

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations

Melbourne—Tuesday, 20 April 2021

(via videoconference)

MEMBERS

Ms Sarah Connolly—Chair

Mr David Morris—Deputy Chair

Mr Will Fowles

Ms Danielle Green

Mr Paul Hamer

Mr Tim McCurdy

Mr Tim Smith

WITNESS

Mr Andrew Kelly, Yarra Riverkeeper and Vice-President, Yarra Riverkeeper Association.

The CHAIR: I advise that the sessions today are being broadcast live on the Parliament's website and rebroadcast of the hearing is only permitted in accordance with Legislative Assembly standing order 234. Thank you so much, Andrew, for joining us today at this public hearing for the Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations.

Before we begin I need to point out a couple of things to you. All evidence taken today will be recorded by Hansard and it is protected by parliamentary privilege. This means that you can speak freely without fear of legal action in relation to the evidence that you give; however, it is really important to remember that parliamentary privilege does not apply to comments made outside this hearing, even if you are just simply restating what you said here today. You will receive a draft transcript of your evidence in the next week or so to check and to approve, and corrected transcripts are published on the committee's website and may be quoted from in our final report.

Thank you again for taking the time to talk to us this afternoon. My name is Sarah Connolly, I am the Chair of this committee and the Member for Tarneit. I am going to get my colleagues to introduce themselves, then I am going to throw to you, if you have got a 5-minute presentation or statement you would like to give us, and then we will jump into some questions.

Mr KELLY: Lovely. Thank you.

Mr FOWLES: Hi, Andrew, nice to see you. Will Fowles, of course the Member for Burwood.

Mr KELLY: Will, hi.

Ms GREEN: G'day, Andrew. A pleasure to have been out on the boat on the Yarra with you. Danielle Green, Member for Yan Yean, as you well know.

Mr KELLY: Danielle, lovely to see you again.

Mr HAMER: And I am Paul Hamer. I am the Member for Box Hill.

Mr KELLY: Paul, lovely to meet you.

The CHAIR: Andrew, I am going to hand over to you.

Mr KELLY: Lovely. Just let me get my presentation up.

The CHAIR: I am feeling a bit jealous about the ride on the boat up the Yarra.

Ms GREEN: Oh, it is a wonderful experience. I highly recommend it. I went with a couple of colleagues. I think I went with Vicki and Anthony Carbines that day. It was a really, really good experience.

The CHAIR: It sounds great.

Mr KELLY: Will you come out, Sarah?

The CHAIR: I will come out if you invite me.

Visual presentation.

Mr KELLY: Thank you. So, yes, I am Andrew Kelly, and I am the Yarra Riverkeeper, and I am privileged to be presenting to you today in the environmental infrastructure inquiry. And look, I am really pleased to extend the invitation to come out on the boat to anybody who is here today. It is a bit of a transformative experience to see the river in a trip up the river, and it has been one way that we have helped politicians fall in love with the river and generated the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murron) Act* and the recently declared planning controls, both of which we contributed to in a significant way.

I think we are all pretty familiar with the incredible significance that the Yarra River has to Melbourne and the Yarra Valley and of course the state of Victoria. It is a critical piece of environmental infrastructure that drives enormous outcomes for the city and for the state. I think you are probably pretty much familiar with all the many ways that environmental infrastructure is an essential part of our world and unfortunately up until now I do think an undervalued aspect of our world. We have taken it for granted. We have assumed that it will always be there and always be delivering for us. I think now that needs to change, so I am very pleased to see this inquiry underway. I think it is very timely, and of course one of the big pressures on the river is population and one of the great disadvantages that people suffer is a lack of access to quality parklands.

So just stepping back in time, there was the *Yarra River Action Plan*, the Yarra protection Act and currently there is the Yarra strategic plan. So the action plan was announced in January 2016, the Act was passed unopposed in September 2017, and we are waiting for the final Yarra strategic plan to be signed off and presented to the RPEs, the responsible public entities, the councils and the agencies such as Melbourne Water to sign off on. The key concept in the Act is that the Yarra is one living and integrated natural entity that is pretty much from source to sea. That is the sort of environmental infrastructure we want to look at.

