

Mr Jeremy Edwards; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Phillip Pandal; Mr John Hyde; Mr Colin Barnett; Acting Speaker; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Terry Waldron; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Mike Board; Deputy Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Rob Johnson

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## HERITAGE PROPERTIES IN WILLIAM AND WELLINGTON STREETS

### *Motion*

**MR J.P.D. EDWARDS** (Greenough) [4.01 pm]: I want to direct this motion to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. I find it somewhat disappointing that she is not here in the House to listen to what I have to say. With your indulgence, Mr Acting Speaker, I prefer to wait until she arrives, although it will waste my speaking time.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: She is right behind you.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: I am very pleased to hear it.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: I apologise to the member.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: I move -

That this House -

- (a) expresses its deep concern at moves by the Gallop Government to resume heritage properties in William and Wellington Streets in connection with the railway construction at a time when such properties are subject to heritage assessment and registration process; and
- (b) calls on the Government to cease any resumption pending the outcome of the heritage process and an independent assessment of potential compensation costs.

It gives me enormous satisfaction to be standing here, knowing that this motion has probably dragged the minister and the Government kicking and screaming to the point of taking action on the very important heritage issues surrounding the construction of a railway line and a railway station in William and Wellington Streets. I am sure that action must be of some comfort to the owners of the properties. I am aware that some of the owners have been feeling anxious about this issue. To provide some background I will quote from *The West Australian* of Wednesday, 20 August 2003, which states -

The State Government has denied that moves by the Heritage Council to develop a heritage precinct on William and Wellington streets will delay the construction of the new city train station.

The Heritage Council is finalising a recommendation to the Heritage Minister about the interim registration of what is being called the William and Wellington Street precinct.

The precinct includes properties slated for the new train station, which are currently the subject of a compulsory acquisition process.

It states further on -

The State Government through LandCorp has issued the compulsory acquisition notices for the properties and Ms MacTiernan said the process was on-schedule to meet the demolition deadline of early next year.

One of the owners of the buildings commented as follows -

“We are waiting with diminishing income streams, no offer of compensation and the threat that we will lose the properties in the middle of this month.”

I make that reference given the degree of comfort they no doubt feel because of the announcement the minister made this morning.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: How does that give them comfort?

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: The minister is moving the issue forward rather than allowing it to stand still. Until now, the heritage issue has been standing still. The owners of those buildings are probably concerned as much about the heritage as they are about the financial downside or benefits of the railway construction.

The record of this Government on heritage issues, particularly built heritage, is nothing short of appalling. We are still waiting for the new heritage Bill to be introduced. In the past three Estimates Committees I have asked the minister of the day when the new heritage Bill will be introduced. I have been told that it will be some time within the next six months, but not before Christmas. So far, we have not had a definitive answer and we have not seen the Bill. No action has been taken on the East Perth power station. I drive past it every time I come into the city to attend Parliament. Each day another piece falls off it. Four or five months ago a great scheme

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was announced that was to involve one of the local entrepreneurs, which seems to have died in the water. We have not heard much about it. No positive moves seem to have been made to conserve the Sunset Hospital site. There has been some tweaking around the edges and some so-called consultation. However, it does not seem to have come to fruition. The Treasury buildings stand untouched on the Terrace. The former Labor Minister for Housing and Works made some noises about doing something with them. However, to date nothing seems to have happened. In addition, the Government has offered no solutions for the preservation of Montgomery Hall.

A prime example of the Government's disregard for our State's heritage was evident in a debate a couple of weeks ago when I spoke in this place about the Fremantle artillery barracks. The Labor Government has sold the State short and shown its complete lack of commitment to both heritage and Western Australia's military history by abdicating its responsibility on that issue.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: I am a little confused.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: The minister will have her opportunity to speak on this. I am sure she will refute various issues and I await her comments with interest.

The William-Wellington Street east precinct consists of a collection of properties that reflect Western Australia's late colonial period to the 1930s. According to the heritage information prepared by the Perth urban rail development consultants commissioned in 2002, they have varying levels of heritage significance. The introduction of this report, which is startling, states -

With a proposed open-cut system of construction for the underground railway station it would be desirable from a construction perspective to demolish above ground structures and redevelop or reconstruct as appropriate.

I reiterate the words "desirable from a construction perspective to demolish above ground structures". I suggest that study is biased and fails to examine solutions that will ensure that heritage values are protected. Having heard the minister's announcement this morning, it would be good if that were the case. I have a slightly cynical view, given the record of the Government's so-called responsibility for heritage so far. On the same introductory page, under the heading "Difficulties", it states that the owners of lots 499 and 507 Wellington Street, who are descendants of the original owners, are distressed by the proposals. They may have drawn some comfort from the announcement this morning. However, I doubt it.

Some of the buildings that will be affected by the plans for the new Perth railway station, platforms 10 and 11, are the Horseshoe Bridge; the Wellington Building at 150-162 William Street; McClaren Chambers at 144-148 William Street; the Mitchell Buildings at 132-142 William Street; a commercial building at 132 William Street; a building at 96 William Street; the Ackers Buildings at 124-130 William Street; the Globe Hotel at 495-497 William Street; the former Levi Green building at 491-493 Wellington Street; and the former Saunders Menswear building at 499 Wellington Street.

The report states, under the heading "Other Factors" -

This section briefly summarises the other factors that could impinge on elements of cultural heritage significance in the affected properties. These other factors provide parameters and constraints which are critical to the attractiveness and functionality of the railway structure, the legibility and security of railway users and the feasibility of the railway construction and the future redevelopment within the streetblock.

This section of the report also states, under the heading "Construction" -

The most feasible form of construction for Platforms 10 & 11, and associated facilities, would be demolition of the existing buildings on the site of the Platforms to enable an open cut form of construction and for new development to occur above the railway structure.

I suggest that is a planning view, not a heritage view, and I hope that will be taken into consideration in the assessment. It continues -

This form of construction would enable the retention of facades that are located outside the site of the railway structure and could be propped during the construction period.

This is what is known as facadism. Facadism was a form of -

Mr J.N. Hyde: Keeping facades.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: The member for Perth is quite right.

Mr J.N. Hyde: It comes under the Burra charter.

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Ms A.J. MacTiernan: Yes. It is the Burra charter that gave us the chook shed in Geraldton. I would be a bit wary about adopting it.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: As amusing as the minister may find this debate, facadism is not particularly popular in heritage these days. I believe this demonstrates that the intent of the Government is to forge ahead with the plans for the railway platform construction regardless. This process is not merely flawed but is a deliberate disregard for proper planning and heritage assessment and for the advice and recommendations of the Heritage Council. It will be interesting to know what sort of pressure the Heritage Council will be put under to make a recommendation. We must not forget, of course, that the minister responsible is in the other place, and that minister will have the final say about what takes place.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: What is the relevance of the fact that he is in the other place?

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: I was not implying that there was any relevance at all. I was just referring to the fact that the Minister for Heritage is in the other place and may have some influence on the decision making.

With regard to the direction that the Government seems to be taking on the so-called demolition of these buildings, we need to remember that this was the same attitude that existed in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s in Perth, and even in some of the regional centres around Western Australia. An enormous amount of our built heritage was lost during that time. I think all Governments were probably guilty of this. I recall that we had a particularly fine sandstone post office in Geraldton, which on the whim of the council of the day was demolished, with very little thought. We need to be extremely careful that we do not go down the same path here. This is an enormous project that the Government and the minister are putting up. It seems that nothing shall stand in its way. However, in perhaps a week of bulldozing, some of the most significant buildings in Perth may be demolished and become just a pile of rubble on the whim or recommendation of the minister. It is essential that we do not go back to those bad old days. Hopefully our attitudes have changed somewhat since that time. I believe the announcement that the minister made at one time that the entire historic precinct would be demolished again reflects the Government's attitude towards protecting the heritage of our capital city.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It reflects her sensitive and caring nature.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: Yes. I am sure the minister will have something to say on that.

It may be timely to remind the House again of what is stated in the executive summary of the Labor Party policy document titled "heritage for the new millennium". I have done this on so many occasions now that I probably should know it by heart, but, because I do not remember it at this moment, I will read the relevant part. It states -

It is important that we protect our heritage to recognise our State's past and ensure that our history is retained for future generations.

Labor will restore heritage to the forefront of Government consideration and see that sites throughout both metropolitan and country Western Australia are protected.

It states also, just as an aside, that Labor will work to pass a new heritage Act that will protect the State's heritage interests. That is interesting. I do not believe any of those policy commitments have taken place. The comment that I had intended to make about the Government not giving the people of Western Australia the opportunity of commenting on the heritage assessment of the William-Wellington Streets precinct is, of course, now obviated by the minister's statement this morning. I understand that there will be a six-week public comment period, and I am pleased to hear that. I have no doubt that report has been sitting on the desk of the Minister for Heritage for some time; I suspect that he was given a hurry-up to get it through before this debate today. I believe that without the actions of the Opposition, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure would have ridden roughshod over the heritage assessment process and those buildings would be gone forever.

I ask the minister, and I am interested in the minister's comments, now that those building are interim listed, what budget implications are involved, and has the Government made any provision for the cost of their conservation? I believe that there is a figure and I would be interested to know what it is.

I have probably covered most of what I wanted to say on heritage issues. Other members will speak in this debate. I will conclude by reiterating my satisfaction that this motion has galvanised the Gallop Government into addressing the heritage issues relevant to the William and Wellington Street buildings. I hope that there is a genuine desire on the minister's part to make sure that these buildings are preserved. I hope that this is not just a cynical exercise because the minister has been pulled screaming and kicking to do something about these matters, and that they are not just a nuisance.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: That is a bit unjust.

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Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: With respect, the Government's record on heritage is not exactly the best. I have already painted that picture. Unjust or otherwise, they are my feelings on the issue. That is why I asked that question. To give the minister her due, I am sure she is genuine. However, I would like to hear her say so. I will be interested to see what happens after the six-week public comment period. I will be most interested in the recommendation that the Minister for Heritage in the other House comes up with. Members on this side of the House will be watching this issue very carefully and with great interest and some suspicion. The ball is in the minister's court. I will be most interested to hear what she has to say on the matter.

**MS A.J. MacTIERNAN** (Armadale - Minister for Planning and Infrastructure) [4.21 pm]: I have no doubt that the member is well motivated in raising this issue. However, I found nothing cogent or compelling in what he said. All the evidence is to the opposite. If I were dealing with someone else, I would say that this is a complete load of cobblers. The first proposition was that the owners of these buildings are worried sick about the heritage consequences of these buildings. I assure the member that I am not worried sick, because the Government now owns all these buildings. These buildings are all in public ownership.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr C.J. Barnett: A heavy-handed resumption is not progress.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: We cannot have progress! What we need are developments like Oakajee, into which we should just keep pouring public money but achieve nothing! That is what the Leader of the Opposition wants - more Oakajees. We should not want projects that work or for things to happen in this State. The projects that have an effect are bad projects. We need to pour money into consultants and not actually achieve anything!

The Government is now the owner of these properties, as has been publicly announced on several occasions.

Mr C.J. Barnett: How did you get to own them?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: The Government exercised the legal process that has been in place since time immemorial, which is the same process that was used to build the Graham Farmer Freeway. It is interesting that it is okay to resume properties to build roads, but it is a disgrace to resume properties to build a railway! What does that say about these people?

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Have all the properties on the interim listing been resumed?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: No, not all properties that were interim listed have been resumed.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Which ones have not been resumed?

Mr J.N. Hyde: The member for Greenough just listed them.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: The precinct is broader than the area affected by the railway. Someone from the Heritage Council may be able to confirm my understanding that the precinct extends to the opposite side of the road as well. For example, the Government has not resumed Raine Square. The member said that the owners of these buildings have been concerned about their heritage status. It would be fair to say that many of these buildings were not necessarily in a very positive state of repair. Indeed, the one known as the Bairs building was a very sad building. Every time I have driven past that building I have thought that it is terrible that it has been let go in that way. The owners are not worried sick. Some of the erstwhile owners who were concerned about the heritage of these buildings would realise that it was time that this very neglected end of town had something positive to say about it.

