



## Minister for Transport; Housing; Emergency Services

Our ref: 30-27350; 30-27608

Hon Brian Ellis MLC  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr Ellis

### **PETITION NO 148 - PERTH WATERFRONT PROJECT**

Thank you for your letter dated 29 March 2012 regarding Petition No 148 - Perth Waterfront Project.

The State Government has recently released a Central Business District (CBD) Transport Plan to 2016 to ensure that the Perth CBD has a sustainable and integrated transport system that can accommodate and complement major city development projects such as the Perth City Link, Riverside eastern gateway and Perth Waterfront projects. The plan has a range of initiatives for the next five years to manage the impact of these major developments and a growing population on the central city's transport system. It considers the service and associated infrastructure improvement needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, taxi users, private car and commercial drivers that need to travel into and around the CBD.

The Government has already announced a major upgrade to the Graham Farmer Freeway capacity and for the northbound lanes of Mitchell Freeway to Hutton Street. This will cost \$57 million. The new initiatives in the CBD will cost \$47.6 million, and will be funded from the Perth Parking Management Fund. This will provide for additional Central Area Transit (CAT) buses, a new Green CAT service from Leederville to the CBD, a new traffic management approach by Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA), and cycle and bus lanes.

Riverside Drive forms an east-west arterial road for traffic not only accessing the Perth CBD but also travelling between the Causeway and Stirling Highway. The 2006 Census identified a significant number of people travelling to work from the southern and south eastern suburbs to West Perth, Shenton Park and the Subiaco/Nedlands area. West of Barrack Street it currently carries on average 35,500 vehicles per weekday. Its four road lanes create a barrier for pedestrians, wanting to access the river foreshore, pathways and developments such as Barrack Square.

The removal of the section of Riverside Drive between Barrack Street and William Street will result in traffic diverting to alternative routes and also some of those drivers changing to alternative modes of transport such as public transport or cycling.

The Department of Transport, in conjunction with MRWA and the City of Perth, has undertaken transport modelling to investigate the likely traffic impacts on the Perth CBD and surrounding road system. In addition, an external consultant was employed to undertake an independent transport modelling assessment for the same situation to corroborate the Government modelling work.

In reference to the specific questions raised in the petition, the following additional information is provided:

**The cutting of Riverside Drive will have serious impacts on traffic congestion in and around the Perth central business district;  
As a result, residents and business people of the Western Suburbs, including the City of Nedlands, will experience increased difficulty visiting central Perth;**

The Perth CBD is undergoing unprecedented changes, both with major new civic projects and changes to the CBD's streets. The changes to Riverside Drive to enable the Perth Waterfront Project are only a small part of these major changes.

To facilitate completion of the new inlet a section of Riverside Drive between Barrack Street and William Street will be removed in mid-2013 resulting in traffic being diverted to alternative routes. Traffic will still be able to use Barrack Street, the Esplanade and William Street as a replacement route or other alternative routes through and around the CBD. In addition, the current single west-bound direction of Riverside Drive from William Street to the Point Lewis Rotary will be reconstructed to enable traffic to flow in both directions. This will provide an additional option for traffic entering the city.

The diversion of Riverside Drive is likely to result in a reduction in traffic from the current 35,500 vehicles per day to 14,000-15,000 vehicles per day. Most of the diverted traffic will use the Graham Farmer Freeway and some 5,000 vehicles per day are modelled to use other parts of the CBD network and arterial roads around the city.

Works to accommodate a third traffic lane in the Graham Farmer Freeway tunnel in each direction and increased lane capacity on the Mitchell Freeway will commence in July 2012. The works on the Graham Farmer and Mitchell freeways up to Vincent Street will be complete and operational before Riverside Drive is redirected.

**The said residents and business people will find it harder to travel to and from Perth Airport;**

The investment in the Graham Farmer Freeway will provide additional capacity for west bound and east bound traffic to travel across the city, including destinations such as Perth Airport. Traffic will still be able to use Barrack Street, the Esplanade and William Street as a replacement route to the current Riverside Drive.

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Travel times through the Perth CBD will vary over the coming years due to road network changes and the impact of roadworks for major projects. Projects such as the Perth CityLink will result in lane closures for extended periods on arterial roads, e.g. Wellington Street and Barrack Street. It is expected that drivers will try a number of different routes to minimise their travel times and travel patterns will take many months to settle.

**The lengthy construction time of the project – anticipated to be 10 to 20 years, will result in continuous disruption and traffic congestion for the foreseeable future.**

It is important to recognise that there will be substantial changes to the Perth CBD and inner city areas in coming decades as Perth rapidly grows to a city with 3.5 million people. This will fundamentally change the way people move about the city and the nature of the transport system.

The major civil works for the Perth Waterfront Project are scheduled for 2012-2015. This includes changes to the road network, relocation of Water Corporation infrastructure and construction of the inlet.

The development of the property lots within the Perth Waterfront precinct will be undertaken over the next one to two decades in response to investment opportunities and market conditions.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely



**TROY BUSWELL MLA  
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**

08 MAY 2012

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