

FORRESTFIELD–AIRPORT LINK

44. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Transport:

Yesterday the minister updated the house on progress of the Forrestfield–Airport Link. I understand that another milestone has been reached with the project. Is the minister able to update the house on this very important milestone?

Mr D.C. NALDER replied:

I thank the member for Forrestfield and the member for Belmont for their continued support of this major project, being the underground rail line from Bayswater through to Forrestfield. Today I was pleased to announce the joint venture comprising Salini Impregilo and NRW Pty Ltd as the preferred proponent for the project. Negotiations have commenced to finalise this contract by May 2016, and we envisage the contractor being on-site in the coming months. Only one group of people is unhappy with this announcement today.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the third time; the member for Fremantle for the first time; and the member for Maylands for the first time. Member for Girrawheen, I have been pretty lenient with you today, so I suggest you stop.

Mr D.C. NALDER: As I was saying, only one group of people has been unhappy with this announcement today, and that is members opposite. They keep talking about this government not doing anything when it comes to transport. We have a plan to take this city forward. The opposition would like to get into a debate about this plan. Let us have a look at Labor's plan. Priority number one is to complete the Liberals' number one plan to build the Forrestfield train line. That is Labor's number one priority. Its number two priority is to complete the original plan of the Liberal Party to connect the Mandurah line from Cockburn to Thornlie. That is another important project we talk about.

It is interesting that this plan includes only rail links. We know that just under half—around 40 per cent—of the vehicles on our roads are commercial vehicles. When we talk about the need to keep our city moving, we talk about a multidimensional plan. The opposition put the Forrestfield–Airport Link as a priority in its transport plan, but we are about to commence a brand-new freeway to the north for the people of Ellenbrook. It is not in the opposition's priority plan, so does it plan to remove it? Members opposite are now talking about another project that we are undertaking as being their priority, but they want to deny the rights to a freeway north that will connect Ellenbrook to the central business district, and through to the south. They just do not want to do these things on our roads. I know that a lot of people are very happy with the freeway connection north from Mitchell Freeway. I talk to the people in the eastern suburbs, and not only are we opening this public transport corridor into the east, we have also done major roadworks. People in the eastern suburbs are extremely pleased about the Great Eastern Highway project. We talk about the Gateway project and what is happening on Tonkin Highway. We will now remove the stop lights on Tonkin Highway north.

This is a multidimensional plan, and it is not just about the different modes of transport. When we plan transport, we talk about building better infrastructure across all modes, but we must utilise our existing transport infrastructure in a smarter way. Talk to people about traffic light sequencing and merging practices. We have organised the clearways in the central business district. We are moving on and making this city move for not only today, but also the future. We have every right to be proud. Another important milestone was reached today, with more to come in due course.