I am very interested in the member for Greenough's comments that this Government has been very bad; that the Labor Party has been in government for two and a half years and has not solved all the problems, such as the heritage legislation. The Opposition was in government for eight years and did not do it. The heritage legislation was an initiative of the last Labor Government. I am proud to say that I was one of the inaugural members of the Heritage Council. The East Perth power station, Sunset Hospital and the Treasury building were raised as grave problems. The Opposition was in government for eight years and did not solve them. They are difficult issues.

Mr J.P.D. Edwards: You said you were going to do something about them.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: The Government is working on them. I can tell the member that those problems will be solved in much less than eight years. The Labor Party will not go out of government after eight years with those problems unsolved.

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Again, it is bad to resume buildings to build railways but it is perfectly acceptable to resume buildings to build roads! I have a diagram of the Graham Farmer Freeway.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Just talk about the Wellington Street buildings.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: No, because we have to get this in perspective. I am holding a diagram of the Graham Farmer Freeway; it shows buildings of heritage significance, little heritage significance and some heritage significance. The vast majority of the buildings were of heritage significance or some heritage significance. Fifty-one buildings were demolished to build the Northbridge tunnel, but that was okay! The majority of those buildings had heritage significance.

Mr P.G. Pandal: Were they on the register?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: No, because the previous Government did not put things on the register in those days. None of these buildings in William and Wellington Streets were on the register until we put them on the register. This Government was prepared to put them on the register, even though it will build railway stations there. The previous Government was not prepared to put heritage buildings on the register. The National Trust and many other people told the previous Government that these buildings should go on the heritage register, but it did not put them on the register. This Government has been far more courageous. I have walked the entire length of the area in Northbridge that was to be demolished. Some of the earliest buildings in Perth were in that location. Interestingly, because that area had been under a planning blight for some 40 years, some of the very early street configurations were in place. One could go behind the main streets and see the original street layouts. There were tiny streets with little houses, including, as I understand it, one of the first brothels in Perth. That was a very interesting little dwelling of some historical significance.

Those buildings all went because the Government of the day made the judgment that it was more important to build that road than to preserve those buildings. That is a judgment that Governments are often called upon to make. The previous Government made that decision in relation to roads and this Government will have to make some of those hard judgments in relation to the rail project.

We believe that this rail project is absolutely essential if we are to maintain the quality of Perth. The requirement to deliver a sustainable city means that we must build a rail line. It is our judgment that we must have a first-class rail system that is competitive with the motor vehicle, that does not deviate via the North Pole and that goes right through the heart of the city and links up with the northern suburbs line. That is a judgment we have made and I will not go through all the arguments for it again. We also believe that it will be tremendously beneficial for the City of Perth and for the central business district to have a rail link go right through the heart of the city. Of course, that will mean that there will be conflict, and some hard decisions will have to be made.

I do not intend to argue that any of those buildings are not of heritage significance. I am very committed to and have a track record on heritage. During the term of the previous State Government, 20 buildings in Northbridge were targeted for demolition for a subdivision. I said that we would take much less money from the subdivision so that the buildings could be preserved.

The Treasurer is looking horrified. I am sorry, I should not have said that!

I said that we would preserve those buildings because they add to the character and fabric of Northbridge and would ultimately make Northbridge a far more interesting place. Because of my extensive history with heritage and my knowledge of the work of Talbot Hobbs, I was very pleased to have been instrumental in protecting four buildings in a precinct that were listed for demolition; indeed, we set up the Talbot Hobbs precinct. I was very pleased to see Talbot Hobbs' grandson there shortly before he died on the day we launched the Talbot Hobbs precinct. I have therefore a pretty reasonable record on heritage. I can point to numerous buildings that I was instrumental in saving well before I became a minister. In my time on the City of Perth council I was very interested in Moir and Brookman Streets, the Grosvenor Hotel and a range of other projects. I appreciate and understand heritage value. However, it is true that from time to time one must make hard decisions. I was more than happy when the proposition went to my good friend and colleague Hon Tom Stephens that these buildings be heritage listed in the interim. I had no difficulty with that proposition because I recognise that there are a number of significant buildings; I would not say that they were anything different. However, the way in which the heritage legislation has been developed acknowledges that although heritage must be properly considered - the process of referral to the Heritage Council for assessment requires that these matters be properly considered - it is not the only consideration. Heritage must be weighed against other important factors. The need for the city to be able to grow and develop and the need to extend the rail network are important counterbalancing views. Many of these buildings could be saved - in fact, all of them probably could be saved - at a cost. There is a

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difficulty with some in that they simply do not have basements. The Wellington Building, for example, has a substantial basement, which will make it a lot easier to protect the building during construction. However, I am quite clear that we will not be able to save all of these buildings. Some buildings in the precinct have very little heritage significance, such as the old Myer building, but the majority of those buildings and the one to which the member for Greenough referred -

Mr R.C. Kucera: I arrested my first shoplifter there.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: Perhaps it does have some heritage significance.

The buildings to which the member for Greenough referred do have heritage significance and of course it would be preferable to save them. However, ultimately it is a complex calculus and we must weigh the benefits to the community from this development against the heritage and the cost of preserving that heritage. I can say that we will do everything we reasonably can to save as many buildings as possible. I have already given a commitment that we will not demolish the Wellington Street buildings. I also expect that we will be able to protect a number of other buildings, particularly the Globe Hotel.

We will do the best we can for heritage. I believe my credentials in the heritage area are impeccable. I work very closely with Hon Tom Stephens, who is likewise committed to heritage and to adaptive reuse. I can say nothing more than that I believe my record speaks for itself. The whole concept of heritage legislation contemplates that from time to time the question of heritage significance will not be the overwhelming consideration. Just how significant a building is compared with how great a benefit the community will derive from another development is a question of balance.

As I said, I give my pledge that we will do our best to protect all the buildings that we can. I anticipate that a number of these buildings will not be preserved in their full glory, but we will give every consideration and weight to their preservation.

**MR P.G. PENDAL** (South Perth) [4.37 pm]: I want to congratulate essentially four groups of people for the outcome that was announced to the Parliament this morning. As a result of that announcement, I will then move an amendment to the motion to bring the motion up to date. I continue to have reservations about the detail of the announcement and I therefore reserve the right to express some criticism later if the announcement does not live up to the aspirations contained in it.

The four groups of people who deserve some real credit are the member for Greenough, who moved the motion; the National Trust of Australia, which campaigned vigorously and vociferously to bring the plight of these buildings to public attention; the officers and processes of the Heritage Council, which deserves commendation; and the Minister for Heritage, who deserves to be congratulated for resisting the undoubted pressure that was applied to him to dump these buildings. There is no doubt whatsoever in my mind that in the main these buildings were headed for demolition. I will refer to some of that evidence in a few minutes.

Mr J.N. Hyde: What about the local member?

Mr P.G. PENDAL: Thanks.

In view of that, I give notice that I will move an amendment in a few minutes.

If there is any doubt about what the fate of these buildings was only a few weeks ago, one need only see what the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure had to say as late as 24 May 2003. Page 64 of *The West Australian* of that date refers to comments by the minister on claims that a collection of rare city heritage buildings was under threat. I believe this claim made by the National Trust was accurate. The article reads -

Ms MacTiernan has dismissed the claims, saying she would seriously consider any Heritage Council recommendations.

First, the minister, notwithstanding lauding her own understanding of heritage law, simply does not understand the law. She stated that she would seriously consider any Heritage Council recommendations, but she does not come into it.

Mr J.N. Hyde: Yes, she does.

Mr P.G. PENDAL: That is a job for the Minister for Heritage. The member who just interjected knows that the recommendations made by the Heritage Council are then dealt with by the Minister for Heritage. It is interesting to me, incidentally, that today we had a response in this debate, not from the minister representing the Minister for Heritage, but from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure who was intent in the first place on pulling the buildings down. Why was the Minister for the Environment not here today to represent the views of the

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Minister for Heritage? I suspect that it might have been because there was some embarrassment on her part. A decision may have been made, but as the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has mucked up this matter, as she has mucked up so many matters relating to the railway and its associated route, she was told to follow through this little embarrassment today. That is why the Minister for the Environment is not in here today doing her job.

*Amendment to Motion*

Mr P.G. PENDAL: I move -

To delete all words after "House" and substitute the following -

notes with satisfaction the actions today of the Minister for Heritage, and congratulates the member for Greenough for his actions in the matter of the William and Wellington Streets Heritage Precinct.

This amendment comes down to the fact that two people today have done their duty and they should be congratulated for it. The first is the Minister for Heritage who sits in another place. I have no doubt that he was under enormous pressure to be a little more accommodating to the more maniacal and progress-oriented activities of some other members of the Government. By the same token, the member for Greenough in this House, who has demonstrated a longstanding interest in heritage matters, deserves the commendation of the House. Without his efforts, along with the efforts of the National Trust and the Heritage Council in doing their job fearlessly, and those of the Minister for Heritage - that entire group of people - I have no doubt that these buildings would have had a very limited future.

I come back to the announcement in May indicating the fate of the buildings. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure said very generously that she would seriously consider any Heritage Council recommendations. I repeat: her statutory obligation does not extend to that. She is not and was not the Minister for Heritage. The Minister for Heritage would give serious consideration to the matters now before Parliament. I say thank God for that because it will probably mean that some or all of the buildings will be retained. My next quote from the same article of 24 May is of more concern -

Ms MacTiernan said this week she had committed to preserving two heritage buildings and the facades of others would be kept.

I say again, thank God that she is not the Minister for Heritage. If the minister is a believer in facadism - she indicates that in her choice of words - she is well kept away from any heritage buildings in Western Australia. If she is satisfied with the notion of protecting and retaining the facades only, she has no right to make the claims on this heritage precinct that she did on her own behalf.

Some of the documentation indicates that blind Freddie would know that the precinct contains buildings of enormous significance to Western Australia. Let me read from the documentation of places for entry into the Registry of Heritage Places. This is database No 16743. Page 2 contains the following statement of significance about the William and Wellington St precinct -

*William and Wellington Street Precinct*, containing a high proportion of retail, commercial and hotel buildings from the late-Victorian, Federation and Inter-War periods, has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

Page 3 contains a half-page of reasons. I highlight only the following two or three sentences -

the historic precinct is rare . . .

Therefore, the precinct buildings are not just something that are desirable or to be seen in other parts of Western Australia and would be nice to retain - they are rare. The document continues -

the historic precinct forms a landmark northern entry to the central business district of Western Australia's capital city.

Note the use of the words as their grouping is significant in itself. It refers to a "landmark northern entry", and "entry to the central business district" and talks in terms of "Western Australia's capital city". A real deliberation has taken place with words to convey not only the intellectual but also emotional pull in dealing with a historic precinct that is rare and forms a landmark entry. A few paragraphs down, page 3 reads -

the historic precinct includes good to fine individual examples of buildings in the Federation Free Classical style (*Mitchell's Buildings*, *Wellington Buildings*, *Queens Buildings*), Victorian Second

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Empire style (*Royal Hotel*) and the Inter-War Free Classical style (*Maclarens Chamber* and *Barker's Building*);

My concern is that there was just a hint on the part of the minister when she resumed her seat that the buildings might not all be saved. I do not know how that can be done if all the buildings are on the interim heritage register, and then they are all transposed to the permanent register.

Mr J.N. Hyde: What if the minister takes some of them off?