This image is of the Upper Yarra Reservoir, from which 70 per cent of Melbourne's drinking water comes. And that is just one way that the river contributes to the city. The *Yarra River Action Plan*, which we contributed to, was an ambitious and interesting plan with 32 items that the government accepted. So we are looking for them to be implemented. I think very relevant to this inquiry is a short-term action, which is action 24, 'Melbourne's natural infrastructure taskforce', and then also, again short-term, action 25, 'Urban natural infrastructure strategy'. I think much more broadly we need a Green Infrastructure Victoria. We have Infrastructure Victoria—maybe we should rename that—which looks at roads, buildings, electricity and all those sorts of things, and we are overlooking the essential needs on which that is all underpinned, which is the environment. We really need to start looking at green infrastructure, particularly in a time of climate change and a time of great pressure from increased populations, admittedly paused at the moment but I am sure soon to resume. So we would very much like to see those two initiatives picked up and maybe expanded a little bit to create a Green Infrastructure Victoria to look across the landscape but also, from my point of view, the Yarra River. That is the action plan.

The next step of course is the Yarra strategic plan. I hope you are all familiar with it. It is a 10-year plan on a 50-year cycle, so it will be renewed every 10 years. This is an innovative way to look at regional planning, particularly where it involves a waterway. Most of our diversity, 70 per cent of our biodiversity, is in waterways, but also the great bulk of our parklands in Melbourne runs along those fingers that make up the Yarra and its tributaries but also the Werribee and the many other creeks and waterways of the west. I think this is something that we need support from councils and agencies to endorse. It is a formal requirement of the plan that they endorse the plan, and it should drive greater cooperation between councils and agencies and better outcomes for the river, better outcomes for the people who live along the river and better environmental infrastructure, and it is a model that we can then apply elsewhere.

There is the Waterways of the West initiative of course and also the Barwon initiative, and we are certainly hoping that they are as ambitious in their thinking as the Yarra was and is, but a critical part of this is funding. Is there going to be the funding to deliver on this plan? This was a statement from the *Yarra River 50-Year Community Vision*, which was a requirement of the Act managed by Melbourne Water to deliver an excellent vision, and I think this really brings community buy-in. So in terms of environmental infrastructure and a Green Infrastructure Victoria, we really need to be thinking about community buy-in so that we deliver outcomes that are strongly supported by the community. And if any of you have followed the Melbourne Water pricing submission at the moment with the Essential Services Commission, you can look at their willingness-to-pay surveys and other instruments they use to assess the mood of the community, and the mood of the community is very much in favour of environment along waterways. Many people walk their dogs or go for walks. It is essential to the health of many people.

The *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrong) Act*, which means 'keep the Birrarung alive', is a bicultural act, and I think any management of our environmental infrastructure needs to take into account traditional owner partnership. The traditional owners need to participate in what is happening. Waterways are an essential cultural part of what they do. It is very important that they be part of any initiative and we have their teams on the ground.

Another part of the act was the Greater Yarra Urban Parklands, which seems to be renamed, I think effectively, as the Great Birrarung Parkland. It is an opportunity identified in the Act, and we really need to think boldly about this, because it was really a couple of words in the Act. This is a great opportunity to look at environmental infrastructure in a slightly different way and look at a park that has no boundaries, that crosses private land into public land and back into private land, where everybody imagines it as a strong, clear parkland, but not one that has boundaries and that is the responsibility of one entity but a parkland that is the responsibility of many. So this is a huge opportunity along the Yarra to really deliver. I think this is still in progress, so there is a lot of opportunity I think for the government to come up with something as innovative as the original thinking behind the Act.

But one key part of the parkland is balancing protection for conservation with access for recreation, and there have been issues along the Yarra where that difference has been smoothed over. I think it is a very real reality that we do want people to access the river. We want people to love the river or they will not want to protect it, but that access can also be quite damaging and we cannot simultaneously have high-quality habitat and recreational opportunity. We cannot maximise both of those simultaneously. We just cannot have our cake and eat it. I think the classic example of this is mountain bikes.

There is huge damage all along the Yarra, from up around Healesville all the way down to the centre of the city. I am in Kew here, and I see it particularly in Yarra Bend Park. There has been a proliferation of illegal mountain bike trails. Most mountain bike trails are in fact illegal. The mountain bikers see restoration as restoring paths, not restoration of land, and I think it is self-evident just how much damage they are doing. There is a huge sense of entitlement from mountain bikers, and we do need to probably reverse that sort of human entitlement and at least put it within boundaries. It is interesting, I recently reread the Gariwerd draft management plan, which flat-out says, 'No mountain bikes in Gariwerd. If you want to ride your mountain bike, please go over to the state park at Mount Ararat'. We will see whether that is enforced, but that was, I felt, a clear directive from the traditional owners that they saw this sort of activity in such an iconic site as disrespectful.

