trauma.*

Imagine the surprise of the Forrestfield and Wattle Grove communities when the proposed plan for the Hale Rd flyover was made public, cutting off direct access to Tonkin Highway, from both suburbs and in both directions.

The 2016 Census lists Forrestfield / Wattle Grove as a combined population of 19,000 residents. The WA Main Roads Traffic Map data of 2017/18 demonstrates a combined 24,600 vehicles using this intersection daily.

Of course, those numbers may be deflated somewhat, due to the aggressive population strategy to suit the opening of the Forrestfield Train Line, and the 2018 & 2019 Telethon Homes being strategically built in the new Satterley land release, The Hales - Residential Estate.

The Hales is accessed by Hawtin Rd, which is the Maida Vale extension of Hale Rd, which in turn, is the natural and safest Tonkin Highway feeder for 16,000 vehicles per day from the Forrestfield side.

On the Forrestfield side, Traffic Map Data shows 36,000 vehicles transit in and out of the suburb daily; and 16,000 (44%) utilise the Hale Road intersection.

The current Hale Rd and Tonkin Hwy intersection is not fantastic, it is simply a single lane feeder that splits into two just prior to the lights from each direction. However, it is a far better option than the single lane school zone mayhem that is Berkshire Road. A road that travels past Darling Range Sports College, a school with a student population of around 995 and over 100 teaching and support staff³.

Or the alternative route, which require drivers to play 40km dodge-ems with Dawson Park Primary School parents shielding their brood (who dart across to class from off-street parking) from becoming yet another road trauma statistic.

Of course, we can choose the Lewis Rd / Welshpool Rd East T Junction where one mentally checks their affairs are in order before diving across the two lanes of traffic building momentum to take on Lesmurdie Hill. Getting that one right is quite exhilarating!!

¹ <https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/state-planning-framework/fact-sheets,-manuals-and-guidelines/guidelines-for-preparation-of-integrated-transport>

² Page 115

³ <https://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline/overview.do?schoolID=4116>

Neither suburb has an abundance of commercial businesses, but what we do have is the 'Pop In' convenience that Hale Rd offers, including a Vet Hospital, Fuel, Groceries, Fast Food outlets, and Specialty Stores all being available within 1500m of the Tonkin intersection in either direction.

In addition, Hale Rd houses what the City of Kalamunda⁴ describes as '*the largest of the City's Premier sporting reserves*'. As outlined in the Master Plan⁵, which was endorsed by Council in August 2010 and received State funding in January 2014 to the tune of \$6.1 million for its implementation, Hartfield Park is a '*large district level reserve*' that is home to the Kalamunda & District Rugby Union Club (KDRUC), Kalamunda District Master Plan, the facility is home to Hockey Club, Forrestfield Football Club, Forrestfield Cricket Club, Forrestfield United Soccer Club (FUSC), Kalamunda Bulldogs Rugby League Club, Forrestfield Flyers Tee ball Club, a Scout Group, Forrestfield Little Athletics Club and many more. As you can imagine, the success of these groups has seen a massive increase to the amount of visitors to Forrestfield, in fact '*the KDRUC and FUSC report over 1,000 players and spectators present during home fixtures*'⁶.

Further, there is no mention in the proposal set forward by Main Roads of an alternate heavy haulage route where the Tonkin / Hale intersection is used to circumvent bridges over Roe Highway, at Maida Vale and Helena Valley Roads, particularly for mega-loads heading north from Kwinana.

Of greatest concern though, is the complete lack of community consultation in identifying impacts to the local population and seemingly total disregard of any 'no disadvantage' sniff testing. We locals demand a transparent risk assessment process whereby unintended consequences are mitigated through further solution planning and consultation.

The local residents do not wish to see that consultation window close either, as the Minister informed 6PR's Gareth Parker on 12th November, as was apparent in the case she referred to when she took over the portfolio; being the concerns of Beechboro and Bennett Springs residents that could not be taken into consideration as the 'Planning' was too advanced.

Not the Construction, or Procurement or Contract Award; just the "Planning".

Minister Saffioti also noted that she spoke with Main Roads a few months ago and asked them to re-look at the design, as she wanted to make sure that 'local access' is retained and that she has spoken with Steven Price MLA, Member for Forrestfield, on this '*a number of times*'. She continues to mention re-modelling options, and the difficulties of interchanges being close.

The Minister says she has asked Main Roads to work very hard to get that local access. She also says that there are plans to collect local traffic impact data in Q1 2020, which we agree seems logical.

Instead though, the proposal, which according to the Minister's own comments is contrary to her direction, was made public around 9th November 2019, prompting significant and swift public debate on social media and an online petition which collected 4,000 email signatures in a week, equal to 21% of local population; shared on social media over 1,000 times.

As our Parliamentary processes have not caught up with the concept of online objection, the good people of Forrestfield and Wattle Grove (and for the benefit of visitors to our great Foothills suburb) hereby use the petition submitted on 5th December 2019 containing 4000 original signatures to demand that the Honourable Minister for Transport is firmer with Main Roads, and ensures access is maintained to the Tonkin Highway from Wattle Grove AND Forrestfield sides of Hale Road

Ultimately, we collectively believe that the careful planning and co-ordination of infrastructure is fundamental to the economic and social wellbeing of any community.

Thank you Honourable members for your time.

⁴ <https://www.kalamunda.wa.gov.au/recreation-tourism/sports-recreation/leisure-planning>

⁵ https://kalblob.blob.core.windows.net/kallibrary/docs/default-source/community/planning/hartfield-park-sport-and-recreation-facilities-master-plan-final.pdf?sfvrsn=2885356a_4

⁶ page 47, Hartfield Park Sport and Recreation Facilities Master Plan [Final Report, August 2010]