Mr P.G. PENDAL: Aha! That was my worst fear, which the member is confirming; that is, that they will be taken off the register. For the next 15 months as we lead up to a state election, more than a few people will take more than a passing interest to see that none of these buildings is taken off the register. The member for Perth has confirmed my worst fears. We will pay a great deal of attention to what Hon Tom Stephens does in the next 15 months. I will show members some understanding of the emotional attachment that Perth people have to those buildings. Only a few weeks ago this issue arose when the member for Greenough moved a similar motion about the army barracks at Fremantle. I spoke during that debate, but I devoted some of my remarks to the concerns that were being expressed to me about the William-Wellington Street precinct. The next morning Liam Bartlett gave the matter unprecedented coverage. Why would he have done that? It was not something sponsored by the Government or the Opposition. It was for no better reason than that the listeners to his program were astonished that in 2003 we could even contemplate knocking down a group of 10 or 11 buildings. I have been to each one of them. That was the level of public interest. If the Government so much as looks as though it is hedging its bets on this, it will not only count very seriously in Perth but also will impact throughout Western Australia as we approach an election. We received another ominous sign around the time of that debate in September when we woke up to find that the buildings were the subject of resumption orders. We know that Governments do not go around resuming buildings, generally speaking, for their own good health. I recall asking whether the Government resumed the buildings for retention or for demolition. In the meantime, what has happened? Since the member for Greenough moved his motion, the Government has made the decision that was conveyed to the Parliament this morning. I return to the point at which I started. I have no doubt that had the member for Greenough not raised those issues in this House on 16 September, there would have been no such announcement and most, if not all those buildings, would have been dropped. I do not know how the message can be told with more clarity. Any one of us could go on a one-hour walk through the central business district of Perth to understand how much we have lost and to hear people - visitors from interstate and overseas - comment adversely. They do not go in for this sort of stuff in a place like London, which is only about eight or 10 times bigger than Perth!

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: And a thousand years older.

Mr J.N. Hyde: When were you last in London?

Mr R.C. Kucera interjected.

Mr P.G. PENDAL: I hope the minister pays more attention to his new portfolio than he did to his last, and I hope he is never made Minister for Heritage, after making an interjection like that.

Mr R.C. Kucera: It is an absolute nonsense, and you know it. There is as much development in London as there is in other major cities.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr A.J. Dean): Order, members!

Mr P.G. PENDAL: It is not an absolute nonsense; it is a piece of ignorance on the part of the minister if he cannot attest to the fact that larger countries are able to do these things better than we are. Twelve months ago I said the same thing about the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure: that what she has brought to the planning of the south west metropolitan railway is what they used to do in London and Boston 50 years ago. She portrays herself as someone who is up there at the cutting edge in 2003 thinking.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: The pointed edge.

Mr P.G. PENDAL: She was talking about getting at the pointy edge in the middle. I reckon she has some worries about physiology if that is the case. That is not cutting edge; that is 1950s thinking. I said that about the proposal to put railway tracks through a place like the South Perth foreshore, and in the end the Government -

Mr R.C. Kucera: Here is the real rub coming. Here is the self-interest coming out.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!



Mr Jeremy Edwards; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Phillip Pendal; Mr John Hyde; Mr Colin Barnett; Acting Speaker; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Mr Terry Waldron; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Mike Board; Deputy Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Rob Johnson

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Mr P.G. PENDAL: In the end the Government conceded the point, at least on the northern side; that is, the side that we are now talking about. Incidentally, all this arises from a decision that was made, without consulting anyone, 19 weeks after the Government took office. What we are talking about in connection with the Wellington-William Street precinct is related to the railway, which is all related to the 19 July announcement by the Premier about the change to the railway route. What goes around comes around! When the Government makes a muck of something in the first place, it keeps reverberating down. That is why this motion has been presented today. Many people who work for this Government as consultants and permanent officers of the civil service could have provided the Government with all the answers without wrecking, in my electorate, the South Perth foreshore and without potentially wrecking the Wellington-William Street precinct. All those things could have been worked out had the minister been kept under control by her cabinet colleagues and had she been asked to follow due process. Do members know why the last Labor Government lost office? Because it lost the capacity to follow due process. I have seen that at a local level at the City of South Perth Council. Why did it get the sack by this Government? It lost the capacity to follow due process. This monumental muck-up not only touches on town planning issues between Perth and Mandurah, and environmental and traffic management issues, but also at stake are important heritage issues that should never have become issues in Western Australia. To the extent that they have, the initiative of the member for Greenough means that this matter has been brought to the attention of Parliament. I congratulate him and the Minister for Heritage for showing the courage to do that. I also congratulate the Heritage Council of Western Australia for not being intimidated and not being taken out of the due process. All those people should be congratulated, but I am concerned, above all else, that the interjection by the member for Perth will be raised in this place in the next few months if we find that some of these places are to be de-listed. I am happy to have moved that amendment and I ask the House to support it.

**MR J.N. HYDE** (Perth) [4.57 pm]: I am happy to explain how the heritage Act works, because I think there are some monumental misunderstandings about what an interim listing means and who is doing what job. I acknowledge the member for Greenough for his longstanding interest in heritage issues and also the member for South Perth. This issue has been used in a political way and it is my great fear that in trying to create a warm, sound blanket - this is all heritage, this all has to stay - we will start turning off the real people who make the decisions about what the community values in cultural heritage. They may go for a drive along William Street and see a couple of these buildings, but they will not think they are heritage, they are not what the residents of Western Australia value as heritage. Therefore, the fact that some people are saying that all 16 buildings have heritage value is suspect.

The heritage record of the Gallop Government is not appalling. One only has to go along Parry Street in my electorate today. The members for Greenough and South Perth are taking time away from their own electorates to be concerned about happenings in my electorate. I will let members know what people in my electorate believe in.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Come on! Perth happens to be the capital of the State of Western Australia. It is more than just your electorate. It is the capital of Western Australia. Do not be so parochial.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The member should be telling some of her Liberal Party mates -

Mrs C.L. Edwardes interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr J.N. HYDE: - from the city of Perth that it is a capital city and not a local council. It is the one electorate with a capital city. Each week hundreds of thousands of people drive along William Street through the central business district. If they know that the members for South Perth and Greenough have said that the King Kong building is a heritage building and must be saved, they will quite rightly say that the King Kong building is not a heritage building. All these "heritage Nazis" lump them together and it degrades the real value of heritage buildings.

We have referred to not only Parry Street but also the value of the Talbot Hobbs area above the Northbridge tunnel -

*Withdrawal of Remark*

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It is my distinct understanding that the member for Perth implied that both the member for South Perth and the member for Greenough are heritage Nazis. If that is the case, I ask him to withdraw.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Again the Leader of the Opposition is attempting to verbal somebody. Clearly, the heritage Nazis I referred to were not those two members. In fact, as will not be recorded in *Hansard*, I used the two fingers on each hand to indicate that it is a colloquialism.

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Mr C.J. Barnett: Why did you name them?

Mr J.N. HYDE: People who are advocating that the King Kong building, or a building that is not on the interim list, is a heritage building will be seen as heritage Nazis. The member for South Perth clearly said that he does not believe the King Kong building is a heritage building. There is no point of order.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr A.J. Dean): From what I heard, there is no point of order.

*Debate Resumed*

Mr J.N. HYDE: Again, we have a stunt from the member for Kingsley. There have been a few this week; let her bring on another.

Members opposite are saying that it is terrible that the Heritage of Western Australia Act has not been reviewed by this nasty Labor Government two and a half years into its term in government. Of course, for eight years the Liberal Government did not touch the Act. There must be a contradiction in their thinking. On the one hand, Liberal members are saying that the heritage Act has not been amended, looked at or reviewed. However, on the other, they are using those parts of the existing heritage Act that imply an interim listing and are giving power and some status to the Burra charter, which could be flawed, to justify their case. They cannot have it both ways. Either the Act is wrong or the way they are using it is wrong. However, they should not be too cute and try to use both. They are using the listing brouhaha as a way to justify their position.

The issue of the East Perth power station has been raised. The Liberal Government was in power for eight years and it had a term before that, but it did nowt. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure - not the Minister for Heritage - is doing her utmost to preserve and work with a heritage building owned by the Government. These empty, degraded buildings did not just sprout up on 11 February 2001. They were there for the eight years the Liberal Government was in power. They have been there a while.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I draw the member's attention to the fact that he is speaking to the amendment, not the original motion.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I thank you for that, Mr Acting Speaker.

I think this amendment has a disgraceful tone. A member from a country electorate has raised the issue in this venue but has not mentioned the great work done by heritage advocates in my electorate, me as a member and other people. The Wellington Building is one of the finest pieces of heritage in our State. I will certainly be chaining myself to a bulldozer if there is any attempt to pull down the Wellington Street buildings. They are superb and, most importantly, they are valued heritage. The local community values them. Members opposite must acknowledge and accept it if the local community says that they are heritage buildings that are valued and they want to keep those buildings, but that the King Kong building and some of the other buildings in William Street are no good and are not valued, and they do not want them put in the same league.

The amendment reflects a gross misunderstanding of the heritage Act. An interim listing enables the Heritage Council, heritage Act experts and the owners of the buildings to have the opportunity to assess the buildings. Scores of interim-listed heritage buildings have been demolished in our period in government and in the period of the previous Government. When the heritage assessment was done, those buildings did not reach the threshold for state heritage listing under the existing Act. Again, it can be said that the Act needs amendment. That is fine, but members cannot have it both ways. If a building does not meet unique status under the existing Act, it will not be heritage listed. The member for South Perth has misunderstood what the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is doing. The Heritage Council negotiates with an owner. A building may not meet the threshold for state heritage listing, but, through negotiation with the owners, a building can be kept or it can be totally demolished and the cultural significance of the site or parts of the building recorded as part of the heritage agreement despite the building being demolished, or the facade can be kept as part of the heritage agreement. Again, members are using the heritage Act, the wonderful Burra charter and the Heritage Council. On a number of occasions, the Heritage Council has recommended that a facade be kept. The Burra charter acknowledges that, rather than creating a neo-Georgian, post-Tuscan, faux-colonial look-alike building, a modern building can be associated with a heritage facade, which would embellish the building and give it much more respect.

Mr P.G. Pandal interjected.

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is not a policy of last resort. The member should read the Burra charter; it is full of contradictions. He should read the pages on cemeteries and graves. The Burra charter gives about seven different alternatives. The member for South Perth uses the Burra charter as many people use "Leviticus" to justify a range of moral and social views of the world.

Mr P.G. Pandal interjected.

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Mr J.N. HYDE: I am sure the member has on many occasions. With selective readings of the Burra charter, he can justify many positions. That is a reason we need to review the heritage Act and look at the Burra charter to determine what we, as a community in Western Australia, value as heritage. What can we say are absolutes in heritage that can be applied in any situation? We need to do that review. Until that happens, members opposite can use parts of the Burra charter to justify keeping every brick left in the CBD of Perth. Others will use it as justification to pull down those buildings and put up a wonderful glass building à la the Pompadour centre in Paris.

Let us be clear: a number of times over the years I have heard conservative members of the House speak about owners' rights and consultation with owners. However, it seems that the moment the owner is a socialist Government, a government entity or a public enterprise, they do not want to give the same rights. Clearly, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure gave notice before she acquired the building that if the building -

Mr C.J. Barnett: She did not acquire them. She resumed them. She did not negotiate with the owners.

Mr J.N. HYDE: We are hearing from another member who did not understand the law when he was a minister. Now he is trying to say that if a person's name is not on the title, he does not own it; there is a different classification of ownership.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: One of the interesting things is that this Government referred these buildings to the Heritage Council for consideration. In October 2002 the Government - the supposed reluctant party - had completed the heritage assessments and actually sent them to the Heritage Council.