The accounting standards I think need to be considered. I think we need to reassess how we put the environment in our accounting. We need proper inventory and we need a proper way of managing maintenance costs, because I think, again, green infrastructure is different from hard infrastructure and we really need to adapt our accounting system so that we adequately value those and value their maintenance and expanding value over time, rather than a discounted value over time. The Yarra riverkeepers are currently doing a report on this, and we will be releasing it in the next few months.

Just noting the unequal distribution of green spaces across Melbourne and noting I think this was part of Nillumbik's submission, but something that we have long been interested in and considered is the land transaction policy and guidelines that require the land to be reclassified as valuable residential land and then sold to developers, where I think a far better purposing of at least some if not all that land is as parkland. We are slowly chipping away at our green infrastructure—the trees and the green areas that support biodiversity but also support things like cooling—and I think it is hard to understate the value of that land transaction policy and guidelines and amending them so that they can deliver a better community for the longer term rather than short-term profit to developers. Certainly Nillumbik raised this with Melbourne Water's land in Christmas Hills. Melbourne Water is of course obliged to sell it for the highest value land use, but that is the highest value tomorrow, not the highest value further into the future. Parkland accumulates value.

Just a quick note on how limited our parkland is within Melbourne, and following up on that, though we see Melbourne as the garden city, we are actually well behind a number of other capital cities, I think. If you have been to Canberra, you will be aware of just how much parkland a modern city can have, and it is interesting we are well behind London in the amount of green space we have, which is a startling figure given the pride that we take in our gardens and our parks.

So there are my recommendations: establish a Green Infrastructure Victoria; adjust the counting standards; support and fund an ambitious Yarra strategic plan; and invest in the great Birrarung parkland—and that means valuing connectivity in open space. It is not just about a patch of parkland, it is about connecting those parklands. We need to consider the balance between access and conservation. We need to develop a statewide mountain trail bike management plan, and I think that is very urgent because at the moment our Crown lands are being turned into a lacework of trails with small bits of parkland in between, small bits of biodiversity, which are being shredded by this proliferation of trails. As my final point I would go back to that technically

sounding land transaction policy and guidelines—review that so it can generate parklands rather than turning it into residential land. Thank you, and I very much appreciate the opportunity to present.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Andrew. That is really quite interesting. I think you have given a really comprehensive and thorough overview of your submission, with the recommendations there at the end. It is very interesting your comments about mountain bike riding. We have talked a little bit about that with other groups and about it, particularly during COVID, starting to become a new trend, a new sort of sport and leisure activity that people are getting into, so it is really interesting hearing your comments on that. I want to turn your attention to walking as a recreation and the remit of Walking Victoria. I can see your submission noted that there is no government strategy for walking as a recreation, and you argue that government needs to expand the remit of Walking Victoria to include all forms of walking. I am just wondering: can you talk in a little bit more detail about the approach that you would like to see government take on this issue?

Mr KELLY: Certainly, Sarah. I think there needs to be more investment in walking. I think walking is one of the prime forms of recreation, particularly as the community ages. It is something that has a great deal of mental value, of wellbeing value, as well as having fitness value for older people, so I think it needs to be an investment. We have a lot of sporting bodies at official government levels with organised sports that are advocating for their sports, and of course they are entitled to advocate for what they are interested in. But I think walkers are comparatively distributed members of the community and do not necessarily have a voice that matches their numbers. Also, walking is a kind of reserve activity. Everybody can go walking in COVID. They cannot play soccer, they cannot play football, they cannot play hockey but they can go walking, so it is kind of a reserve. I would like to see walking made more official within government, with a government body being responsible for reviewing and understanding and representing. In much the same way the Birrarung Council represents the river we need a voice for walkers. I can see walking Victoria, if it was made more official, given more funding and more legislative oomph, would be a great benefit.

Ms GREEN: Andrew, can I clarify: do you mean Victoria Walks?

Mr KELLY: Oh, Victoria Walks—sorry, Danielle. My apologies.

