

PREMIER'S STATEMENT

Consideration

Resumed from 29 September on the following question —

That the Premier's Statement be noted.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Parliamentary Secretary) [7.53 pm]: It is my pleasure to respond to the Premier's Statement. It is now three years since the September 2008 election and this government commenced its term. It is great to have an opportunity to provide the house with an update on the status of my electorate and some of the issues that have been bouncing around the electorate during that time. I will also advise the house where we are up to with respect to the promises made to my community in the 2008 election. One of the promises that I was very pleased to deliver at the start of this year was the new Deanmore Primary School. The school community has now spent one year in new premises. It was a long and sorry story involving a hard-won fight for that new primary school, with issues around the primary school bouncing around the community as far back as 2002. There were issues to do with not only asbestos but also a noxious odour that was making it impossible for children to sit in their classrooms. People with respiratory conditions were unable to even walk past some of the classrooms without having breathing problems or asthmatic attacks and all sorts of things. In the lead-up to the 2008 election we were very pleased to promise that community a brand-new school if we were successful in coming into government. In February this year we delivered that brand-new primary school to the community in what is the school's fiftieth year. That is a great achievement for the community. The children and teachers at that school are really thrilled to bits with the new infrastructure. They are so proud of the site in the community. It is such a great pleasure to visit that school and see happy, smiling faces in an environment that is so much more conducive to learning.

I will highlight some of my other election commitments. In 2008, the Innaloo Sportsmen's Club had been fighting for a number of years to get the very first undercover bowling green in the state. The club had saved about \$400 000 and was looking for a community sporting and recreation facilities fund contribution from both the City of Stirling and the state government. It had been knocked back a couple of times. There was a bit of an issue around the election when some flyers went out saying that the former government had actually delivered the funding for the undercover green, which turned out to be incorrect. It was with great pleasure that I took that to the Liberal team during the election campaign and managed to secure funding for an undercover bowling green. The Innaloo Sportsmen's Club still cannot quite believe its luck. The people who frequent that club are now playing lawn bowls throughout the entire year. That project was also delivered on time. Club members are still talking about the wonderful opening day when the Premier joined me and other prominent members of the Innaloo Sportsmen's Club community to roll the first lawn bowl on the undercover synthetic green, protected from the wind and rain, and the sun, all year round. It is a great achievement.

One of my other election commitments was additional funding for closed-circuit television coverage at the Scarborough foreshore area. The Scarborough foreshore area attracts a wide variety of people who go there for a wide variety of interests and pursuits. Unfortunately, some people have a different idea of a good time to what the social expectations are. CCTV cameras have proved to be a very effective tool in helping police to not only prevent crime but also to prosecute people after the event, to examine the footage and determine how things might have unfolded, and to verify witness statements against what the cameras have recorded. We made a promise to fund additional cameras. From memory, the promise was for around \$258 000 in 2008—it was a long time ago. The Office of Crime Prevention made that funding available to the City of Stirling in 2009. I am advised that those CCTV cameras will be ready for use pretty much as we speak. There was a fair bit of toing and froing by the City of Stirling while it tried to sort out the Scarborough foreshore master plan and exactly where the cameras should be placed. There is certainly much rejoicing in the community, and with local police, now that the camera locations have been sorted and the cameras have been installed. The technology is quite advanced. The new digital enhancements to that technology provide police with very good identification of people who might be involved in antisocial activity. The cameras are able to be moved around in response to activities unfolding on the ground. They are a very, very good tool. I am pleased to see that they are finally sorted and of use to the community, as was intended back in September 2008 when I secured the funding as part of my election campaign.

One of my other campaign commitments was in response to my door-knocking campaign in the lead-up to the 2008 election when I had lots of complaints from public transport devotees who, for various reasons, like to drive to the Park 'n' Ride station at Stirling and take the train into the city. There have not been enough parking bays at Stirling train station for a number of years. In response to those complaints from the community, we agreed to double the parking capacity at Stirling train station. The construction of an additional 468 bays is nearing completion and will be available to commuters in the very near future. This will make a really big

difference on a number of levels. Most people who travel along Mitchell Freeway in the morning to go to work in the city, or indeed to even cross the city to go to work further south of the CBD, always end up getting caught in the congestion that starts around Karrinyup Road and continues through to Glendalough train station. I drive through it fairly frequently myself. Part of the advantage of having this additional parking at Stirling train station is that it will take 468 commuter vehicles off the road every morning, which will make a tremendous difference to the traffic congestion right at that point of the freeway, albeit for only a short distance.