Mr J.N. HYDE: That has inspired me and I feel that I should move an amendment to this amendment. I was going to make the very clear point that the heritage significance has been recognised. When they know the Government is doing the right thing it is a ploy of Oppositions - it might have taken this Opposition two and a half years to realise it - to recommend the same policy a year or so later and try to take credit for it. I think the motion and the amendment reflect a little glory grabbing from a good thing. I foreshadow that I will move an amendment on the amendment to give credit where it is due so that we can have a rational discussion on this issue.

I refer again to scaremongering on heritage issues. If this issue is given one line in the local paper - I hope it is given more in my local paper - the people at, say, Floreat who are looking at the houses built for the Commonwealth Games will read the word "heritage" and think we are talking about a fibro monstrosity next door to them. When we create an atmosphere of crisis around heritage issues and start labelling places and using heritage politically, there is a danger that a lot of heritage buildings that are downgraded, especially middle level heritage buildings, will never get on the interim list, let alone the state list. They are the sort of heritage buildings that should be saved and that a local community could value if it was convinced of the importance of the heritage to the community and the streetscape.

The member for Greenough tried to make a distinction between the Minister for Heritage and the owner of the land, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. Surely it would be improper for the Minister for Heritage to be involved in this debate. Clearly he would not be able to say anything today. As a minister of the Crown, he must wait until he has received a submission from the Heritage Council and the public has commented after the interim listing before making an impartial decision based on the Heritage Council's response. The Heritage Council made the interim listing. After the public comment period is closed, the council makes another recommendation. I have seen this process throughout my area and in Geraldton with the member for Greenough. Sometimes during the interim heritage listing process something that was supposed to have been owned by a member of the Legislative Council in 1898, for example, may be found to be a 1940s building owned by the member's second cousin.

Mr P.G. Pandal: I think you are letting the cat out of the bag!

Mr J.N. HYDE: I am trying to convey the true situation concerning heritage in this State. The moment anyone goes to the wall and claims that something has heritage value but the information that led to its interim listing is found to be false, the community at large will say that all the "heritage Nazis" are factually wrong and, therefore, their support for any heritage is wrong. I have seen that in various communities throughout Western Australia. I, along with the member for Greenough, know from local government experience that if we involve the community, we can save much more heritage than if we take a didactic approach and interpret the Burra charter as law.

I am reminded of some criticism of the Gallop Government on heritage. In 1982 when Sir Charles Court had built -

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Mr T.K. Waldron: Which Government?

Mr J.N. HYDE: I am talking about Sir Charles Court's Government in 1982.

Mr T.K. Waldron: You said the Gallop Government.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Yes; earlier in the debate the Gallop Government was criticised for its record on heritage. In 1982 Sir Charles Court's Government was responsible for building the Queens Park Theatre in Geraldton. At that time the old town hall in Geraldton, which was heritage listed, was in a dilapidated condition. I had long hair in those days and I used to ride there on my skateboard to watch surfing movies.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes interjected.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I did not wear cardigans in those days. The theatre's status was downgraded and people thought it was good because Charlie Court, with his cornet, had come to Geraldton and opened a new beaut QPT, so we did not need the old town hall. It was one of the first times I was mobilised politically.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: How old were you?

Mr J.N. HYDE: I was 21. I became a member of Friends of the Town Hall to convince the local council to change its mind. I am not sure whether the member for Greenough was a member of FROTH at that time. Given that the State had provided the QPT, the council believed it should demolish the beautiful old Geraldton Town Hall to build a car park.

Mr P.G. Pandal: Did you convince the council?

Mr J.N. HYDE: We did. Through community action, the building was kept and today it is attached to the Western Australian Museum.

Mr P.G. Pandal: Congratulations. That is why we want you on our side.

Mr J.P.D. Edwards interjected.

Mr J.N. HYDE: As always, in this debate the member for Greenough was very fair with his criticism and directed it at both Liberal and Labor Governments. That is why we like him.

The Government encourages negotiations with the owners of the William Street buildings under the Heritage of Western Australia Act. Clearly, all of us are involved in constituency and contentious issues. If negotiations are held that result in a consensus between an owner of a building, the Heritage Council and protesters or others, a quick decision can be made and an economic outcome achieved. On council we were often able to convince owners to keep their buildings after they had said they must demolish them. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure will negotiate and, as an owner, will say that she values some of the buildings.

I would like to move -

To delete all words after the first "and" and substitute the following -

acknowledges the support of the Gallop Government for the interim heritage listing of the William and Wellington Streets heritage precinct.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Is the House proposing to vote on this amendment on the amendment?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Andrews): No. The question is that the words to be deleted be deleted, as moved by the member for South Perth. We have not finished the debate on that amendment.

**MRS C.L. EDWARDES** (Kingsley) [5.20 pm]: One of the things that keeps coming through whenever we debate this railway is increased costs and delays. The heritage issue that has now been raised will delay the project even further, because once the properties have been taken off the interim list and been properly listed, the development plan must go through the Heritage Council. That will also lead to increased costs, because the development plan must take into account the heritage value of those properties. Every decision that has been made so far has further delayed each stage of the building of this railway, and the more the delay, the greater will be the cost.

Mr J.P.D. Edwards: I asked a question about cost, but I did not get a response.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: We will ask it again. That means that the Cabinet and the backbench members have allowed the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure to stymie the term of this Government. They have allowed the minister to stop them from taking full advantage of the whole of their time in government. The Government has done reviews and reports. The ministers have been asked to cut back their budgets. The Minister for Health

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said that he would cut the funding for the mobility programs. However, he was put under pressure to reinstate that funding. The Minister for Health has cut the funding for mental health programs and any preventive programs that do not have a clinical base.

Mr J.N. Hyde: Get back to heritage!

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: This is very important, because the Government is wasting opportunities. Labor's term in government is characterised by wasted opportunities, all because in July 2001 the minister convinced Cabinet that the rail should go not via Kenwick, as was proposed by the Court Government, but straight along the freeway and along William Street. The minister convinced Cabinet that it should be the Labor Government's railway, not the Court Government's railway, because she did not like the thought that there had been any planning by the former coalition Government for any inch of rail. Cabinet thought it was a damn good idea to stick it to the coalition Government and have its own railway. What planning had happened up until that time?

Ms K. Hodson-Thomas: None!

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: That is right. There was no assessment of the two bridges that the rail would have cross, nor of the plan for the rail to go along William Street. I understand that the Government is sticking to a tight timetable, because it wants to have the contracts in place so that when it loses government at the next election, the next Government - the coalition Government - will not be able to change the contracts. I hear that it will now not be possible for the Government to keep its commitment to the City of Perth and the owners of these properties that the sinking of the railway under William Street will cause no disruption to traffic. The soil testing in William Street has identified that it will not be possible to put the two tracks as close to the buildings as was anticipated. In order to build a tunnel, the soil will need to be strengthened. Normally the borer goes in, and it is then pulled out and the soil is strengthened. However, because the Government has made the timetable so tight, there will not be time for the borer to be pulled out in order to strengthen the soil. Therefore, the rail lines will need to be put closer together so that the borer can be kept in the tunnel and the soil can be strengthened from the top.

Mr J.N. Hyde: There was always going to be a joint tunnel. You are being disingenuous.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: No. Go back to the original plan, member for Perth. There will be disruption to William Street traffic. That is totally against the commitment that the minister gave to the City of Perth and to the owners and the people who work in those buildings. That will lead to further cost.

I turn now to the heritage buildings that were identified in the media release today, which states, in part -

Heritage Minister Tom Stephens and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan jointly announced that the precinct would include the buildings the Government was acquiring . . .

I understand that a resumption order is in place; however, not on the whole of the precinct, as the minister interjected to advise the House. The resumption order means that the Government has acquired the buildings, because the tenants are already paying the rent to LandCorp. The issue is, however, that although the Government has acquired the buildings, it has not paid for them. An article on the *Western Australian Business News* web site of 31 October 2002 states -

A spokesperson from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure said the Government had the ability to resume the land but would only take this course if negotiation with the owners proved unsuccessful.

However, even though the resumption order was in place, the owner of the King Kong building had still not been contacted. We have raised that issue many times in this House. The State Government has said that it has set aside \$38 million to compensate property owners and tenants. The King Kong building is estimated to be worth in the vicinity of \$20 million or \$30 million. If we add to that the compensation that will need to be paid, that \$38 million will go nowhere. Again, that will lead to increased costs.

The Government is being stymied by this railway project, to which the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has foolishly committed the backbench members of the Government. Every one of them is guilty of wasting opportunities that this Government could have had. Even if they are committed to this route for the railway, they can still stop the minister and ensure that proper processes are in place, and that when the tenders are let the time frame is not so tight that there will be a huge escalation in costs. The money the minister has set aside for escalation is nowhere near enough. The railway project is already out of time from the original documents that the minister tabled in this House. The minister said that in June 2003 that the buildings would be demolished. That information was provided in a letter that the Western Australian Government Railways Commission wrote to Mr Brian Bowden of King Kong Sales on 24 September 2002, which states -

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Assuming conventional construction techniques, built form above the new platforms will be demolished. A preliminary project schedule has been developed, based on the overriding Government commitment for rail services to Waikiki to be in place by the end of 2006.

That is a tight timetable. The letter continues -

The preliminary schedule requires demolition of buildings on the William Street site to commence by June 2003.

It is now October 2003. There has already been a delay. There will be delays in putting the tunnel through William Street. There will be extra costs. This railway will bankrupt the Government. It will have to put up taxes to stop that happening. It will have to make sure that it does not do anything. That is why it conducts reviews and all the rest of it. If the Government wants to keep the State's AAA credit rating by the time the next election comes, it will have to make sure that the capital cost of this railway will be covered, because as soon as it builds it, it will be absolutely blown and this State will be bankrupted again. I remember when we came to government in 1993 the amount of time we spent getting the State's finances back in order.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Rubbish!

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: Mate, I remember it well! Nights, week in, week out, were spent cleaning up the mess that the previous Labor Government had left behind. That will happen again. When we get into government at the next election we will have to spend time cleaning up the mess and doing the small things. Do government members remember when the last Labor Government used to borrow money to do maintenance on schools? That was an absolute disgrace!

Mr J.N. Hyde: You sold off AlintaGas; you sold off the silver to pay for things.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: And we paid off debts and built assets with it.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.W. Andrews): Order, members! The member for Kingsley can look after herself very well in this Chamber, but it is reaching the point at which I cannot hear her voice, and I will not let that happen to anyone.

Mr M.P. Whitely: Can I make a genuine offer to you, member for Kingsley, and the Leader of the Opposition? I used to teach accounting. It is clear from my time in here that you guys do not really have a very good understanding of basic accounting.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: I used to work for chartered accountants auditing the accounts that the member probably prepared!

Mr M.P. Whitely: I am happy to put some time into remedial accounting lessons.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The question before the House is that the words to be deleted be deleted. We can take advice on accounting at some other time. Members should get back to the question before the House.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: The other issue with these buildings is the asbestos. In the past five years WorkSafe has issued a number of notices. The answer to question on notice 696 of 2002 states -

The level of asbestos in the buildings is typical for a building of this age where spray applied limpet asbestos was used to fire proof steel support beams. WorkSafe is continuing to liaise with the managing agents to ensure the risk is appropriately managed.

The issue for the Government now that it has taken over ownership of these buildings and, more importantly, in the development of this site, is that the removal of asbestos is estimated to take up to 18 months and cost \$5 million. Again, these are the little add-ons that cannot be included in the big figure, because they were never anticipated. It will also take up to 18 months to clean up the site because of the asbestos problems. How will the Government demolish those sites by June 2003, taking into account the asbestos problems? It is a major exercise. The dilemma is whether to do it right or to do it fast. If the Government wants to do it fast, problems could be created. William Street is a clear example. Because the Government is not prepared to further delay the project and wants to set the contracts in place, that automatically puts up the price. The tunnelling through William Street will cost a huge amount of money. More importantly, it will disrupt traffic, employment and income in that central city area. That is a critical issue that has not been highlighted in the development, because it has been discovered only since the testing of the soil in and around those buildings.