Ms GREEN: That is all right. Thank you. Ben Rossiter and Victoria Walks—I am a massive fan, having been on the VicHealth board. VicHealth actually established Victoria Walks and yes, they are a fabulous organisation.

Mr KELLY: Thank you, Danielle. Yes, I would agree with you and I would like to see them made more official, if you like.

The CHAIR: A bit of a silver lining of COVID, maybe.

Mr KELLY: Yes.

The CHAIR: People are finding out they do enjoy going walking.

Mr KELLY: Absolutely.

The CHAIR: I am going to throw to Will.

Mr FOWLES: Thanks very much, Chair. Andrew, thanks very much for that presentation. There were some interesting things in there, and some things particularly in relation to accounting standards that have not been raised throughout the course of this inquiry and are a bit more broad than just the Yarra River remit.

Can I ask: the way in which that trust, and I have forgotten what it is called—the parks and reserves trust or whatever, the thing that is funded from the water bills—we had a discussion about this a while ago. Because it is not really addressed in your submission, I wondered if you had a specific recommendation about what you would like to see done with that revenue mechanism and also then with the way in which it is applied.

Mr KELLY: Yes, certainly, Will. Thank you. So there is the parks and recreations charge that we all pay on our water bills. I think it is around 20 bucks a quarter, and that then ends up in the departmental secretary's equivalent of a drawer, if you like, to be doled out as the department sees fit. I would certainly like to see that, as it was intended originally, go to Parks Victoria for the maintenance of national parks, so that is one aspect. I think that is kind of critical. Parks Victoria is underfunded and if we really expect the parks to survive, we need

to fund it generously—not nearly enough but a lot of funding. So I would like to see the parks charge basically be paid and be increased. I think the area needs to be increased as Melbourne’s metropolitan region expands. Melbourne Water have expanded their waterways and drainage charge in several tranches and the parks charge has remained in the same geographical area, so I would like to see the two tied together—

Mr FOWLES: So, sorry, your evidence is that at the moment the charge is levied against geographical area A but applied against a different geographical area?

Mr KELLY: No—potentially. I am not absolutely sure about that, Will. It is supposed to be applied within the metropolitan area of Melbourne, I think, that parks charge that we get on our water bills, but in fact I am not sure where it goes to be honest. There is a lack of clarity around what happens with that charge, and I guess the first thing would be more transparency and the second thing would be ensuring that it is actually going to where it should be. The third thing is it needs to be increased on a regular basis as Melbourne Water’s drainage and waterways charge is, and I think the area needs to be expanded as Melbourne’s metropolitan area effectively expands.

Mr FOWLES: And would you mind pointing the secretariat towards that data you referred to in the Essential Services Commission submissions or whatever so that we can include that in our reporting?

Mr KELLY: Certainly, so Melbourne Water’s drainage and waterways charge is currently up for review by the Essential Services Commission and yes, I can send you all that detail, Will.

Mr FOWLES: Terrific, thank you.

Mr KELLY: No worries.

The CHAIR: Danielle?

Ms GREEN: Thanks, Andrew. In relation to the Northcote Golf Club I was really glad that you had gone down the path of saying shared use is appropriate rather than converting the golf course into parkland, because I have actually visited Northcote golf course and I would say I like the shared model but I disagree about whether it is alternate days. The community golfers there have actually worked on a fabulous alternate model which would include concurrent usage—you know, some fencing off, some connections, path connections. They have actually been working with the Merri Creek Management Committee and they have actually shown that the golf course has some of the highest levels of biodiversity along the whole Merri Creek corridor. So it has been very concerning for that local community to have, sort of, an obsessive Greens-led council that wants to rewild the golf course in a very ill-informed way. I think you then get people clashing rather than cooperating for a solution. But I suppose I just wanted to draw the Riverkeeper’s attention to what the golf club is actually saying that they want to do. Their community golfers are not sort of big-end-of-town silvertails, and they really do want to share the facility.