That brings me to another election commitment that we are in the process of delivering, which is around fixing the traffic bottleneck at Innaloo. The congestion at the Innaloo precinct is a matter that is becoming quite urgent. It has been a problem for quite a number of years now. In response to that problem, the state government has funded the Stirling City Centre Alliance. The Stirling alliance team is working on future planning for the Stirling city centre, which includes the Innaloo traffic precinct right along to the City of Stirling Civic Centre and back pushing into Woodlands. It is a very bold plan. It is a 50-year plan for a satellite CBD to the Perth central business district. Once that plan is completed, the expectation is that another 30 000 residents over the following 50 years will place themselves in the Stirling city centre. It will be one of those places of mixed residential and commercial use, and will be very close to the industrial development hub in the Osborne and Herdsman industrial parks. The concept of people living close to where they work with a nice environment of high amenity may well be realised for the first time retrospectively in a modern city when this Stirling city centre gets off the ground. There is still a fair bit of work that needs to be done on this. A lot of transport planning needs to occur, including rationalisation of the freeway access points between Karrinyup Road and Glendalough train station. An improvement to Stirling train station needs to occur to allow greater connectivity between both trains and buses, and the freeway access points need to be improved. Connection points over the freeway at Cedric Street, Hutton Street and various other points along the way will also be upgraded and improved to allow vehicles, which are currently forced onto Mitchell Freeway as part of their journey, access points to cross the freeway and get from Innaloo to Mt Hawthorn, Karrinyup and other areas without having to traverse parts of the freeway that add to congestion and are in fact an unnecessary part of their journey.

There is a great deal of community excitement and community investment in developing that plan. There is still a fair bit of work to be done on it and, of course, funding needs to occur for any of it to happen. This is therefore a project that is very much front and centre for my electorate and is important to a lot of people. Until we unlock the bottleneck through Innaloo and sort out the traffic congestion through that section of Perth, none of the potential can be unlocked for private investment through that area in both the retail centres and vacant land, and indeed land that is currently owned by the state government. I am very pleased that the government has seen fit to fund further planning of the Stirling alliance to enable the very important groundwork to be done so that this expansion that the community is very much looking forward to can occur.

Some of the other things that have been delivered in my community that did not form part of the election strategy have been both surprising and pleasing to many of my constituents. Indeed, it has been said to me that the Scarborough–Innaloo–Doubleview community has had more money spent on it in the last three years than it enjoyed for a number of years prior to that. One of the projects I was very pleased to be involved in was around Scarborough Primary School. It has always had a really bad, difficult issue there with the safety of children. It is on a relatively busy road that often gets used for rat running by commuter traffic and it is quite a difficult place for parents to stop and drop off their children safely. Being an old school, it is also pretty much landlocked by residential dwellings. As a result of that, not too many opportunities are available for parents to park safely, deposit their children and see them safely through the front gates of the school. Plans drawn up by the City of Stirling in conjunction with the Department of Education had been on the books for a long time to consider funding a kiss and ride drop-off area and to improve the verge parking around Scarborough Primary School. I was very pleased to become involved in that project and have that kiss and ride area and safer parking delivered to Scarborough Primary School. I think that occurred in the October school holidays, although it could have been July—I am losing track of time this year. However, it was delivered this year and the community is very pleased with it. It has actually improved the congestion along Hinderwell Street, which was an unexpected outcome for that particular project.

We have also had a flurry of flashing lights installed in the Scarborough electorate. St John's Primary School was a pioneer in the campaign to have flashing signs installed at their 40-kilometre-an-hour zones, particularly on Scarborough Beach Road. May I seek an extension, Madam Acting Speaker?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Certainly, member for Scarborough!

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am just making sure!

The campaign by St John's Primary School was led by a ferocious campaigner for road safety, a local lady called Esme Bowen, who I believe is now on the RAC road safety council. Esme led a fantastic campaign over approximately 13 years to try to provide a safer crossing point along Scarborough Beach Road for the children of St John's and Scarborough Primary Schools. She had many, many knockbacks over that period, and in 2009 as the new local member, I was very pleased to see the 40-kilometre-an-hour flashing road signs installed on either side of the children's crossing on Scarborough Beach Road. That particular section of Scarborough Beach Road has had motorists clocked travelling at 120 kilometres an hour when the zone was signposted at 40 kilometres an hour. We were therefore very pleased to see flashing signs installed. Driver behaviour has responded as expected and slowed down through that particular section, making it much safer for children. The result of that is more children are walking, riding or taking their scooters to school each day, which is of great benefit to the general health of the wider community and to the future parents in Scarborough. Also through the government's commitment to road safety for children, similar flashing lights have been installed around Doubleview Primary School on both St Brigids Terrace and Ewen Street. The local parents and citizens association president there campaigned for a long, long time to try to get those flashing lights put in. Then, as a result of this Liberal-National government's commitment to funding flashing lights in school zones, Doubleview Primary School was successful earlier this year in having flashing lights installed at both St Brigids Terrace and Ewen Street. There has been significant improvement in driver behaviour through those zones now that more drivers are aware that they are passing through a school zone. They are aware that schoolchildren may be in the area so they need to slow down and be ready for those sudden and often unpredictable movements that children might make as they make their way to school. I put on the record my congratulations to the P&C president, Karen Appleby, and the P&C at Doubleview Primary School and to the principal, David Tennant, for his efforts over time in pushing for those lights.

