

TRANSCRIPT

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Budget Estimates 2019–20 (Planning)

Melbourne—Friday, 7 June 2019

MEMBERS

Mr Philip Dalidakis—Chair

Mr Richard Riordan—Deputy Chair

Mr Sam Hibbins

Mr Gary Maas

Mr Danny O'Brien

Ms Pauline Richards

Mr Tim Richardson

Ms Ingrid Stitt

Ms Bridget Vallenge

WITNESSES

Mr Richard Wynne, Minister for Planning,

Mr John Bradley, Secretary,

Mr Julian Lyngcoln, Deputy Secretary, and

Ms Phuong Tram, Executive Director, Financial Management, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; and

Ms Sue Eddy, CEO, Victorian Building Authority.

The CHAIR: I declare open this hearing of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee.

On behalf of the Parliament, the committee is conducting this inquiry into the 2019–20 Budget Estimates. Its aim is to scrutinise public administration and finance to improve outcomes for the Victorian community. The committee will now begin consideration of the planning portfolio.

I welcome the minister, the Honourable Richard Wynne, and officers from the department. Thank you for appearing before the committee today.

All evidence given is protected by the Parliamentary Committees Act. This means that it attracts parliamentary privilege and is protected from judicial review. Witnesses found to be giving false or misleading evidence may be in contempt of Parliament and subject to penalty.

Minister, I invite you to make a brief presentation or opening statement of no more than 10 minutes, which will be followed by questions from the committee.

Mr WYNNE: Thank you very much, Chair, and good afternoon. Can I begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting today, and I pay my respects to elders past and present. I would like to introduce the members who are here in support of me today: John Bradley, the secretary of the department, is to my left; further to the left is Phuong Tram, who is the executive director of financial management in the department; to my right is Julian Lyngcoln, the deputy secretary of DELWP for planning; and to his right is Ms Sue Eddy, CEO of the Victorian Building Authority, because Chair, I understood there was a late request for Ms Eddy to attend today, and I am pleased that she is here and will be able to answer questions as well.

Visual presentation.

Mr WYNNE: I would be pleased to start my presentation if I can. I am going to start in the context of population first. Victoria continues to demonstrate each year that it is a desirable place to live, with our population experiencing the strongest growth in the country of about 2.2 per cent. In the 12 months to September last year we grew by approximately 140 000 people, and this was achieved in three ways. The first was birthrates obviously being higher than death rates; secondly, higher interstate migration to Victoria—a disproportionate interstate migration actually, many of that migration coming from Queensland and obviously Western Australia and indeed South Australia as well; and also we are hosting a disproportionate number of overseas migrants as well. And the question is of course: how do we manage this growth going forward? Plan Melbourne, which I am sure you are all very much aware of, really sets a vision of how we will develop over the next 30 years, identifying the roles to manage this growth in our greenfields, our regions and indeed our established suburbs and of course our urban renewal sites as well. And we will perhaps talk a bit more about that today.

As you can see from the next slide, our regions are performing quite strongly. Plan Melbourne recognises the role our regional towns and cities have in helping to ease the growth pressures around metropolitan Melbourne. If you can just pick that up, hopefully, our three major regional cities do have very strong population growth. Geelong grew by 2.6 per cent, and that is a very robust figure, and in part that growth has obviously been due to investments that have been made in Geelong. Particularly the NDIS and WorkCover being established in

Geelong has had a really significant impact both in shifting the focus of the CBD of Geelong but also being followed with a really extensive amount of apartment start-ups as well. So for the first time in many years if you go down to Geelong you will see cranes in the sky building really high-quality apartments, so that is a terrific outcome for them. Ballarat is growing at 1.9 and Bendigo at 1.7.

I can indicate to the committee that recent building approvals in regional Victoria have remained steady compared to metropolitan Melbourne. And Geelong is in fact experiencing a record level of dwelling approvals, with 3600 approved in 2018, which was 30 per cent higher than the previous year. And as I indicated, apartments are continuing to be a feature of the landscape in Geelong. Ballarat's housing approvals are also performing strongly compared to previous years and reaching levels that have not been seen since 2010. Wodonga, Warrnambool, Shepparton and Wangaratta are also experiencing significant growth, between 0.7 per cent and 1.5. And our regional cities and towns are doing well, attracting major investment and residents.

