

YAGAN SQUARE — RENEWAL PLAN

607. Dr K. STRATTON to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to supporting local businesses and driving more economic activity in our CBD.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the government is working to revitalise Yagan Square to ensure that it is a major drawcard for economic activity?
- (2) Can the minister update the house on the other work underway to drive greater vibrancy in our city?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I thank the member for her question. I also note that I was with her and the Minister for Planning yesterday for the announcement on the demolition of Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, which is the next stage in a major renewal for housing in our city, with 2 700 homes for a population of 4 000, which is brilliant for Perth and inner-city areas.

- (1)–(2) On the weekend, I announced a renewal plan for Yagan Square. We inherited Yagan Square from the previous government and it is fair to say that the model has not worked as planned. Our government is investing \$5.4 million to renew Yagan Square to give it more soul, to drive more vibrancy and foot traffic, and to support the small businesses in the area. We have already been undertaking significant investment in policing, with a permanent mobile police station there and an extra 175 police in the city. This is about securing a new major anchor tenant that will spread out and activate Yagan Square. That is why we have locked in Nokturnl, which is a highly credible hospitality provider, with both the Old Synagogue and the Beaufort, which is very trendy, I know.

Several members interjected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: There are a lot of hipsters at the Beaufort.

Mr M. McGowan: Not me.

Mr J.N. CAREY: It provides a high-quality product. The Premier will be going there all the time. The Premier is the ultimate hipster—the Rockingham hipster! This will be a quality destination, with five levels for restaurants, a live music venue and a tavern. It will pump in that life that we need.

We are also backing in activation of our city through our \$4 million grants program, which is about creating events across the CBD to attract new people. The signs are very encouraging, because the tourism and transport forum on the weekend released key mobility data. It tracked the movements of eight million Australians and it found that Perth is leading, with Adelaide, in total visitations compared with pre-COVID levels. We are at 85 per cent of pre-COVID levels. Melbourne is at 71 per cent and Sydney is at 67 per cent. When we look at workers, Perth is leading the nation at 71 per cent of pre-COVID levels. Melbourne is at 56 per cent and Sydney is at 52 per cent. I note that the media release from the tourism and transport forum actually stated that Perth was largely restriction free during the pandemic compared with cities like Sydney and Melbourne, which endured long lockdowns. It is no surprise that the CBD has come out on top. The recovery that we are seeing in Perth, in our city, is a direct result of our response to and management of the COVID pandemic. That is very clear in the evidence from the tourism and transport forum. But I want to assure all Western Australians that our government will continue to invest in the Perth CBD, not only through the \$1.7 billion Perth City Deal, but also with renewal programs, like at Yagan Square.

The SPEAKER: The member for North West Central with her first question.