The Premier visited the electorate of Scarborough recently. I wish to put on the record again that Scarborough is really Perth's premier beach. Sorry, member for Ocean Reef, but it was named as such on the front page of last week's edition of the *Stirling Times*. The Premier is on the record as saying that. It is great for Scarborough to finally receive that recognition. We need some improvement in Scarborough's foreshore amenity.

Mr A.P. Jacob: A bit more like Mullaloo.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I think Scarborough could probably raise it a notch over Mullaloo but I appreciate the member for Ocean Reef's passion for his local area. The Scarborough foreshore attracts people from right around the state, and also international tourists.

The City of Stirling has been looking at urban design master plans and foreshore master plans since 1974 when the Scarborough foreshore was declared a special beach development zone. In 2011, I think we have finally agreed on the foreshore master plan. It has come in with a price tag that one might expect when plans have been tossed around for many years. We are looking at a \$53 million foreshore master plan—a redevelopment proposal—by the City of Stirling. It is seeking funding from various avenues to fund the foreshore plan. The really interesting thing about the Scarborough foreshore is that the areas and the eyesores that people complain about are large blocks of privately owned land. The problem with the foreshore is that there is pretty much a disincentive for private developers to redevelop their sites. The Rendezvous Hotel has fantastic redevelopment plans on the books with the City of Stirling awaiting approval. If it gets its planning approval through and commences redevelopment of that site, it will provide a fantastic catalyst for redevelopment in the whole area. The problem is that the redevelopment always comes at a price. When Observation City was first developed, a lot of money was put into the community by the developer towards rearranging the foreshore. As is the case with most of Western Australia's beachside communities, foreshore redevelopment usually ends up as some form of limestone bricks. We ended up with limestone walls right along the foreshore in Scarborough. That was filled in with grass and that was our foreshore redevelopment. Since then the city is to be commended for spending some money on putting the beachside amphitheatre in place.

If we want Scarborough to have a facelift, these big tracts of privately owned land need to be redeveloped. That can only happen if there is a master plan and a planning scheme that stimulates development. We also need a local government that wants to work with developers to assist them through the process and encourage them to improve their derelict sites. One site in the Scarborough foreshore area is a case in point, especially when we talk about frustrating red tape that turns away people who want to invest in an area. This site was vacated. The developer was in the process of raising funds to develop the site when the global financial crisis hit. Funding for ventures that have a tourism component has pretty much dried up in the banking community. That then puts pressure on people who want to redevelop any site to pretty much have all their apartments or villas or whatever it is they are trying to put in place funded prior to development. They say they need pre-sales of 85 per cent to 100 per cent for certain sites. The building in question was vacated with great optimism, with the owners figuring that they would be able to redevelop fairly soon. They got their planning approval through and then their money dried up. Squatters moved into the site and pretty much wrecked it. It is now a derelict, graffitied,

vandalised eyesore. In the interests of community safety, the developer applied for a demolition licence for the site, which consists of four strata titled lots in the one building. When the owner of the site applied for a demolition licence, he was told that because there are four strata titled lots and he would need four demolition licences. There ensued an appeal to the State Administrative Tribunal, which resulted in a lengthy battle to get a demolition licence for an eyesore that the community is begging to have sorted out. The owner of the property was then told that if he paid his developer contribution for the development upfront, he would have to apply for only one demolition licence and the lots would be amalgamated upon receipt of the developed contribution for the site. This is before he sold the required 85 per cent of the apartments before he could develop and get his funding from the bank. We have bureaucratic red tape, amongst other things, holding up the revitalisation of the area. We need a much better attitude and a less bureaucratic approach to these sorts of developments if we want to see Scarborough transformed in the way that the community expects.

One of the other issues in this whole scenario is that this particular owner has development and planning approval for his site but he now needs a building licence. Because of the lapse in time between submitting and receiving planning approval and his application for a building licence, the City of Stirling is now demanding that he re-visit that his construction still complies with the Building Code of Australia. The city is demanding that he resubmit his compliance reports for fire safety. A range of other ridiculous hurdles are being put in the way of somebody who wants to basically build something really nice for the community, transform an eyesore and deliver to the community much-needed revitalisation that it has been desperate for and been waiting for since 1974 when the area was declared a special beach development zone. We need to have a cultural change and an attitude check if we are going to see any transformation of Scarborough. That transformation needs to occur first and foremost on privately owned land—on those privately owned properties that have derelict buildings on them.