Mr KELLY: I think it is great to hear that they want to share the facility, Danielle. I think golf courses are an interesting question because they do restrict access. I must say I took the opportunity during COVID of walking the Yarra River through Freeway, through Kew, through the other golf courses along the river, the one run by Parks Victoria, and it did strike me that a lot of the river is being closed off by golfers. I am an occasional golfer myself, but if we could strike a better balance and get better investment on the waterways—because I did not think the health of the areas along the waterways by the golfers was necessarily as good as it could be. Curiously it was very good in Freeway, which is managed by the council. That had, to me, at a quick look, high biodiversity values. When I went to Green Acres and Kew golf courses I thought the values were lower. But there were some really good areas there. Golf courses have been a sort of strong support for green areas in the city. So it is a really interesting and mixed picture, Danielle, that I think pays quite a bit of thought about how we can better manage those spaces and achieve better outcomes for both golfers and people who want to get out and enjoy, you know, walking through our green spaces.

Ms GREEN: Yes. Kat Theophanous, the local MP there, is in fact working with Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water because the golfers themselves actually want to be quasi riverkeepers in a sense. They actually want to be involved in preventing rubbish from getting into the creek and things like that. So I think often people can get in their corners and portray the other side as not being passionate about the environment when in fact they are. So it is always good to see what brings us together rather than what divides us.

Mr KELLY: The Latrobe golf course is similar, Danielle, with a very strong environment committee that has done excellent replanting along the river.

Ms GREEN: Good to hear.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Danielle. Paul.

Mr HAMER: Thanks, Sarah. Thanks, Andrew. I was interested just in your graph about the green space per capita. You made a couple of comments. One of the statistics on the graph I think was about Perth, which looked like it had double the green space per capita. Then you also made a comment about London having more green space per capita than Melbourne. From my experience in those cities—which has been brief but has been in the suburban areas of those two cities—I must say I did not particularly notice the wealth of green space. So I was just wondering: are we comparing apples with apples on those graphics in terms of—is it the boundary just of the built-up area of each of the cities or is it a wider, larger area? And what are those cities doing that we could be doing better? Obviously Perth has probably doubled in population over the last 20 or 30 years, so they are still in a growth phase, but London has had a similar population for 50, 80, 100 years. So two really different cities, but I would be interested in whether you had any sort of insights or suggestions as to what we could be doing, what we could be learning from those places.

Mr KELLY: Great question, Paul. I think it is a matter of comparing apples with oranges, avocados and a whole range of other fruit. When you start getting down to it and making comparisons between the cities it is very, very hard to make a really neat comparison. Of course here in Melbourne we have a lot of parklands that have a lot of indigenous vegetation. We have areas of great biodiversity and rich natural vegetation. In London you tend to get those manufactured parks in the middle of squares—you have the green square with a fence and a key; you cannot necessarily get into it—but nonetheless I think there is quite a bit of green for historical reasons in London. Perth, I must say, I am less familiar with. I have not tested those figures, but I suspect those figures were pretty broad in their scale and the comparison might not be particularly valid.

I do think, Paul, that in terms of development, we are not really assigning enough areas to open spaces within new developments. I do not think it is matching what London did as it developed; I do not think it is matching what New York did as it developed in terms of assigning green space through development. I think we need a much greater proportion of open space for the new developments. That would be one thing I would say. The other thing I would say is I go back to that land transactions policy, and I think there is a lot of opportunity there not to choose the highest immediate value, which would be residential, but looking at turning excess government land into parkland. Of course that requires somebody to administer it, and I do note that there has been an offer at Bulleen by the developers of the Yarra Valley Country Club to give 50 acres, I think it is—something like that—to developers, and Park Victoria, due to budgetary constraints, has been very reluctant to take that on, which again goes to I think we need to be prepared to fund open space, whether it is through Parks Victoria or not. We have a reluctance to fund it; we have a reluctance to require developers to give adequate green spaces. They are allowed to count things like nature strips as part of their green space. And to me we need to review that whole planning scheme area and review the sale of government land, or otherwise the city will just become much, much more dense. Does that answer the question, Paul? Or do you have any further questions? It is a really interesting question you have asked.

Mr HAMER: I am not sure if it answers the question, but I think it is a really interesting answer as well in terms of what actions could potentially be taken to address some of the issues.

Mr KELLY: Thank you. Yes, I would definitely say: one, the developers and the developer contribution, and that was raised in a number of submissions I looked at this morning as well as in our own; and, two, what do we do with excess government land like the Melbourne Water land at Christmas Hills.