The other issue is the guarantee to all the other buildings in William Street. We are talking about not just the heritage issue in the development of that site; there are other buildings in William Street and their status also needs to be continued. The Government faces a critical issue all the way along the line.

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The Government was conned in July 2001 by the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. The Government wanted its own railway; it did not want a coalition Government railway. That will cost this Government dearly. That decision was made very quickly over two cabinet meetings. I cannot comprehend the amount of advice and information that would have been given to the minister for the Government to make that decision, but it certainly was not the advice and information that has now come to light, which includes the information on the increased costs. We will probably get a second-rate option. The whole issue will be determined by timing and cost, both of which will be severely restricted, and we will not get the best option. If the Government is to go down this path, for goodness sake it should do it right! This is the policy of the Government of the day. The way the Government made the decision was bad. It is now coming under increasing pressure because of the time that has been blown out on a consistent basis. As time gets blown out, so too do the costs. If the Government keeps pulling back the time, costs will increase to build the railway on time. I urge cabinet members, if not backbenchers, to seriously think about it. They do not have long before the next election. The Government has wasted many opportunities in many areas to ensure that this railway gets up and running.

**MR T.K. WALDRON** (Wagin) [5.38 pm]: I concur with the amendments moved by the member for South Perth. I say on behalf of the National Party that the Government's handling of the William Street issue has been an unmitigated disaster. The member for South Perth alluded to that. It is obvious to me that there has been no proper plan for the preservation of important buildings in this precinct. There has been no proper consideration of the public interest. There are many warning signals that heritage does not matter in this case. The Government's entire handling of the William Street issue rings alarm bells. There is no doubt that the Government is obsessed with getting the railway through the central business district at any cost. As the member for Kingsley said, with the time frames and costs involved it is obvious that time will blow-out and costs will increase substantially. Time will tell us all that. We need look only at the treatment of the owners and tenants of buildings in the Murray and Wellington Streets precinct to see that nothing will stop this railway dream. I remind members that it was the National Party that first uncovered the minister's plan to blast these owners and tenants out of these buildings. The owners, tenants and scores of people who work in the William Street precinct learnt very quickly that nothing will be allowed to stand in the way of this minister. Her railway will at all times override the rights of individuals. I welcome the interim heritage listing; it is a good thing. I hope that all, or at least most, of these buildings will be retained. I ask the minister to say exactly how long these buildings will be on the interim list, when a final decision will be made and how many buildings will be left there.

It is worth revisiting the history of this matter, which is really a fiasco. After deciding on the central city route, the Government released a supplementary master plan in August 2002. The public was led to believe then that a tunnel would be built directly under the William Street road reserve. However, to everybody's amazement, the William Street tunnel was moved about 25 metres eastwards. I understand that this was partly to create a curve so that the trains could link with the northern suburbs line. The National Party found that there was a plan to acquire the buildings and that \$40 million had been set aside for that acquisition. We were also told that this was not an additional cost to the Mandurah railway project. We were told to trust the minister because she could regain that cost when she co-developed the demolished site with the private sector. The so-called negotiations with the owners and tenants were almost scandalous because they were kept deliberately in the dark. Their representatives were forced to plead for meetings with government officials and I believe that some did not meet them. The minister used the might of the planning legislation to beat these people into submission. The minister pressured them with the Valuer General's estimate of \$40 million in acquisition and commercial compensation. The minister had a valuation carried out in November 2001 but refused to make the details public.

There has always been secrecy by and mistrust of the minister in all dealings with the William Street owners, tenants and workers. This resulted in the key stakeholders hiring a Queen's Counsel to protect their position because their buildings were secretly targeted for demolition. This whole fiasco came to a head on 19 August this year when, in typical style, the minister used the Town Planning and Development Act 1928 to take the buildings. The advertisement in *The West Australian* that I am holding in my hand tells that story.

While the rights of individuals involved with these historic buildings have been brushed aside, so too has the public interest. I would hate to see that happen again in this great city, which has too readily seen many of its old historic buildings knocked down. I was concerned to hear what the member for South Perth said about the buildings on the interim list; that is, their being on the list provides no guarantee on what will happen to them.

Mr M.P. Whitely: It is an interim list.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: That is right. It gives no assurance about what will happen to them. I want to know from the minister what will happen to them. We do not know yet what will happen. We will wait and see what will happen; that will tell the truth.

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There will be 690 metres of bored tunnel and 310 metres of cut-and-cover construction in the heart of the central business district, but not a whisper has been said about the engineering challenges. There are major risks in dewatering the tunnel site and the 16-metre deep excavation for the William Street station. I understand that water drainage is a real issue and is linked to Lake Monger. Those issues have not been properly addressed.

Members might ask what relevance these issues have to the National Party and members like me, because I guess we focus a fair bit on regional areas. Regional Western Australia has a very keen interest in this city project for a couple of reasons. The first is that the city of Perth is the capital city of Western Australia for all Western Australians. All rural Western Australians have close ties with Perth; many went to school here, many have family here, many retire here and many, like me, have lived in Perth for some part of their life. Another issue is the potential for a major cost blow-out with this rail project and the effect that would have on country WA. In August 2002 the Government budgeted only \$195 million to bury 1.6 kilometres of railway from the Narrows Bridge to an exit near Lake Street; that figure is now more like \$248 million. Spending on this railway will have a profound impact on regional WA; there is no doubt that the capital works programs for roads etc have been decimated under the Labor Government.

As I said before, the buildings have been only interim listed. As the member for South Perth stated, the Minister for Heritage could remove any of these buildings from that list; therefore, their future is very much in doubt. I therefore support the amendment moved by the member for South Perth. The heritage minister has placed the buildings on an interim list and will consider them. I also give my support to the member for Greenough for raising this matter. Without his motion we could have ended up in a diabolical situation.

**MS K. HODSON-THOMAS** (Carine) [5.45 pm]: I rise also to support the motion moved by the member for Greenough and the amendment moved by the member for South Perth. I congratulate my colleague the member for Greenough for giving notice of and moving the motion. The motion was moved on 16 September 2003 and here we are dealing with it on 15 October 2003. The amendment moved by the member for South Perth notes with satisfaction the actions today of the Minister for Heritage, and congratulates the member for Greenough for his actions in the matter of the William and Wellington Streets heritage precinct. I suspect that every member in the Chamber realises that my interest in this motion relates to the railway.

Mr J.N. Hyde: No!

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: Yes.

As a consequence of that, I will make some comments on the railway before I talk about the heritage value of the buildings - particularly the buildings in William Street - that are required for the city station of the minister's direct railway between Perth and Mandurah. Although I wish to talk about that, I also point out that the decision to change the route of the railway was made in July 2001. The members for South Perth and Kingsley also mentioned that today. On 17 July 2001 it was made known that this Government intended to change the direction of the railway from the Kenwick route to the direct route, as it is now called. The minister subsequently told us that she would issue a supplementary master plan. I have in my hand a copy of the supplementary master plan dated August 2002. It was released a number of months late; nevertheless, it was provided. It is interesting to note that there is very little in the supplementary master plan that relates to the heritage issues surrounding the William Street section of this rail route. I find that very interesting.

Mr J.N. Hyde: That is because the Liberals didn't interim list them; it is Labor that has now interim listed them.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: The member for Perth has had an opportunity to speak.

The minister made the decision on the new route on the run some 16 or 19 weeks after coming into government. Three years and \$3.8 million had been spent on the planning of and studies into the Kenwick route, all of which was wasted as a consequence of this minister's decision to change the route. That is not the beginning of the wasted expenditure on this project. I come back to the fact that the supplementary master plan made very little mention of heritage values. In fact, somewhere in the vicinity of three pages of the supplementary plan of August 2002 relate to heritage and archaeological issues, but none relates to William Street. It was well and truly 12 months after the decision was made. The Perth urban rail development report, volume 1, was a compilation of heritage advice from February to June 2002, and it was issued in September 2002. Here we are in October 2003. The minister is very slow in making a decision. Interestingly, the report refers to other factors. Regarding station design and alignment, it states -

Platforms 10 & 11 need to be 150 metres long, running parallel to William Street. The length of the platforms is the combined length of the Murray to Wellington Street block plus the full width of the Wellington Street road reserve.



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The width of platforms 10 & 11, with two railway tracks and construction requirements, is some 25 metres in width. Assuming space for retention of facades then the width of requirements east of William Street building line is about 30 metres.

Interestingly, I have heard a number of members, particularly the members for South Perth and Greenough, comment about building facades. Certainly, they suggest that the retention of facades is not the optimum retention with those buildings. I find it extraordinary that the report refers to “assuming space for retention of facades”, yet nobody seems to know whether space will be provided. It is extraordinary that after all this time the Government does not know the answer. The member for Kingsley rightly highlighted today the incompetence of the minister. The buildings were to be demolished in June 2003. Here we are in October in 2003 and they are certainly standing. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure today made her ministerial statement in this place. Members chuckled at this interim listing of the heritage precinct. Although we congratulate the Minister for Heritage for this decision, it has been forthcoming only today. It seems that every endeavour of opposition members to attempt to highlight the incompetence of this minister -

Mr M.P. Whitely: You’ve failed.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: We have not failed at all. We have highlighted that the minister after all this time has been unable to convince the community of the true cost of the project. We have already seen people express concerns about the cost of the project. An article appeared in *The West Australian* on 27 September headed “Experts warn Gallop of a \$700m blowout”. The Opposition has been making that comment for some time, although not using that figure. It is a concern of experts in the field. Projects have blown out costs frequently around the world. One need only look at what is happening in New South Wales at the moment. *The West Australian* of Saturday, 4 October 2003 stated -

The NSW Government has been stung by a \$2 billion blow-out in the cost of its key road and rail projects . . .

Mr J.N. Hyde interjected.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: The member has had his opportunities to speak - this is mine. The article further reads -

. . . experts warned the Gallop Government of likely cost overruns in its plan for a city rail tunnel.

. . . NSW Roads Minister Carl Scully admitted this week that there had been a \$285 million increase in the cost of the Lane Cove tunnel to \$1.1 billion - double the original estimate.

I asked the question of the minister today about the expert advice she had received regarding the true cost of the tunnel along William Street.

Mr R.F. Johnson: She’s keeping it secret.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: She is. She tried to combine parts of package A with package F. It is a smoke and mirror exercise designed to deliberately mislead people about the true cost. This Government can come up with all its spin doctoring about true cost, but it will ultimately come to light that this rail project will blow the budget way out of the water.

Several members interjected.

The Acting SPEAKER (Mr P.W. Andrews): Order! That is enough, members.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: It is my view that the Government is short-changing the people of Western Australia with the rail project.

Mr D.A. Templeman: You’re short-changing the people of Mandurah. You don’t support it at all!

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: The member is short-changing people because the railway would have been there by 2005 if he had convinced his minister to stick with the Kenwick route.

Mr D.A. Templeman: You’ve never supported the rail to Mandurah, and you never will.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: That is not accurate. I have been consistent in what I have said in this place about the railway. I support the railway to Mandurah, and I supported it to be constructed by 2005.

I must make a point about the question I asked the minister today. The minister alluded to some escalation in cost; it appears it is still escalating. The supplementary master plan states that the escalation was included in the supplementary master plan on page 138. The estimate was for \$168 million in escalation. The minister told the

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media the cost is still escalating. How many times will it escalate? It is escalating because the minister has no concept of the matter.

The House is dealing with the heritage values of buildings in William and Wellington Streets. I take up the point the member for Kingsley raised about traffic management in the city and the trench along the foreshore.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: The one with no top.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: Indeed; it will have no top, probably to save money on ventilation.

Mr J.N. Hyde: It's parkland.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: It will have a lovely big fence along the side.