All in all, my community is a very hardworking community. Lots of people are involved in volunteering, sporting groups and school groups right across the board. As a result, my community is becoming quite successful at achieving things that are important to them. Scarborough Sportsmen's Club is a case in point. For a number of years it has been trying to achieve funding from the community sporting and recreation facilities fund for an upgrade of one of its bowling greens. That took a fair bit of campaigning. It needed a three-way commitment from the club, local government and the state government. Trying to bring three interests together at once is not always as easy as one would expect. The Scarborough Sportsmen's Club opened its new refurbished synthetic green only a few months ago. It was very pleased with its achievement. Sometimes those things that local groups manage to achieve after a long fight are the ones that they savour the most. My hat goes off to Mike Robinson at the Scarborough Sportsmen's Club for the massive effort he put into trying to get that synthetic green. He keeps advising us that he will step down as president of the sporties' club because he has achieved what he set out to achieve, but a few people in the local community hope that he will reconsider that decision and stay.

Another area I would like to put on the record before my time is up is small business, which is an area that is very close to my heart having had, and still owning, small businesses and a background in that area for the majority of my working life. The Small Business Commissioner will soon be appointed in this state and that will make a very, very big difference to the way that small businesses go about fighting for their rights and ensuring that, particularly in commercial retail tenancy matters, they have somebody on their side who is willing to give them the advice they need and to sit down and provide a low-cost mediation service so that they can get together with their landlord and work out a way through a dispute. If our Small Business Commissioner is anywhere near as successful as the Victorian Small Business Commissioner—the legislation that this Parliament put in place is similar to the Victorian model—we can expect a tremendous improvement in the confidence of small business operators, both in the commercial retail tenancy sector and also the state generally. The Small Business Commissioner will ensure that there is somebody on the side of small businesses to assist them with not only tenancy matters but also unfair market practices and disputes around franchising.

One of the other areas in which we see a role for the Small Business Commissioner is actually getting out there to inform small business owners of their rights, obligations and duties as small business owners to ensure that they are fully aware of the contracts that they sign. One of the biggest problems that has come out in the conversations I have had with small businesses that are in dispute over tenancies, contracts, franchising and all sorts of things is that they do not obtain legal advice before they sign their agreements. Indeed, for franchising in particular, I think the figure was 42 or 46 per cent of franchisees ticked the box to indicate that they have received legal advice before signing their franchising agreement; but, when push comes to shove and everything goes pear-shaped, we discover that of those, 50 per cent actually did not seek legal advice—they just ticked the box so that they could get on with doing what they wanted to do. Therefore, I see a very big role for the commissioner to play in getting out there to inform small business owners about how to read their contracts, how to look through a contract and determine which aspects of the contract are and are not favourable to them, and to make an informed decision before they sign agreements that perhaps may not be in their long-term interests or,

indeed, may not be consistent with their expectations of the contract at the point at which they sign. I very much look forward to the commissioner coming on board because the commissioner role, in conjunction with our changes to the commercial retail tenancies legislation that just passed through this place, will give significant confidence to small businesses in going about their business, knowing that somebody out there—the Liberal-National government and the Small Business Commissioner—is looking after their interests.

I also want to place on record my appreciation for the people in the Small Business Development Corporation and our small business centres, notably Jacky Finlayson, the acting managing director of the Small Business Development Corporation. Over the past couple of years they have been very challenged and have done a terrific job, particularly in delivering assistance to many of our small businesses that have been affected by drought in our regional centres. In Manjimup we had the Gunns mill closure —

Mr D.T. Redman: Hear, hear!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I thank the minister. The Busselton Small Business Centre is in Margaret River to look at working with the small businesses there to ensure that protections are in place for those businesses as they recover from the fires. I thank you for your indulgence, Madam Acting Speaker (Ms L.L. Baker), and I appreciate my opportunity to respond to the Premier's Statement.

MR M.J. COWPER (Murray-Wellington — Parliamentary Secretary) [8.24 pm]: I rise to talk about issues affecting the Murray-Wellington electorate. For those who are not familiar with it, the Murray-Wellington electorate takes up 4 600 square kilometres of land, predominantly from Keysbrook in the north to Clifton Park along the southern boundary. It encapsulates the Harvey, Waroona and Murray shires. The Murray and Harvey shires are both category 1 shires; they are very well run and they are quite well heeled as far as their finances are concerned. Both these shires are experiencing rapid growth at the moment. Without going into which is growing the most rapidly—whether it is Busselton or Dalyellup or whichever it might be—certainly areas around Australind and the Treendale and Kingston Estates are growing very rapidly. Almost on a weekly basis when I am down that way, I see new streets springing up. A brand-new shopping centre is being built as we speak and a brand-new Woolworths will go in there. Of course, the Leschenault Leisure Centre now sports, with great support from this government, brand-new playing fields, brand-new sporting clubhouses and a brand-new aquatic centre and a recreational centre. Members, I think we spoke in the house just during the past week about a men's shed being built and —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Members, particularly members who are not in the chamber, can you please just keep your voices down because it is quite quiet in here. I am not talking to you two—behave yourselves.

