



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPIILLY

Hansard 5 October 2000

TRANSPORT [BUSWAY AND LIGHT RAIL] AMENDMENT BILL

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (12.50 p.m.): I rise in relation to this very important Bill before the Parliament because it relates to Brisbane's public transport system and Brisbane's needs. Brisbane certainly does need a modern public transport system. A great deal has been done, but a great deal still awaits to be done. Unfortunately, this legislation does not achieve those ends. It is unfair to Queenslanders in some areas and unjust to Queenslanders in others. It will certainly lead to their substantial economic and social loss. As previous speakers have indicated, it certainly has broad and obtrusive powers.

I notice that a number of things in the Minister's second-reading speech seem to have passed us by. I am talking there about the light rail system and other such things. From recollection, I think the current Government has scrapped those particular plans. No doubt work will have to be done on further plans to improve the current public transport system. The key modal interchange with busways, ferries and the rail system is not something new. It has been talked about for quite a considerable time.

The proposed new smart card or value card system, which is coming to the fore more and more, is something that has probably not taken off in this country as much as one would have expected a number of years ago. I am sure that the cards will continue to replace cash. One of the reasons it has not taken off so much is the role that the credit card has in society and the associated programs, whether they be Fly Buys or something else, that provide an incentive to use a credit card. So people tend to use those more rather than put money on a smart card. I am sure that we are going to find that the smart card is going to come to the fore in smaller transactions.

Not only do these value cards store monetary value, but they can be used to store a whole range of other things. A person's medical life history can be stored upon one of these cards in a minute form. I am sure that we are going to see that, in time to come, people who suffer medical ailments and who need treatment will store their history relating to that ailment on one of these cards. For example, people with diabetes can store on those cards the history of their diabetes. If they get into trouble somewhere when they are out and about and there is no-one at hand to assist them, they will be able to put that card into a machine—or someone can do it for them—and quickly ascertain their problem. There is a range of ways in which these smart cards will, I am sure, be used in the future.

Interchanges is another issue that has been talked about. We already have interchanges in some locations to some degree in this city. Not only do we have to look at the mode of transport, but we also have to look at the ease of access, which is very important, as well as the comfort, cleanliness and timeliness of those services. No matter how an interchange is organised, without encompassing those aspects it simply will not work and the travelling public will not be encouraged to transfer from one particular mode of transport to the other. Once people board a bus, train or ferry, they do not like to move to an alternative form of transport unless it can be done comfortably and with ease and it is readily accessible and timely.

I want to touch briefly on a couple of local issues. One of those involves the rail stations in my electorate. I will raise them again with the Minister, as I have raised them in the past. Some of those stations need to be upgraded. Sherwood is the first to which I will refer. Sherwood Railway Station is being used increasingly by older people in the community. I have noticed that there seem to be quite a number of young mums with prams also struggling to use that station. I say "struggling" because there

is no ramp there and access is not easy at all. In fact, it is very difficult. We see those mums and the older folks struggling up the steps. There are a number of steps that they have to struggle up with a great deal of difficulty.

Not only is there no wheelchair access or ease of access, there is also a problem with the pedestrian crossing across the rail line. It is one of the few crossings in the city that does not have an automated pedestrian crossing system. I have asked about this in the past and it seems to have been ignored, but it is an important issue. Some attention does need to be paid to it. It is another issue that is raised from time to time. It services not only the shopping centre and a commercial centre close by but also places such as the Sherwood Senior Citizens, the Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre, the Sherwood Respite Service and a number of churches in the area. Those centres all offer a range of services. There is also the Sherwood State School only a short distance up Sherwood Road. A number of children use the rail station to get to and from school. There are also girl guides in the area who also use the station.

It is a well used station and it is not a station that needs a long ramp. Because of the height of the station above the road system, it would only need a short ramp, unlike a neighbouring station which has a long ramp. People would get tired from simply making their way from one side of the ramp to the other.

Mr Bredhauer interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: I am very happy to take the Minister's interjection.

Mr Bredhauer: It's a bit more expensive, which is why it takes a bit longer.

Mr BEANLAND: I accept the Minister's interjection about installing lifts rather than ramps. I was going to touch upon that, as I have some knowledge of those. If the Minister prefers to put in lifts, I am very agreeable to that. However, there needs to be a much more urgent process than we have at the moment. I understand that a system exists currently, but it is a bit in the never-never in the long term. I hear something about 20 years, or whatever it might be. It is certainly more than five or six years, anyway.

Some of those stations do not need a large amount of cash spent on upgrading them. Sherwood is not one that would involve millions upon millions of dollars. However, a station such as Chelmer, which is also in my electorate, would certainly be very costly to upgrade—and I have not raised that with the Minister. I appreciate that that is a station that would be quite expensive because of the topography of the area.

The Graceville station is also very much like Sherwood in that it would not be very cost intensive to upgrade, whether a lift or a ramp were installed. I accept that lifts can be used, provided that they are guaranteed not to break down. Durability is a problem with lifts. I know about lifts because in my former role we put in lifts. The problem is that, unless durability is guaranteed—and they are tough lifts—they will break down. We cannot use cheap lifts. The Minister has to put some money into them and they have to be regularly maintained. There is not much point if the lift is installed and an elderly person or a mum with a pram comes along and finds that the lift is not working. Then we would be back to square one. It is no use telling them, "We are waiting for the technician to come to fix the lift." We might get away with that when the lifts here at Parliament House break down, but it certainly will not work at the rail stations. Those lifts have to work 24 hours a day.

The other station I wish to talk about is Indooroopilly station. I understand that it is one of the largest in Brisbane. Not only do we have access problems there, but there are also problems with the Park & Ride and the bus/rail interchange. I thank the Minister and the Government for taking this matter up again, which we were taking up when in office. However, we need to continue to push ahead with it. I know that it is out for consultancy at the moment and the consultants are doing work on that. I appreciate that we have to go through those processes. Once that process is finished and general agreement is reached, I hope we are able to get on with that. It is a major station and there are problems with the Park & Ride. This is one of the biggest stations in the city. Apart from the Park & Ride, there is also the need for a bus/rail interchange at that location.
