HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADJOURNMENT

Deakin Electorate: Infrastructure

SPEECH

Thursday, 14 February 2019

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Mr SUKKAR (Deakin) (16:45): I take this opportunity to speak about some very exciting and practical announcements of funding that we have made in relation to infrastructure in my electorate. For many, many years—indeed, predating my time in parliament—one of the biggest bugbears for people who live in my community has been access to public transport and, in particular, being able to park at one of our local railway stations. We all know the difficulty if you don’t live within walking distance of a train station. Sadly, with some of our substandard bus services, for many people, the only way they can get to their train in the morning is to drive down to the station. At a number of stations in my electorate—in particular, Croydon, Ringwood and Mitcham—getting a car park is nearly impossible after about seven or 7.30 in the morning. At Croydon station, it’s almost impossible to get a car park from 7 am; at Ringwood station, it’s almost impossible to get a car park any time after quarter past or 20 past six; and, at Mitcham station, it’s really impossible to get a car park any time after 7.30 am.

That has had huge impacts in those communities because, inevitably, those people need to park in side streets or park adjacent to areas where we’ve got shopping strips and other local community services, so I was very pleased when Alan Tudge joined me at Croydon station just a couple of weeks ago to announce that we would be funding multilevel car parks at Croydon, Ringwood and Mitcham stations. In the case of Croydon station, $15 million will fully fund the construction of a multideck car park that will have 487 car spaces. To put that into some context, there are only about 170 all-day car spaces at Croydon station at present. To add an extra 487 is going to change the day-to-day lives of commuters at Croydon station. It doesn’t change your life, but it makes your morning just that little bit easier, when it would otherwise mean that you arrive at the station where there are no car parks when you’ve got a train to catch and demands that require you to get to work. These car parks will make it just that little bit easier. We also announced $15 million to build a multistorey car park at Ringwood station and that will ensure that we have an additional 482 spaces there. Again, the overflow into the local streets in Ringwood has really caused an issue for local residents, but, more importantly, for the people who actually need to get a train, being unable to find a park makes life extraordinarily difficult. Finally, we announced $15 million for a multilevel car park at Mitcham station. We think that will fund around 500 car spaces, equivalent to the other two stations which, again, will take so much pressure off the side streets of Mitcham and give commuters that easier access to get on at Mitcham station. Extra car parks do two things. Yes, they make those commuters’ lives just that little bit easier. It will encourage people, I think, to use public transport and, therefore, get cars off the road. In this case, each day, we will take 1,500 cars off the road, so it’s good for easing congestion on our roads and it makes life easier for those who want to commute.

When I was lobbying for this funding, and I might add this is fully funded—these are not election commitments; these are fully funded, and work has already commenced on them—it was important to me that, along the Belgrave and Lilydale line, we didn’t fund a multilevel car park at just one station. I think the risk of doing that is that you turn that station into a destination, more and more people flock to it and, in the end, you haven’t improved the situation for the commuters at that station or the local residents. By funding these three stations, nearly 500 car parks at each, you take pressure off the entire network, and we’re very confident this is going to take pressure off each of them—Croydon station and its surrounds, Ringwood station and its surrounds, and Mitcham station and its surrounds. This is practical infrastructure that makes life just that little bit easier, and I’m very pleased to be delivering this for the Deakin electorate.