Mr M.J. COWPER: A number of things affect the Shires of Murray and Harvey in particular; one being in the north, which is encroached upon by the Perth metropolitan area, and another being encroachment from the south. I refer specifically to the south metropolitan Peel regional scheme 2031 spatial plan. It is a significant impediment to the growth of the Murray shire. At the southern end is the greater Bunbury regional scheme, which seems to be penned very similarly to the 2031 formula which has been applied to areas in the Murray shire. Therefore, those shires that are affected have been touched by the application of a very similar sort of theme or formula. I really believe that this will be an impediment to the capacity of this state to reach its full potential. We know about the \$280 billion worth of projects in Western Australia. We know about the fact that we will need 235 000 additional workers in the next seven years. We know about the shortfall in the workers needed to keep industry going in this great state. But with that also comes the responsibility of government to provide affordable, cheap housing and to cope with the influx of people that is expected in the near future. I think we are falling way too short under the current planning projections of the Western Australian Planning Commission to accommodate that rapid growth. I will talk specifically about areas that I believe are fundamentally flawed. I will go through those in a minute, one by one, and I will give a summary at the end of it.

Basically, the Shire of Murray has capacity for a large number of houses to be built, particularly along the new freeway and the new transport routes and also adjacent to industry. The principle seems to have evolved out of the metropolitan area, but people down my way see themselves as being independent of people from the metropolitan area, and certainly the City of Bunbury. Remember that my electorate is the third-largest mining region in Western Australia. Behind the Pilbara and the Goldfields comes the Peel region, with all the Alcoa alumina refineries, coal mining up over the hill in Collie, the Boddington goldmine, mineral sand mining and a range of other things that are actually keeping this great state great. In addition to that, we also have what I would argue is the primary food-producing area of Western Australia. I am very parochial about the capacity of this great state to reach its potential; if we can maintain and service industries, particularly those that operate in the Murray-Wellington electorate, it will hold us in good stead. But what is really starting to worry me is the situation in which we have a pseudo, quasi-government developer in the form of LandCorp, which sees itself as some sort of a developer. I speak specifically of a number of projects that it has been involved with. I think some

of them have been fantastic. In particular, the one in the member for Mandurah's electorate, the Mandurah Ocean Marina, was a wonderful demonstration of how LandCorp was able to develop some land. However, it seems as though LandCorp has a taste for development at the expense of free enterprise. The Liberal Party is about small business; it is about being able to give enterprises out there a fair go at developing land, rather than having to compete against taxpayers' dollars.

We have a plan to develop an area known as Amarillo, which has been renamed Keralup by a competition in *The West Australian*, and so be it, but it is certainly known down my way as Amarillo, which means yellow in Italian. It is Amarillo because the area is yellow. Those who have ever visited Amarillo, or Keralup, will know that it is a swamp. It is full of mosquitoes and, I dare say, full of tiger snakes. The amount of fill, and the environmental damage that could potentially be caused from the amount of soil that is needed to be put into that area, does not bear thinking about. Just further down the brand-new Kwinana Freeway and Forrest Highway we have an ample amount of land that would be suitable for development. It is owned by a number of big companies around the place. Years ago, all the big companies bought the land, including Peet and Co, Satterley, Palermo's and the Palmer Group. All the big developers bought vast tracts of land through that part of the world, and we are already starting to see new suburbs spring up. In particular, around South Yunderup in Austin Cove, a brand-new Austin Cove Baptist school has been built. New shopping centres there are also planned. However, they have to be in direct competition with LandCorp. LandCorp is doing this in not only residential areas, but also industrial areas. I recall that some of the land that we visited, Madam Acting Speaker (Ms L.L. Baker), was set aside for industrial use. It will require probably two metres of sand fill to make it eligible for use as industrial land, yet just up the road about half a kilometre there is a parcel of land that has been crying out for development for some time. It is bordered by a piggery on the north, an airport on the west, dog kennels on the east and an abattoir on the south. The Premier himself has walked across this land. He identified that it is just black hungry-gutted sand. There is a small portion in one corner —

Mr C.J. Barnett: What did I identify it as?