Mr J.N. Hyde: How can it impact on traffic management if there are no cars? So, a Liberal Government will put car parks in my electorate.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: The member is a joke! I was talking about ventilation. Interestingly, the minister has said that it will not be necessary to put in as much ventilation because it is a trench. It is another exercise in saving money.

Mr J.N. Hyde: Either you want us to save money or you do not. Get your act together.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: We want some accountability and the truth about the real cost of this project.

Mr J.N. Hyde: It is \$1.42 billion.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: And it will be on time and on budget, but the time line has changed! It will not get to Mandurah by 2007.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: I hate to say this to the member for Mandurah, because I think he is a very nice person -

Mr D.A. Templeman: And I think you are a very nice person, too.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: Given that he will not be able to deliver this railway to Mandurah by 2007, I do not think he will be the member for Mandurah after the next election. It is incumbent upon him to ensure that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure gives us the detail. People in the community are worried.

Several members interjected.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: I met some of his constituents in Mandurah on the weekend. His mother does think highly of him.

Mr J.N. Hyde: I want to see you spend time in Carine.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: I spend time in Carine as well. This decision has been made on the run, due process has never been followed, and adequate studies and planning have not been carried out to ensure that this railway is on budget and will meet the time line.

**MR M.F. BOARD** (Murdoch) [6.01 pm]: Why are we debating the heritage values and the process for heritage protection of buildings that will be at risk following the Government's plan - its ill-fated, ill-conceived, rushed plan - to put the railway down the Kwinana Freeway into the city? We are debating this matter today because, like all of the concepts in this Government's strategy, the railway was unplanned and ill-conceived and it proceeded without consultation prior to the decision-making process. As a result there has been a lot of after-the-scenes, after-the-publicity sorting out of details and costings and efforts to try to make the announcement and the publicity work. That is the reality. The project is ill-fated for a number of reasons: it is ill-fated on a cost-to-usage factor; it is ill-fated because it does not conform to what is required to protect our environment; it is ill-fated because not even the engineering solutions were put in place prior to the decision being made; and it is ill-fated because the majority of Western Australians who will utilise the new route will be disadvantaged in terms of time and costs compared with the decision that was made by the previous Government.

Mr J.N. Hyde: It is 12 minutes faster.

Mr M.F. BOARD: It is 12 minutes faster for whom?

Mr J.N. Hyde: The people who will use it.

Mr M.F. BOARD: The 200 people a day who travel from Rockingham or Mandurah? Yes, they may get into town eight minutes faster as a result of having to stop at fewer stations, but the member should ask for the views

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of the majority of people who are already transiting to the city via the fast bus route - the people in my electorate, the people who live all around the southern suburbs - because they will now have to get a bus to the train station, wait at the station and then get a train into the city. It will take much longer and probably be more expensive because the buses will not go on the fast bus route to the city. Does the member for Perth recognise that the people living south of the river who currently get a fast bus from where they live directly to the city along the fast bus lane will be disadvantaged by having to get on a bus, get off a bus and get on a train?

Mr J.N. Hyde: Without trains the growth in car use will mean unbelievable delays. What about the 24 extra trains that would have used the Kenwick route?

Mr M.F. BOARD: The member for Perth is concerned about defending a decision that was made on the back of a coaster, probably at the Mt Lawley hotel. It is as simple as that, because the minister was paranoid. When in opposition she made statements about her paranoia that we were going to build a railway line and that our Government would be responsible for the major infrastructure and the development of a project that this Government now has the carriage of. The Labor Party could not stand coming into government when its biggest infrastructure project and biggest cost initiative was put in place by the previous Government. It had to go to extreme lengths to change that. This Government was convinced by some lunatic plans, which we looked at. We looked at the cost-effectiveness of those plans, which were presented to Cabinet, and we listened to the transport and planning experts. They pleaded their case, which was not to put the railway down the freeway. I can hear their words as I stand here today; they were saying not to put it down the freeway. Do members know why? It would never provide cost-effective engineering solutions for the community; it would disadvantage a large proportion of the southern corridor; it would not get the patronage south of the river; it would not pick up on the growth zones in the south east corridor; it would advantage only a few people in the Rockingham-Mandurah region; and it would disadvantage the majority of Western Australians, particularly those south of the river. That is what this is all about. It is unfortunate that after the next election our Government will have to carry the can and the problems with the contracting that was put in place by a minister who is out of control. I say that advisedly, because I believe that as a result of transport issues this Government will lose the next election. It is unfair to Labor backbenchers, who are currently in government, that their one term will be brought to an end because of decisions mainly to do with planning and transport - the railway line, the deletion of the Fremantle eastern bypass and the non-construction of Roe Highway No 8. The member for Riverton has entered the House; he is likely to lose his seat over this issue. The seat of the Minister for Education and Training is also in jeopardy because of transport issues, including the non-construction of Roe Highway No 8.

Mr N.R. Marlborough interjected.

Mr M.F. BOARD: The member for Peel knows that what I am saying is right. Information that is coming out of his own electorate and the Fremantle council would tell him that at present there is some planning lunacy going on in Western Australia. Plans that had been put in place - structured plans for well-conceived transport links along major freeways and the construction of what was going to be a well-conceived railway program that would be used by the majority of people south of the river, particularly through the growth zones - have now been thrown out the window for a plan that I can guarantee will run grossly over budget, a plan for which the Government does not have engineering solutions and that not will work for the Western Australian community.

We are dealing with heritage issues, which are some of the by-products of an ill-fated and ill-conceived plan that has been rushed through solely for political reasons but, strangely enough, those political reasons will backfire and cost the Government the next election. The Government will go so far over budget that the State's AAA credit rating and the Government's taxation credibility will be in jeopardy. It will be seen as an arrogant Government that does not listen to the community.

Mr J.N. Hyde interjected.

Mr M.F. BOARD: All those things were considered. Does the member for Perth think that the previous Cabinet said that it wanted to put a slight dogleg into the railway line? For what reason would it do that? It did that on good engineering advice and on advice about patronage, costing, heritage and the environment. All those matters were considered and we came up with an option that worked. This Government has an option that will not work. Not only will it cost the community a lot of money in taxation but also it will not benefit people. That is the shame of it. The legacy will be left with our Government to fulfil or get out of contracts or provide a better alternative in a cost-effective manner. We may not have the opportunity to do that; we may be locked in. It is a great shame for the Western Australian community.

**MR J.P.D. EDWARDS** (Greenough) [6.11 pm]: The amendment notes with satisfaction the actions today of the Minister for Heritage and congratulates the member for Greenough for his actions in the matter of the William and Wellington Streets heritage precinct. As much as I enjoy taking plaudits for that, I must thank my

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colleagues for their support because many of them have had as much bearing as I have on the issue of the William Street project before it was raised this afternoon. I need not name them, but they have been sitting in the House this afternoon.

Mr J.N. Hyde: Thank you.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: That does not include the member for Perth.

I return to the comments I started with earlier today. I am sure that the motion we spoke to earlier spawned today's ministerial statement. I am sure that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure put a fair amount of pressure on the Minister for Heritage to ensure that it was made prior to the debate this afternoon. So far, everything I have heard from government members leaves me with a lack of confidence that the heritage values of the buildings in William and Wellington Streets will be conserved. The comments of the member for Perth particularly cause me some anxiety. Some of the comments of the members for Carine, Kingsley and Murdoch are very pertinent. It is worth reflecting on the fact that the whole of the Perth-Mandurah railway project, which has a bearing on these buildings, has been done on the run. There is no doubt about that. It was a good idea by the previous Government; in fact, the Kenwick route was an excellent project. I think this Government wanted runs on the board or plaudits - whatever one wants to call it - so it decided that it would change the route.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: They wanted their own line.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: I thank the member for Kingsley. The Government wanted its own railway so that it could say that it did this. The decisions about the Perth-Mandurah railway are being made on a needs-must basis. This is a prime example that the project is being done on a needs-must basis. We would not be debating this issue today unless it had been raised by the Opposition. We are doing what we are supposed to do as an Opposition: we are raising some of the issues that need to be addressed. As I said earlier, I do not think they have been addressed to our satisfaction this afternoon.

As I said, this issue concerns interim heritage listing. The buildings have been listed as interim heritage only; they are not heritage listed. The question mark remains. I am sure that if the two ministers got their heads together, it would be a matter of who came up with the best arguments and who conceded. I do not suppose that these buildings would have been put on the interim list if the matter had not been publicised. I give credit where it is due. Other members in this place on this side of the House made that matter public some time ago and consequently we have moved forward from there.

We should be very wary of the interim listing, particularly in the light of some of the comments members on the other side of the House made this afternoon. We should be cynical about them too. Again, I go back to the current Government's record on heritage matters. Regardless of what we did during the eight years when we were in government, I put it to members on the other side of the House that they are the Government of the day and it is their responsibility to make decisions on heritage issues. Frankly, not many decisions have been made.

Mr J.N. Hyde: Our Government listed it. You did not. What more do you want?

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: I do not know much about engineering but it has been referred to this afternoon and I raised the issue of the cost earlier. I have had no response from the minister on that. She was ominously quiet about the budget implications if these buildings were heritage listed. Perhaps that means that the tunnelling - the member for Kingsley gave us a very vivid description about how the machine bores into the ground and out again - will impact on those buildings. I am sure it will. Given that, there will be a cost to stabilise those buildings.

Mr J.N. Hyde interjected.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: That is another question that has not been answered. Regardless of the bleatings from members on the other side, I am still not convinced that the Government has the answer to that. The buildings will need to be strengthened. With that in mind, the project has been ill-conceived. I do not think that aspect has been thought through. The project has been rushed through and done on the run. There are questions that need to be answered.

With regard to the Opposition's record on projects, clearly the Graham Farmer tunnel is a prime example of what good planning, forward thinking, consultation and engineering can do. Nobody could argue about that.

Mr J.N. Hyde: It was not a tunnel; it was a trench and you destroyed so much heritage. You know that.

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: The member has a vested interest in this matter. He stood up and abused everybody in sight when the tunnel was opened. I really expected better behaviour from him.

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Mr J.N. Hyde: It was a trench, not a tunnel.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Perth!

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: Members on this side of the House have a record of putting in place those types of projects. I could mention others. The tunnel was not built on the run. I still have concerns with the Government's project and they have not been obviated this afternoon.

It is vital that these buildings be protected because they are held in such high regard. Again, I call on the Minister for Heritage to stand up to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and ensure that these historic buildings, which are an important part of the city of Perth's history, are preserved for future generations and are not allowed to be destroyed.

Mr J.N. Hyde: If they were so important, why did your Government not place them on the heritage list?

Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS: Once they have gone, they cannot be replaced. With half an ear to what the member for Perth has said, I give him due recognition for the battle he took on to save the old town hall in Geraldton. That would have been demolished if it were not for members standing up in this place like I am and raising the issue and addressing the perceived problems. The member for Perth needs to remember that he has gone out on a battlefield and addressed an issue like this. I am doing the same thing. It is necessary that we remember that, and that the Government take due note of what has been said.

Without further ado, I again support the amendment moved by the member for South Perth. I also congratulate the member for his comments this afternoon and his articulate spelling-out of the situation.

Question (words to be deleted) put and passed.

*Amendment on the Amendment*

**MR J.C. KOBELKE** (Nollamara - Leader of the House) [6.20 pm]: I move -

To delete all words after the first "and" in the words to be inserted and substitute -

acknowledges the support of the Gallop Government for the interim heritage listing of the William and Wellington Streets heritage precinct.