Mr HAMER: Terrific.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Paul. Andrew, I just want to dig down a little bit about your comments around nature strips in new estates. You would know that out in Tarneit and Truganina we have got thousands of new homes. Nature strips are not what they are perhaps in the eastern suburbs and nor are they what they are in the inner western suburbs. Obviously you said that nature strips should not be counted as part of the developers' open space in the planning. What other sort of comments do you have around those sorts of nature strips, about the types of trees that are being planted? Obviously you would know that my electorate has got really low urban

shade. It has basically got not many trees, which is having all kinds of environmental impacts. Do you have some comments around that in how we can do that better and perhaps whether it is the responsibility of the state government to get involved earlier on in monitoring this kind of thing?

Mr KELLY: Thank you, Sarah. One thing about nature strips is that nature strips are long and linear, and you need nice, big chunky bits of parkland as well, which I feel we do quite often have in the east if we go back to look at that map of where people could access public land. While it is less so in the new housing estates in Tarneit and Truganina and places like that, I think they are being short-changed by the planning schemes effectively. I think they are being short-changed by a lack of appreciation for the waterways. I think they are the golden opportunity in terms of creating high-quality linear space throughout developments, and when I have been over there in the west I have seen development going far too close to waterways. I think the west has a bit of a problem in the sense that many of those waterways would have been ephemeral, so they are not treated as proper waterways, and I think that is a golden opportunity that we are possibly missing out on in terms of giving them a better consideration in terms of planning. There are a number of river estates there that it troubles me that the development is too close to, and we have had of course the Yarra River planning controls made permanent this last Sunday by Minister Wynne. I really think that we need to look at that and really push that a bit harder in new housing estates, because these housing estates will be there for a very, very long time, and if we do not have the green spaces then they are not going to be effective.

In terms of canopy coverage, I think that is a really interesting question, Sarah, but of course the western plains would have been grasslands and not had many trees. I mean, of course they would have had scattered trees, and I think that is what we have lost—those huge old river red gums that would have provided a lot of canopy. I am not sure what the solution there is to canopy. I think our requirements as a modern city are different to our requirements for what it was in terms of grasslands, so I am certainly a huge supporter of canopy. I think the cooling effect is quite dramatic. I am very fortunate to live in Boroondara, which has a very high proportion of canopy, and it is noticeable when you drive back here on a hot day that it is cooler, so why should it be good enough for me if it is not good enough for everybody?

The CHAIR: Thank you. They are very good, very interesting comments about that for me to take away as the local member. Thank you.

Mr KELLY: No worries.

The CHAIR: I am just conscious of time; we have got about 3 minutes. Are there any final comments, Andrew, that you want to leave us with?

Mr KELLY: Thank you. I think we have to look at this balance. I think we have to be formal in our consideration. There has been a little bit of thinking going around that recreational open space is equivalent to conservation and protection open space, and I think while they can sometimes be the same thing, they are also often very different, and I think the mountain bikes absolutely illustrate that conflict. We have a sense of entitlement from those mountain bikers that their rights are greater than the rights of everybody else. There is a certain enlightenment entitlement to be able to go anywhere you like on the Crown estate. Of course we have the Crown frontage discussions going on at the moment, the regulations from the VFA, and personally I think we as a community, as the population intensifies, have to be more willing to get on with each other and to accept constraints on what we do.

My response to the Crown waterway frontages, the proposal to allow camping on them, is that if we should then take this opportunity it will require people camping on waterways to bring in their portable toilets and to use fuel stoves rather than gather firewood. I was up around Boort, on the lakes there—Lake Leaghur, Lake Yando—and it was very clear that the duck shooters were capable of consuming enormous amounts of firewood and doing quite a bit of destruction to the waterways, so it is kind of, ‘How do we get to that point of going, “Well, we want people to be out in the bush, we want people to be out experiencing the natural world, but we also want them to do it in a way that is sustainable”’. So that would be my comment I think—access versus—and we need to make those decisions, and we need a statewide mountain bike plan and we pretty much need it now, because mountain bikers are just everywhere, and as soon as we get e-bikes everywhere, they are going to go in places that we have not dreamt of.

The CHAIR: Very wise words, as someone that does not do much bike riding. Thanks again, Andrew, for taking the time to speak with us today. I think I can say on behalf of all members that it has been really insightful and a really great conversation and discussion.

Mr KELLY: Thank you, Sarah. I very much appreciate the opportunity to present. I look forward to the report.

The CHAIR: Hopefully we will have some things in there you will like.

Witness withdrew.