Mr M.J. COWPER: Black hungry-gutted sand. Does the Premier remember that we walked across that big paddock and it was just —

Mr C.J. Barnett: I don't remember saying that but I'll take your word for it!

Mr M.J. COWPER: Well, it was boggy black sand, which is really not much good for anything. Unfortunately, certain quasi-government departments have come out and said that it is of significant environmental value. If that is of significant environmental value, I will walk backwards to Bali, I think, because some of the land there is just dreadful, and it is going to impede the capacity of this great state to provide employment opportunities.

Some of the issues that I have with the south metropolitan region scheme and the greater Bunbury region scheme include identifying urban and regional land use, planning growth and infrastructure delivery. I fully support the general philosophy behind the draft strategy. However, the people responsible for the scheme are trying to connect the city with a long-term vision of improved transport, and I believe that some of the baseline assumptions are fundamentally flawed. When a release of 38 000 new homes on the northern end of the northern suburbs of Perth occurred, we had to spend a great deal of money extending the freeway and extending the railway, as we did between Clarkson and Butler. We had to extend the power, water and gas services. Down my way, those services already exist. The water comes from down south. The powerlines from Muja are all there. We have a freeway through the middle of the place. We have freeways and we have trains. What we have over everyone in the northern suburbs is access to jobs. Potentially, those people in the northern suburbs can only jump onto their trains and shuffle off to Perth like a mob of herded cows, whereas the people down my way have access to real, meaningful jobs. They have secondary employment in the big construction areas such as Pinjarra, around Waroona with Charles Hull Contracting, around Harvey with Dwyer Engineering and Construction, which I know is operating 24 hours a day at the moment, and in Brunswick Junction with B. and J. Catalano and Carbone Bros—the big earthmoving companies. So, the jobs are there, but we do not have a lot of support for them.

I and the people of my electorate see ourselves as a village in our own right that supports the mining and agriculture industries, not some sort of tacked-on afterthought on the southern end of the south metropolitan region scheme. Equally, on the southern end, we are not going to be part of the greater Bunbury region scheme, because at the end of the day I think there are some fundamental flaws with that project in that they want an infill population. They say they are restricting land release in the Shire of Murray because they want to see the Cities of Rockingham and Mandurah become more populated. They are working on the principle that somehow people will choose to live in denser living situations; that may be true of the empty nesters who do not have kids living with them anymore, but the people who live in my electorate are aspirational people who work predominantly in the mining industry and want a four-bedroom, two-bathroom house. They want a big shed, they want a boat, a caravan, and somewhere for their kids to kick the footy around. Having the option of a larger block of land is

very important to them, whether it be an 800-square-metre block or a 1000-square-metre block, or indeed five or 10 acres, so that they can run a few horses. As Madam Acting Speaker (Ms L.L. Baker) knows, the equine industry is extremely important to the people of that area; it is a lifestyle choice in the Murray–Wellington electorate. The amount of land that is proposed for release is, I believe, significantly inadequate. I think that we will find ourselves in desperate trouble if we think we can rely on an infill population operation in Rockingham and Mandurah, and certainly within Eaton and Australind in the southern end.

During a period of sustained growth a lot of people invest in smaller houses and choose lifestyles overlooking the beautiful estuaries and waterways around Mandurah and Australind, and also perhaps Bunbury. But when the economy starts to downturn, so do subdivision requirements, and that option becomes difficult to realise because it costs about \$6 500 a square metre to develop infill homes in those small areas, whereas in those areas I am referring to, people get a vast amount of land for \$6 500—more land for their buck—and that land is available.

I was recently in Singapore, and yesterday I entertained some very important business folk from Singapore. They said that one of the things that attracts them to invest in Western Australia is that we have what a lot of people do not have in other parts of the world—that is, access to a vast amount of land to spread out and do the things we want to do. This is something I think we will lose if we do not recognise that we have a problem with the strategies that have been proffered by the Western Australian Planning Commission. I will summarise it later, but I will ask the Western Australian Planning Commission to go away and rethink how it is going to apply this strategy.

I turn to growth rates. I think it is fair to say that it is difficult for anyone to predict the future population of an area, whether it be the Planning Commission, the Australian Bureau of Statistics or some sort of consultancy. As an example of the variation, the Planning Commission estimates that by 2026 there will be 100 000 people in the greater Bunbury area, but the Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that there will be 100 000 people in Bunbury by 2018—a significant difference of eight years. That is an example of how estimates can result in the Planning Commission being so far out in its planning requirements. It has been recommended that the Planning Commission do a thorough population model, to allow strategic planning to be undertaken with a greater level of confidence and ensure that sufficient land is provided to accommodate the predicted growth. I believe that the population growth as estimated by the Western Australian Planning Commission is inadequate, and certainly the estimates of various shires appear to be a little overstated or a bit optimistic perhaps, but somewhere in the middle is the truth about where we are going to be. We need to revisit that.

