

HILLARYS BOAT HARBOUR, PARKING FEES

888. Mr JOHNSON to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

I refer the minister to the Premier's second reading speech on 26 June 1997 on the Local Government (Foresshore Parking) Amendment Bill to ensure beach parking remained free, in which he stated -

The Australian Labor Party vigorously opposes the introduction of beachfront parking fees. Our view is that requiring people to pay to park at the beach would be a tax on the Australian way of life.

I ask -

- (1) Is the minister aware that during a meeting this week between her policy adviser and the Hillarys Boat Harbour Leaseholders Advisory Committee, her representative confirmed that the consultant, Sinclair Knight Merz, had been asked by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure to investigate the possible introduction of paid car parking at the harbour?
- (2) Does this Government intend to introduce beachfront parking fees at Hillarys Boat Harbour?

Ms MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for this question; it was entirely predictable. The member is doing me a great favour, because I do not have to gobble up our dorothy dixers; I can simply rely on the member for Hillarys to ask these types questions.

- (1)-(2) I will take a bit of time to go through this issue. This member, who was the member for Hillarys in the previous Government, is very agitated about the relocation of the Department of Fisheries to the Hillarys Boat Harbour. Interestingly enough, the approval for this move was given in May 2000, when the member for Hillarys was a frontbench member in the previous Government, and he was no doubt in Cabinet at the time the decision was made to move that department. A great deal of agitation occurred in the member's electorate because it was recognised that he was not doing a good job looking after the interests of people in that electorate. Interestingly, when residents recently prepared a petition, it was not sent to the member for Hillarys because they knew he was a dud when he was in government, he could not do anything for them then or when he was a cabinet minister, and he cannot do anything for them when he is in opposition.

The commitment by me and the Premier to the operators at Hillarys was that, prior to the relocation of the Department of Fisheries, we would undertake a review of the parking. We have done that. As I explained yesterday, that report is in the process of being prepared by Sinclair Knight Merz. It is true that in the brief drawn up for the consultants to prepare this review - as we promised and as we are delivering - the Government wanted a range of mechanisms to be considered. One of the key issues for these leaseholders, as the member would know if he had gone to any of the meetings, is the use of the car parking bays by people who are accessing the ferries to Rottnest. Discussion has taken place on whether parking management should be included for some of those usages - not for people using the beach but for those using the marina for other purposes - and whether there should be some form of parking fee. This was proposed by the leaseholders themselves. Because the Government wants a thorough, comprehensive report, it included in that brief a whole raft of things that could be looked at. It referred to a range of management techniques, including the possibility of parking fees for certain uses.

Mr Johnson: How can people pay for certain uses? There is one car park only.

Ms MacTIERNAN: This is something the leaseholders wanted. I will share with the Parliament and the member for Hillarys a letter from the Hillarys Boat Harbour Leaseholders Advisory Committee. The member is obviously out of touch; the residents will not give him a petition to lodge because he cannot do anything.

Mr Johnson: They want to know what you have done with the petition during the past two months.

Ms MacTIERNAN: He cannot even get the facts right. The first paragraph of this letter from the chairman of the advisory committee addressed to Dr Jim Penn, Director, Fisheries Western Australia, states -

Further to our meeting in January I have met with other members of the Hillarys Boat Harbour Leaseholders Advisory Committee and it is clear that the majority of the leaseholders do not have an objection to the Fisheries development, indeed a number of leaseholders eagerly await the facility.

This member for Hillarys is completely out of date and completely irrelevant.