



Speech by

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INALA URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

Mr FENLON (Greenslopes—ALP) (1.35 a.m.): I rise in relation to a visit that I undertook on Monday of this week to the Inala urban renewal project. That is the third time I have visited that project in recent times. The first time was upon the opening of the underground project associated with the urban renewal project by the Honourable Minister for Mines and Energy, Mr McGrady. The second time I visited the project was actually after it had got under way and drilling of the underground pipeline areas had already commenced. That was a very interesting exercise in that I was able to compare that with a similar exercise that I was able to inspect in Perth, which was a very important development. It is a city in Australia which has progressed further than any other city in that it is undertaking to underground approximately one half of the City of Perth by the year 2010.

The Inala urban renewal project has certainly been of merit in its own right in terms of the general beautification in that area and the many aspects of the urban environment that are being improved currently in conjunction with the Department of Works and Housing. It is also doing some very important and valuable work to basically reconstruct that suburb. As we know from the earlier trials of these urban renewal projects, it is in fact going to have very real consequences in terms of the social outcomes in that community, particularly in relation to reducing crime in that community.

The undergrounding exercise at Inala is also extremely valuable because it is a trial project which is basically finding the way in Queensland in terms of the undergrounding of power. It is establishing various parameters for operating the various technical aspects of the capital equipment and the undergrounding of cables, etc. Also it is establishing the economics of this particular project. I am very pleased that the officers from Energex were able to brief me very closely again on this project. I particularly thank Pat Pearl and Mike Griffin, the officers from Energex who have been most helpful in assisting me in understanding exactly what is going on out there in this undergrounding project at Inala.

A number of outcomes are already starting to emerge in terms of the analysis that has been provided. The general cost estimate was originally estimated at about \$4,000 a house and seems to be a realistic target for future phases of this project. Indeed, there were some indications that that cost figure could even become lower as the project progresses. That project takes the undergrounding all the way along the streets and to the house itself. It is a very valuable outcome for the community in terms of beautifying it and removing overhead cables entirely from the street.

There is a scenario analysis being conducted at present under which emphasis is suggested to be placed on optimising low voltage losses and also in terms of transformers being located near gas infrastructure to permit replacement by fuel cells in the future, which may be an important element in future planning. There are various other savings which are being estimated. In total, those savings appear to come to about 15% of the estimated total cost of the undergrounding itself. That is in terms of such matters as savings of energy, savings on pole inspection and replacement, savings on tree trimming, etc. So there are great savings directly as well as the obvious aesthetic improvements and the general safety for the community in terms of outages that occur because of falling wires during storms and also motor vehicle accidents. I will continue to urge the Honourable the Minister to continue to investigate the viability of this very important project.