I mentioned block sizes before. In the outer suburbs of Perth and Bunbury, households are likely to have about 2.5 people; the inner suburbs, where there are higher dwelling densities, are more likely to have smaller household sizes. This relates to the number of bedrooms and the demographic characteristics of the resident base, particularly age profiles, as well as to the fact that higher density residences are popular with investors, which creates more transient populations and higher vacancy rates. In developing plausible dwelling capacities for population projections, these density patterns and the complex relations that exist between these factors need to be considered. The recommendation is that the Western Australian Planning Commission undertake a thorough population model that accounts for the complex relationship between density and household size to ensure that sufficient land is available to accommodate predicted growth.

A number of things influence growth rates, including employment generators. We have just heard another announcement about the expansion of the Binningup desalination plant, which will happen in another couple of years. That will attract more workers down to that neck of the woods. People must travel some distance to the main employment operations. Obviously, the people in that neck of the woods down at Australind and Harvey work at Worsley, Wagerup and Griffin Coal. On a recent trip to India, I met with a company that is looking to invest in and expand Griffin Coal. If that comes to fruition, they are talking about quadrupling the size of the workforce from about 400 people to about 2 000 people. There is also some talk of duplicating the railway line, so plenty of work is being done in that southern end of the electorate. Of course, in the northern end we have the Boddington gold mine, which is now working away very nicely. Expansions at Alcoa Pinjarra and Wagerup are also planned—they have been sitting on the backburner for a bit, but I would not be at all surprised if there was some sort of announcement about that. The industrial area around Pinjarra has expanded.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr M.J. COWPER: The expansion of the area around Pinjarra has seen the development of some fantastic new facilities, predominantly servicing the mining industry. In my role as parliamentary secretary, I have been trying to get funding for apprenticeship training in that neck of the woods. The companies down there are very involved with our local football clubs. The Pinjarra Tigers, Waroona Demons, Harvey Bulls and Harvey Brunswick Leschenault Lions are all fundamentally linked to these companies. They are very parochial down there. We are trying to maintain our young people in our communities, who in the past have had to find training options in either Bunbury or Perth. That situation took them out of their family homes and sent them to Perth, creating

logistical issues with transport and accommodation. What we are trying to achieve with this model is to keep those young people in our communities to work, train and recreate, so that we can all be part of the very strong sense of community that exists in small towns in this part of the world.

These young people get themselves a trade. They want to be able to afford a nice, reasonable home. I and other members of this place have teenage children who have aspirations of one day perhaps owning their own business or home. At the moment, we have a crazy situation in which I think we are going to have an undersupply of houses. The influx of people to our mining sector will put additional burden and pressure on the cost of housing. I believe that the cost of housing will be inflated. We saw that happen in 2008–09. We went from being one of the cheapest places to own a home to probably the dearest. Unfortunately, the sad reality might be that unless my wife and I are prepared to help our children in some form, they will probably never be able to afford to buy their own homes unless they get themselves highly paid jobs. I hope that all people in my electorate have the aspiration of owning their own home. There is a notion that they are going to be jammed in. The view of a Perth academic that we should have infill in Mandurah and Rockingham before allowing any further expansion of land in either the Murray or Harvey shires is fundamentally flawed.

This was something I observed under the previous Minister for Planning and Infrastructure; it was her mantra, led by the Western Australian Planning Commission. Unfortunately, I have not seen a great deal of change since this government has come to power. In fact, I have spoken to our planning minister on a number of occasions about these concerns and, of course, I seem to get the standard reply: “We need to be able to plan properly for the future.” But we need to start putting in place some methods of speeding up the process, if we like, but not at all to the detriment of the environment. The Peel region scheme, which washed over the top of my electorate, is a scheme that is supposed to be protecting the environment, but, unfortunately, a lot of the area that was identified I think was done by some sort of aerial photograph. I am sure that within the Peel region scheme, there are some significant areas of environmental concern and places we need to set aside for future generations. There is also a lot of land that has been impacted on by schemes such as the Peel region scheme, the Swan coastal plain and the various other schemes that have emerged from time to time. They have impacted on the capacity of people to do what they want with their own private land.

This brings me also to the issue of property rights. Various plans have come across and impacted on people’s land. I have seen farms cut in half by pipelines, powerlines and roadways, and the owners have never been given fair and just recompense for their land. Members might appreciate that to run a beef cattle farm in my electorate, the farmer probably requires nothing less than 800 acres of land. If a freeway is built through the middle of it, people might think, “So what? It’s only 10 acres of land”, but the logistics of moving cattle and trucks backwards and forwards from one side of the property to another make the land virtually unproductive. Unfortunately, landowners have a number of outstanding claims lodged with the courts in their fight for recompense. I do not think we should be engaging in these sorts of actions because all it does is drag out the inevitable.

