

EAST PERTH POWER STATION

414. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to the \$112 million being spent by the government on the East Perth power station and the Auditor General's recent report and recommendation that the government regularly report the status of projects to improve transparency to both Parliament and the public.

- (1) In light of the Auditor General's report, will the Premier table the full cost of works planned and undertaken by the state government at the East Perth power station site?
- (2) Will the Premier regularly report on this project as it progresses, as recommended by the Auditor General?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(2) The costs incurred by the state are in the budget. The cost of this project to remediate this site has been in the last few budgets. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to open the budget papers, she will find it. That is where the costs are contained.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am trying to answer the question, Madam Speaker.

All the costs are in the budget. To explain the project to the Leader of the Opposition, an expression of interest process was begun by the last government that we inherited when we arrived in office. I think it came out with around five potential proponents to redevelop the site. The site has sat there now for 42 years. It is an old power station in the middle of the city. Think about that. If this was New York, Sydney or Melbourne, it would have been redeveloped decades ago and something would have been done about the site. Nothing has been done for 42 years—42 years! The damage from the war in East Berlin was fixed in less time than that! It has sat there like that. Basically, the Gallop government did some remediation work worth around \$16 million, I think, to make sure that the walls did not fall over and so forth. It is an amazing historic building. It is one of the only remaining ones in the world of its type. I think the Battersea Power Station in the heart of London, which is now some sort of gallery, and the East Perth power station are the only remaining ones of their type that were built back in the early parts of the last century; all the rest were demolished. The last government decided on an EOI process, this government continued with that and a proponent was selected. Obviously, it is a very, very difficult site because it needs remediation and all sorts of services, such as electricity and gas infrastructure on the site that needs to be moved, so it has a cost attached to it. That is the reality. But once that is done and the site is redeveloped, the total cost for the private sector to redevelop the site, I am advised, will be around \$1 billion.

We will get \$1 billion of spend on that site, including on office accommodation and public access to the old power station that will include all sorts of public art and amenity and so forth, and other activity on the site, whether it is residential or otherwise. At the end of the day, the government has decided—and I personally think—that is a great thing, otherwise that site will sit there for another 40 years, rotting and an embarrassment. People see it when they come in from the airport. It would not stand in Sydney, Melbourne, London, New York or wherever it might be, and it should not stand like that in Perth, and so we have come up with a process to resolve the issue. All the costs are contained within the budget. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to see the costs, open the budget.