

# All aboard the \$80m train fix

**EXCLUSIVE**  
**Glenn Cordingley**

THE Barnett Government is to spend about \$80 million building WA's biggest park-and-ride train station and buying more rail carriages to ease the pressure on the state's busiest railway line.

Today, Premier Colin Barnett will unveil plans for the major new hub – Aubin Grove on the Perth-Mandurah line – to ease transport congestion for commuters in the southern suburbs.

The station, about 3km south of Cockburn Central, will be near the Gibbs and Russell roads exits of the Kwinana Freeway, with a bridge connecting passengers to a 2000-bay car park and a new bus terminal.

The multimillion-dollar project includes two three-railcar sets worth about \$25

million to service the southern rail link, which already carries almost 70,000 passengers each working weekday.

In a major pre-election promise, Transport Minister Troy Buswell said the new Aubin Grove facility would meet the growing public transport needs of people living in and commuting from the rapidly expanding southern corridor.

“The latest population forecasts for WA show an increase of about 400,000 people by 2026, with part of that increase expected from (southern) suburbs such as Aubin Grove, Atwell, Hammond Park, Mandogalup and Wandi,” he said. Mr Buswell said he had not forgotten residents in the northern suburbs, and vowed to press ahead with plans to extend the Joondalup rail line to Yanchep.

“We are in heavy planning now to push that railway line

further north to Yanchep,” Mr Buswell said. “That planning work is happening and conversations are now ongoing between the Government and landowners in that area.

“Extension of the line north to Yanchep is an important opportunity for us to get a railway line in ahead of the development front.”

The Opposition announced in June that if it won the state election it would put a \$45 million freeway train station in Atwell, including a park-and-ride facility, initially for 900 cars.

Mr Buswell denied the Government was playing copy-cat by simply throwing more money at a good solution. “What we have proposed is a train station with 2000 car parking bays because we all know from experience that 900 bays will not be enough,” he said.

“And the Opposition know

this. If you build a train station you have to buy two sets of carriages otherwise all you are doing is adding significantly to the overcrowding that is already happening on the trains.

“What they propose is a train station with nowhere to park and no train to catch.”

He said it would be impossible just to expand Cockburn Central, because that station had constraints. Mr Buswell opened 470 extra car bays there recently, taking the total to about 1500.

He said the Liberals' public transport plan predicted a 50 per cent population increase over 20 years, with a doubling of public transport use.

“Increasingly, people will turn to public transport,” he said. “That is a big challenge for governments. We have to make sure we maintain our investment in public transport, buses, trains and the light rail system.”



Movement at the station: An artist's impression of the Aubin Grove project.

Perth  
 Esplanade  
 Canning Bridge  
 Bull Creek  
 Murdoch  
 Cockburn Central  
**AUBIN GROVE**  
 Kwinana  
 Wellard  
 Rockingham  
 Warnbro  
 Mandurah

**Park 'n' Ride** space for 2000 cars  
**PROPOSED STATION SITE**  
 Kwinana Freeway  
 Russell Rd  
 Gibbs Rd

**HOT TICKETS**  
 MANDURAH LINE BOARDINGS

2007/2008	2011/2012
7.34m	20.29m

**68,550** average weekday boardings  
 Source: Public Transport Authority.