Mr F.A. Alban: Hear, hear!

Mr M.J. COWPER: There has to be a better way of dealing with it. I think we have created an industry in which we do not have the capacity to pay for the land. At least under the metropolitan region scheme, we have a land improvement tax. Members in the metropolitan area might be able to tell us that that is what happens. When people buy land in the metropolitan area, they pay tax on the land, but in the regional areas there is no such thing; there is no fund for that. Under the Court government, Minister Kierath saw that funds were set aside for that purpose, but they evaporated very quickly, and there is still a very sour taste in the mouths of many of my constituents who have owned land. That land was their superannuation. I have been pushing very strongly within my own party to come up with some sort of resolution to it. We went to the last election and the one before it on the principle that we would do something about property rights.

I refer again to the greater Bunbury region scheme and the south metropolitan scheme. I spoke about land supply. There is probably about six years of growth left in the greater Bunbury region. but I think there is a shortfall of about 1 400 acres of land needed to accommodate just the current growth. A lot of the area that has been taken up is in the Treendale and Millbridge estates, which is in the member for Collie–Preston’s area, as is Dalyellup on the other side of Bunbury. I think Dalyellup has about three years’ land supply left. There is about six years’ supply left in Treendale, but, beyond that, very little is available. The government is relying on the practice of infill. If someone owns a quarter-acre block in, say, beautiful Australind, they may have the capacity to subdivide it from 1 000 to 500 square metres. But I think the government is overestimating the capacity for infill within those areas, unless a house is an empty-nester house, or is getting too old and perhaps an owner wants to refurbish or knock it down and put in some units. That is why I believe that this notion of infilling these areas will fall short of the target that the government is planning to achieve.

I have spoken about lifestyle. The people down my way are aspirational. They want to have a boat and a caravan, and access to sporting facilities. I do not believe that this strategy that is being proffered will deliver a diversity of housing options for those people. I believe that we need to provide not only for infill, but also for additional land—land that we have an abundance of, land that is owned privately and that can be developed at no cost to the taxpayers, and land that is begging to be developed—yet we are putting restrictions on our capacity to deliver on those issues.

I have also spoken about the affordability of housing, about a regional lifestyle, and about choices not being recognised. As I have mentioned, people want access to quality open space, and a wide range of block sizes. People want a country atmosphere, price advantage, a relaxed lifestyle, a safe and friendly environment, reasonable access to the city, and, of course, the ability to keep a horse or a couple of sheep—a bit like yourself, Madam Acting Speaker (Ms L.L. Baker).

In summarising, it is noted that a number of reports have identified a significant shortage of land for future urban development. That will impact negatively on the economy of the region. A report by Geografia identified a shortfall of around 600 hectares of land in Bunbury, and triple that in the Shire of Murray. So we are talking probably about 2 500 hectares of land that is currently usable but is not being used. It must be noted that this figure does not take into account the analysis that some other companies have done of the available land in the area. We believe this will require an additional 300 hectares of land.

I believe that the population growth in this area has been understated. I will just touch on that. We need to have a better look at how we will be able to accommodate the influx of people into Western Australia. They will not all come to live in Perth. They will not all be fly in, fly out from Perth to the north west. Some will live in the wonderful places that are being developed by the state government, such as at Karratha. But a lot of them will choose to live in what is a wonderful place to live —

Mr P.B. Watson: Albany!

Mr M.J. COWPER: Albany is a beautiful place to live—no doubt about that, member. But the fact remains that they will probably come to live in my area, because there is access to jobs—good, well-paying jobs.

So, apart from having a look at the population estimates, we need to go back to the 2031 spatial plan for the south metro–Peel region, and the greater Bunbury region scheme. I do not support the context of those reports in total. I can identify what the Western Australian Planning Commission is trying to do. When the Western Australian Planning Commission put out its draft plans, it identified a lot of this land that I am speaking about. However, unfortunately, when the more recent report came out, it just seems to have divorced that off. It has simply ignored what it put in the first draft papers that it submitted. When it called for submissions from various people, there was a large raft of submissions by companies, as I have mentioned before. But the Western Australian Planning Commission has simply gone about its own business and appears to be belligerent of all the views that have been put forward by various departments. Unfortunately, in my view the Western Australian Planning Commission has become a law unto itself. I am calling on the Minister for Regional Development; Lands to rise above and take control of that particular government department and deliver what is needed in my neck of the woods, because I believe that the land available in my electorate will go a long way towards providing the much-needed affordable housing and land that this state will require into the future.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr R.F. Johnson (Leader of the House)**.