The original motion quite rightly raised issues about heritage. However, notice of that motion was given on 16 September, and, as we found, it was out of date by the time we started the debate today. The Opposition was left with a motion that did not address the substantive issues. Unfortunately, although the member for Greenough may be very genuine, we have seen from the way the debate has unfortunately been conducted, with a great deal of cant, that heritage is not the issue the Liberal Party wants to deal with. The Liberal Party is opposed to a railway to the southern suburbs. It does not want to say it up-front, but it is opposed to it. In fact, this Liberal Opposition seems to be opposed to any positive development in this State. When the Gallop Government undertakes positive developments in this State, the Opposition has to differentiate itself in some way. Quite often, it differentiates itself by attacking the project outright or trying to white-ant it through political attacks. The Liberal Party knows that the southern rail is so popular that it cannot come out and say it opposes it. Instead, it uses heritage and a range of other issues to try to attack it, drag it down and white-ant it. That is what the original motion is about. Our amendment reflects that the Gallop Government is quite appropriately and properly taking heritage into account. Issues of heritage need to be looked after, and they will be handled correctly. My amendment addresses this. However, much of the contribution from the Liberal members has been about the rail. There has been very little about the heritage. The movers of the motion and the amendment spoke about that but, after they finished, the debate became an attempt to find ways to attack the southern rail and suggest that it could not be built on time and would not be built on budget.

The last Government committed itself to building a tunnel through Northbridge. The all-up cost of that, including land valuations, approached \$500 million. The coalition Government had no trouble spending \$500 million on a tunnel when a much cheaper option was available.

Mr J.N. Hyde: According to the uncosted escalations, it cost \$680 million.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I am going by the figure we received while the tunnel was being constructed. I have not updated that. At that time, when the land costs were included, the tunnel through Northbridge cost in the order of \$500 million. The member for Perth, who is more up to date, suggests that it cost over \$600 million. That is nearly half of what will be spent on the whole southern rail line. The coalition Government did that, although it could have built the tunnel for a couple of hundred million dollars. As a result, there are now 14 lanes of road in a cross-section of 140 metres. I do not disagree with the need for the Windan Bridge and access through

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Northbridge. Whatever model the Government chose, some people would have disagreed with it. However, the Government could have built the tunnel without spending between \$500 million and \$600 million. When that was put in place, where were the arguments on cost? The Liberals were not worrying about it. They were not worrying about how much they had to spend on it, because the project had to be done and they were driving it. However, when we are in government the Liberals do not say that there are issues that they will go with; they try to say that this project will not be done on budget.

The Labor Government in the 1980s built the northern suburbs railway. It is instructive to look at what the Liberals said then. The Liberals said that it could not be built on time or on budget. The member for Murdoch's argument against the southern rail is exactly the same as that put forward against the northern suburbs railway; that is, people will not want to get on a bus, travel to a transfer station and then use the railway. The Liberals tried to knock the northern suburbs railway. Do we hear the Liberals knocking the northern suburbs railway now? No, it is an outstanding success in public transport. It has been a brilliant success, but the Liberals when in opposition back in the late 1980s and early 1990s tried to knock the northern suburbs railway.

Mr J.N. Hyde: They cut the ribbons at all the stations when they were in government. They performed the opening ceremonies and gave no credit to us.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Yes, and I find it interesting that members of the Liberal Party are only for developing the State and providing good infrastructure when they are in government. When they are in opposition they want to knock it all. I can well remember the Hillarys marina project. The Liberal Party ran a campaign to try to stop the construction of Hillarys marina.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Who was at the end of Northbridge Tunnel with his placards?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I ask the member for Hillarys: does anyone knock the Hillarys marina now?

Mr R.F. Johnson: No, of course they do not.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: No, it was a brilliant Labor initiative, but when the Liberals were in opposition they were trying to stop the bulldozers and they were totally opposed to the project. The Liberals do not believe in the development of this State. They believe in development only if they are in government. When they are in government they pour money into holes in the ground if it might bring some development. They spent something like \$20 million at Oakajee on shifting sand around.

Mr J.N. Hyde: What about the vanadium mine?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Oakajee was an absolute waste of money. The Liberals also supported the vanadium mine. They poured money into such developments so that they could attach their name to them, but when they are in opposition they like to white-ant any good developments in this State.

The motion that has been moved today simply uses heritage as a way of trying to white-ant this brilliant project. Even the member for Kingsley said that the cost will blow out because of asbestos removal. Buildings do contain asbestos and it must be removed. Costs and risks must be managed, but that must be done whether we build the tunnel or not. People cannot use the buildings if the buildings have an asbestos problem. However, for the member for Kingsley this will stop the whole project. She is saying that we cannot manage it and that the presence of asbestos will blow out the cost of the project. It is an absolute nonsense. The member would only say something like that if her real agenda were to white-ant the railway. All she is trying to do is white-ant this brilliant project.

There is also the issue of disruption. There will be traffic management problems. However, how much disruption and traffic management occurred with the building of the tunnel through Northbridge? That cost only \$500 million or \$600 million, whereas this is a \$1.4 billion project. The fact is that there will be a little bit of disruption, but I am very confident that the minister and the officials will be able to manage it and keep it to a minimum. This is a major development project, but the Liberal Party sees every little difficulty as an obstacle that cannot be overcome. It does not matter how small the difficulty is, it is a huge obstacle which means that the State cannot be developed and a brilliant project like the southern railway cannot be put in place.

The Opposition also raised the issue of finance. Opposition members say that we cannot complete the project based on the current budget. However, the last major railway project was built by a Labor Government in the early 1990s. It was built on time and on budget. The Gallop Government has delivered surpluses.

Mr R.F. Johnson: The Joondalup line was not even running properly for commuters when you were in government. You had the official opening three months before trains could pick up passengers.

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Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Madam Deputy Speaker, you can see what I mean. We built the first major urban extension of rail in decades. Everyone knows it is a brilliant success, but the Liberal member can only say that there was a problem because the trains had to be readjusted to stop properly. It was a huge project costing I do not know how many hundreds of millions of dollars. It is a brilliant success and has increased the use of public transport by people in the northern suburbs by a huge percentage, but the Liberal member says it was a problem because there were some brake issues when it started. All they want to see is the negative aspects. They do not want development; they are negative political white-anters. I do not have to say it because members opposite keep interjecting to prove it! That is all they want to do; it does not matter how brilliant a project is. There are so many reports and views from members of the public about how fantastic the northern suburbs rail is. It is recognised internationally but members opposite want to knock it. That is where the Liberal Opposition is at. As I have already said, this Government has managed both its budgets to come in with a surplus. When members opposite were in government five of their eight budgets were in deficit. Their accusations that the Government cannot manage this project or manage the finances do not ring true coming from people who blew budget after budget. They could not manage their budgets, but this Government is managing budgets and will manage the budgets required to put in place this fantastic public transport system to the southern suburbs, Rockingham and Mandurah.

The member for Murdoch raised an accusation that was run time and again when the Labor Government was establishing the rail transport system to the northern suburbs. The accusation was that people would not want to get on buses and then transfer to trains. No-one complains about that now. Again, the member for Murdoch has to find something negative; he has to carp and white-ant the system politically. He will tell his constituents that this system will be bad for them. He will not tell them how wonderful it is in the northern suburbs. He will put the worst possible complexion on every aspect of it.

Mr M.F. Board interjected.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The member for Murdoch has his head in the sand and he should know what part of his anatomy is sticking up in the air! It is not a pretty sight!

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: That is a disgraceful thing to say.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: No; he has his head in the sand. That is an acceptable colloquialism to describe someone who is talking absolute tripe. The member for Murdoch should think about what will happen in his electorate if he happens to be around in the next five to 10 years. All his constituents who want to get into the city will be stuck in a traffic jam on the Kwinana Freeway going nowhere and our trains will be going straight past them! The member's proposal to keep people in cars and buses will not provide the solution we will get with rail. The member should get out of his negative mode because he is normally very reasonable and considers the issues. He should see what happens in the northern suburbs and realise that it may not be for the first five years but, as the density of traffic increases, the rail solution will be much better for his constituents. We cannot continue to rely on road transport and, even though buses help to alleviate it, the rail system will be far superior.

The Opposition wants to look for any negative aspect and blow it up to try to attack the rail option because it cannot stand by and watch a brilliant development be put in place that will allow public transport in metropolitan Perth and through the southern suburbs to Rockingham and Mandurah take a huge leap forward. It is very futuristic and will be delivered in a way in which the budget can manage. It will provide sustainable transport in Perth and down to Mandurah. That is what the Opposition does not like because it does not like development when a Labor Government is in office. That is what this debate is about. We heard that from the contributions made by many members; they were very contradictory. Only today, the Leader of the Opposition said that if we really wanted the rail we have stuffed it up because we should have done it earlier. He said we were far too late. Liberal members then said we were going too quickly; that we were speeding it up! There is no consistency when members opposite put out a whole lot of cant. That is what we have heard. When members are not speaking the truth and when they say things for different reasons, they get it all mixed up. We have heard all the different points of view, which have often been quite contradictory, because all the Opposition wants to do is to attack a brilliant public transport system that will make a big difference for Perth well into the future. That is what opposition members are against. The heritage issue is a subterfuge that the Liberal Opposition is using to attack this marvellous southern rail system.

**MR J.N. HYDE** (Perth) [6.35 pm]: I am delighted to support this amendment because it focuses the attention of the House back on the very important heritage issues that were originally raised in what has perhaps now become an outdated motion. It is important that we set the record straight. Much of the talk has been about railway issues and has moved away from heritage issues. A couple of speakers stated that these buildings in William and Wellington Streets are undoubtedly of pristine heritage value. Rather than go through a listing, they

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are saying today that these 11 or 16 buildings definitely all have heritage value. I must pose the question: if they are heritage buildings, they were heritage buildings five years ago. Maybe they were not valued 30 years ago. However, they may have been in better condition 30 years ago. In fact, one could probably argue that they were of far greater heritage importance then. For the eight years of the conservative Government - and I have checked through *Hansard* - there were no matters of public importance, motions or private members Bills on the heritage status of these buildings.

Mr P.G. Pental: Because they were not under threat.

Mr J.N. HYDE: That is not the issue. The issue is that they were not listed. Listed buildings throughout this State are not under threat. Dilhorn in my electorate is one such building. Buildings throughout the metropolitan area and the Greenough hamlet are not under threat but are heritage listed. There is no logic to that argument. We should value heritage buildings, and we do that by listing them. Opposition members have suddenly decided to try to enhance a couple of places on William Street that I do not think qualify as having heritage value. I have been inside the buildings. Fifteen to 20 years ago the law chambers or the building next door had intact heritage integral staircases. There were a number of jarrah attachments inside the building that had intact heritage fabric. They are not there today. The facade may be of heritage value. I hope the interim listing considers that issue. Internally, there is no longer any heritage. There is heritage intact in the Treasury buildings. They have the staircases and everything else. There is no doubt about their value. A couple of the William Street buildings are not intact. Therefore, the issue of facadism is valid, as the Burra charter itself states. When the integrity is not within a building, keeping the facade is an approach that is justifiable on heritage grounds.

As I stated earlier, as a Labor member of Parliament and, more importantly, as the local member, I believe that the Wellington Building, regardless of the eventual listing, is fine, pristine heritage of this State and must be kept. I am saying that I will chain myself to a bulldozer if there is any attempt by the owner, the Minister for Heritage or the Heritage Council to say that we should knock over the Wellington Building. It is a wonderful piece of heritage. I thank members for the indulgence to speak on heritage buildings within my electorate. It is a great indulgence. I know that members have other issues in their own electorates. However, this has allowed us to highlight this issue. It is very important that we comment on the specifics of the beautiful buildings in Wellington Street. We are not talking about a dacha on the Caspian Sea that is being used by bureaucrats and flunkies; we are talking about something that is integral to the heritage history of our State.

Mr P.G. Pental interjected.

Mr J.N. HYDE: As somebody who has dealt with heritage throughout his local government and parliamentary career, I am saying that I would almost put the mortgage on the Wellington Building being unadulterated and ready to go on the heritage list.

Let us look at this precinct. We are talking about a precinct listing. It includes the buildings on the other side of William Street formerly owned by the University of Western Australia, and included in that is the 1970s addition of the artificial arcade. That is all part of this heritage precinct that is up for an interim listing. Under the heritage assessment, one would hope that the listing would say yes, on that side of William Street the buildings are intact. The pub downstairs has probably been modified, but certainly the facade and upper storeys are intact. I hope that the 1970s arcade addition and so on will not be heritage listed. Of course, under the Burra charter and our heritage Act, we can look at listing a heritage precinct. I believe it is very proper that the Minister for Heritage has done that today.

Again, I want to congratulate the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. Legally, she is the owner of these buildings. She is unlike some owners. The moment there is the threat of a heritage listing, some owners say, "No, I demand my rights. A man's home is his castle", and they pull out the Magna Carta and everything else - perhaps even Leviticus, member for South Perth - to say that they should be able to do whatever they like to their building. However, the owner of the building, the minister responsible for buildings, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, has said that there is heritage in that area and that a proper assessment should be done to ascertain the true, proper and correct heritage value. With some buildings, perhaps a facade is what the community values and heritage demands. Some buildings are not unique, special or rare, and therefore do not meet the threshold test for listing under the state heritage Act. This is a proper process, and there is time for public comment. If we get any airplay out of this issue, and I mean legitimate airplay, it will give people - certainly people with knowledge of heritage, as well as the people of not only my electorate but also every other electorate who drive past these buildings every day - a chance to say publicly whether they value these buildings as heritage buildings.

The heritage assessment will also deal accurately with cultural heritage issues. That is a significant point. There was an interjection earlier in this debate about the King Kong building. I believe most of us in this place agree



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that it is not a heritage building and could go. The member for Yokine mentioned that he had arrested a couple of famous people in there for shoplifting. Of course, the cultural heritage issues relating to what has happened on the site are often just as important as the built heritage. Therefore, it is proper that we are getting a full heritage assessment.

We have touched on the issue of asbestos. The issues of asbestos are all in the master planning. I do not think I was so disingenuous during the debate on the Northbridge tunnel, which I opposed, to ever try to pull a stunt and say that there was asbestos in some of the buildings above the Northbridge tunnel; therefore, the tunnel could not be built - it would blow out the construction time by three years and double the cost by \$600 million. Of course, there was asbestos there and of course the former coalition Government, whether or not I approved of the project, did the tenders and the planning properly so that the asbestos removal was included in the cost. The blow-outs that occurred were because of the trenching by the former Government, the mistakes it made with dewatering, and the road planning, across the bridge, going from 14 lanes back to eight, six and then three. Of course, my electorate is dealing with the traffic flows at the moment. We were told by the former Government's engineers and experts - hopefully, they are not the same four who have advised the Liberals this time on the William Street tunnel because they were wrong - that if the Northbridge tunnel and the Windan bridge were opened, traffic on Lord Street would increase by 60 per cent and traffic on East Parade would decrease by 30 per cent. This is what the coalition Government's experts said. Hello! It is open. I live off Lord Street and it is a gorgeous boulevard now; there is hardly any traffic on Lord Street now and the traffic on East Parade has tripled. The planning at that time was wrong.

Going back to the asbestos issue, that was properly covered in the planning phase. Other issues came up when the coalition Government started fiddling with access ways on the route. Originally the Northbridge tunnel would have had egress off Lord Street, but mid project the coalition Government changed that and, bang, the cost was up another \$100 million. Land acquisitions and so on were not budgeted for properly in the construction of the Northbridge tunnel. We have learnt from the mistakes of the former Government, as we so often do. We have learnt from its deficits. We have learnt from its Northbridge trench mistakes. We have the up-front budget allocation in black and white for not only the acquisition of properties in William Street, the removal of asbestos and everything else that will occur, but also contingencies. They are in not only the current budget, but also the forward estimate figures. Unlike the former Government's 1998 figures for its dodgy route via Kenwick, ours are real figures. When the trains start puffing down the railway line and entering the tunnel on time and on budget, the costs will be properly accounted for.

Let us destroy some of the myths about the Kenwick route. Members opposite said that the previous Government had costed, developed and conducted all the proper research on the Kenwick route to cater for all the people from Mandurah, Kwinana, Rockingham, Thornlie and other future growth areas. The former Government said it would have saved \$300 million with only one train line at Kenwick, but - hello - what would happen once a train got to Kenwick?. Currently 12 to 14 trains an hour come from Armadale. According to the forward estimates for the Mandurah rail, there could be 18 to 24 trains an hour, yet suddenly one single rail line, which could cope comfortably with 24 trains an hour, would be expected to cope with 36 trains an hour. Members opposite think they would have saved \$300 million up-front by using the Kenwick route, but can they envisage the absolute gridlock that would occur just after Kenwick?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Wind it up!

Mr J.N. HYDE: I am sorry, I thought the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection was saying the opposite - travel!

One train sitting at Kenwick would cause a gridlock on the Armadale line, let alone the trains from the new Mandurah line. I support the amendment. The Mandurah to Perth railway is the best outcome and, more importantly, the heritage in my electorate is being protected.

**MR P.G. PENDAL** (South Perth) [6.49 pm]: It is a great pity that the second amendment now before the House is to be dealt with. The first amendment paid tribute to the actions of the Minister for Heritage, and gave some credit to the member for Greenough, who has been persistent in his advocacy for those William Street buildings.

Mr J.N. Hyde: We support them unanimously.

Mr P.G. PENDAL: Then the Government should be supporting the amendment I have moved, because it was a bipartisan amendment that congratulated the Government and the opposition spokesman. Now, with the amendment on the amendment, we are leaving in the bit that congratulates the Minister for Heritage - with which I agree - but we are repeating ourselves by saying that this is all because of the attitude of the Gallop Government. We have already said that in the amendment I moved. It is a pity that what could have been a real

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bipartisan expression of this House about an important project has now been turned back into a bit more grubby politics.

The member for Perth has a genuine interest in these things, and I have heard him express it on many occasions, but a few minutes ago he said something that is quite wrong about the heritage value of the buildings in that precinct. With all due respect, it does not matter what his view is on the listing of those buildings and it does not matter what I or anyone else thinks. What is important is the decision of the Heritage Council and what it recommends to the minister of the day. The recommendation of the Heritage Council was that those buildings that were listed this morning as a precinct, were worthy of the ultimate assessment - to be added to the permanent register. People should not be second-guessing. They can certainly disagree once the decision has been reached, but that was an ill-advised statement by the member for Perth. We could have been making a decision now to give some credit not only to the Minister for Heritage for what he has done today, but also to the opposition spokesman. Now we are to turn that back and in effect reinject the party politics. I oppose it for that reason, and I will vote against it.

**MR R.F. JOHNSON** (Hillarys) [6.52 pm]: I have kept out of this debate so far because I thought my colleagues were doing such a great job that they did not need me to support them. However, since the Leader of the House has moved this amendment to the amendment, I feel obliged to say something because I have heard so much claptrap, not only from the Leader of the House but also from the member for Perth and some other members opposite, that I feel compelled to say a few words. I knew that my colleagues would want me to get up to rebut some of the claptrap I have heard from members opposite. That is all I have heard. I have heard tedious repetition from the member for Perth, in whose electorate this is happening. He and the Labor Government are not gracious enough to accept the amendment the member for South Perth put forward, which actually commends the Gallop Government and the Minister for Heritage. They must play these stupid little political stunts in this House during private members' time to try to score a few more points.

Mr P.G. Pental: The Government could not take yes for an answer!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Absolutely! Talk about *Yes Minister*! Members opposite do not understand the word. We were actually commending the Government in some ways, but it is not satisfied with that, and it wanted a bit more - that extra ounce of blood. We will not give the Government that extra ounce of blood. I will tell the Government a few home truths. The member for Perth lives his life by stunts. I remember when I walked through the Northbridge tunnel, and there he was -

Mr J.N. Hyde: I walked through Queens Park on the seniors' walk today. Where were you?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Where was the Premier today? He was not there. He sent his lap-dog, the member for Perth.

Mr J.N. Hyde: I am not a lap-dog.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member for Perth was there, and he went for a walk; good luck to him. I had other important meetings. The Leader of the Opposition was there this morning. The Liberal Party was represented by its top person, but whom did the Labor Party send to represent it? The member for Perth!

Mr J.N. Hyde: I walked today. All the Liberals just stayed in their cars.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I remember the time the member for Perth was at the end of the Northbridge tunnel, hanging over the edge with a placard saying what a disaster the tunnel was.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is the Northbridge tunnel a disaster? Does the member for Riverton support the Northbridge tunnel? I expect that the member for Riverton was present at that time in the demonstration as he is a cohort of the member for Perth. I referred to them as dumb and dumber, and he asked which one is dumber. I said that it was the member for Riverton.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: What a question to ask me. He deserved that response. I did not know the member for Riverton back then when I was living in a peaceful and happy time, but I knew the member for Perth as the then Mayor of Vincent. He was mayor of one of the great city areas, but he was demonstrating like some political stuntman hanging over the end of the tunnel with his dreadful placards opposing one of the best developments seen in Perth for a very long time.

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Mr J.P.D. Edwards: He was also a one-time President of the Local Government Association.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Exactly. He was also the President of the Local Government Association, and there he was carrying out his cheap political stunts.

Mr J.N. Hyde: I was doing it for my electorate. They voted against it.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, they did not, my friend! Can the member for Perth tell me anyone in Perth who does not like the Northbridge tunnel now? I cannot find anyone. The member opposes it because it was the coalition Government that did the work and put the tunnel in place to now save hours in journey times. It is a fantastic development. However, the member for Perth, who was previously the leader of WALGA and the Mayor of Vincent, demonstrated with his left-wing mates at the end of the tunnel when we celebrated its opening. I cannot find one person who speaks ill of the Northbridge tunnel. They say it is a wonderful facility to get from A to B.

As my colleague the member for Kingsley said earlier, anything good the coalition put in place, members opposite have had to change to put their imprimatur on it. They can now call this rail development the Gallop Labor Government railway. The coalition Government had already funded it and put plans in place. It was to be routed via Kenwick. Members opposite could not stand that. Instead, they will spoil the foreshore and make all the changes at great cost to save 12 minutes in travel time. The cost is millions and millions of dollars per minute saved. Members opposite are squandering taxpayers' money and increasing the State's debt. The member for Perth believes that the project will come in on time and on budget at \$1.42 billion. He does not believe there will be any blow out. My friend is living in cloud-cuckoo-land. He supports the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, whom nobody believes any more. She is one of the secret 14 because she will not be accountable to the people of Western Australia or to Parliament because she will not produce the document the Opposition has asked for, and has every right to ask for. She is keeping that document close to her chest because she knows the truth; that is, she knows that the budget is already blown, never mind what will happen in the future. We have seen Labor Government budgets.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Didn't they hold cabinet meetings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The poor Minister for Heritage is trying to do a good job, but she is having great difficulty with the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr J.N. Hyde: The Minister for Heritage is now a man.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is that right? Okay.

Mr J.N. Hyde: The Libs are up to date!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As it was. I know that to be the case in Cabinet. The member for Perth may get to find out what it is like on this side of the House after the next election, but some of his colleagues will not. The member for Perth may make it because he has a big enough margin but some of his colleagues will be one-term members and we will say to them, "Bye, bye."

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: They can blame the railway.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Absolutely. Of course the people in Mandurah want the railway. I do not blame them for that. The member for Mandurah will speak up for them; nobody would expect anything different. However, people living in other parts of the State are very critical of the extra costs that will be incurred. They did not mind the original cost of the railway; they accepted that. However, the cost we are now looking at - I have said it before in this House and I will say it again - is a minimum of around \$2 billion.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

*House adjourned at 7.00 pm*

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