I want to turn to Victoria's building industry, because it continues to be a significant contributor to the economy, providing 8.5 per cent of total employment. This reflects obviously the success of our greenfields program, led of course by the Victorian Planning Authority, where we set a target to have 100 000 lots released, and we achieved that by the end of 2018. And more recently the Treasurer and I announced our next program delivering about 50 000 lots and, more importantly, land for 50 000 more jobs over the next four years. We will continue to maintain Melbourne's strong land supply for the next 15 years. And in 2017–18 the value of building works reached a record \$38.4 billion—a 17 per cent increase from the previous year and a 22 per cent increase from 2015–16. The latest ABS building approvals data shows that in the year to April 2019 there were more than 61 000 dwelling approvals in Victoria, and you would have to say this is a very healthy pipeline. As you can see from the graph that is up there now, this is lower than the peaks we have experienced in the last few years but still outstrips the 50 000 approvals seen in calendar years 2011, 12 and 13. Obviously we need to monitor the market closely, and with the demand for dwellings, obviously whilst it has eased off in the short term, all of the advice suggests that we are looking towards some uplift closer to the end of this year.

Obviously the planning portfolio does have a range of challenges, and we need to continue to provide housing in our greenfields and urban renewal areas to keep pace with demand and to keep pace with population, and align them clearly with jobs, services and critical infrastructure, which of course is the work led by the VPA, as I mentioned previously.

We are committed to keeping Victoria safe by leading the nation to find and fix combustible cladding—and no doubt we will have some further conversation about that today—and our government is delivering the largest major state infrastructure program, with a record \$107 billion for projects commencing or underway in 2019-20. These include of course investments in the Melbourne Metro rail tunnel, the Suburban Rail Loop, the north-east road project and of course the level crossings as well. My department clearly has to provide support to these investments by making sure that they are appropriately and environmentally assessed and indeed robustly scrutinised. This is not just for delivery of these major projects but also critical to renewable energy projects for our state to deliver on Victoria's target of 50 per cent renewable energy by 2050.

We also need to ensure that we are maintaining a strong supply of commercial development in Melbourne, which has a vacancy rate decreasing at the moment from 3.6 per cent to 3.2 per cent over the six months until January of this year. Whilst this shows the strength of Melbourne's commercial office market, we need obviously to keep a close eye on the pipeline of office supply to meet demand beyond 2020.

I have also approved projects that see almost 500 000 square metres of office space under construction through 11 projects in the CBD, which is forecast to increase our office stock by June 2020, lifting rates to 5.7 per cent.

Finally, the 2019-20 budget recognises these challenges and has provided over \$200 million across a range of initiatives. We have allocated \$165 million to work with the Victorian Building Authority on a comprehensive cladding rectification program to rectify 95 government-owned buildings and a further \$4.6 million to the Building Better Homes initiative to keep raising the bar on high-quality apartment designs for Victoria. A further \$20.5 million has been provided to the very popular Living Heritage program to provide grants to safeguard and reactivate the state's key heritage places and objects, \$2 million to help fast-track non-

government school approvals in our growth corridors and \$5 million to fund our planning system's capacity to support our work across the state. I will just conclude the presentation at that point.

The CHAIR: I have got to say, Minister, that you have continued a tradition of ministers in the 2019 PAEC hearing of being under time and ahead of budget, so I thank you for that.

Mr WYNNE: Thanks.

Mr RICHARDSON: Minister, you mentioned in your presentation some of the building projects that Victoria has on the go at the moment, and I want to draw your attention, if I may, to budget paper 3, page 185, which goes to the performance of the environment effects statement—the referrals and assessments completed by the departments—something I am familiar with in terms of the level crossing removals and the Mordialloc Freeway. But, Minister, can you just outline for the committee's benefit how does EES process seek to ensure potential impacts on communities are minimised?

Mr WYNNE: Thank you, Mr Richardson, for the question. The government is delivering the biggest infrastructure program Victoria has actually ever seen. Government infrastructure investment, as I indicated in my earlier slide presentation, will hit a record \$107 billion for projects commencing or underway in 2019-20. These include \$15.8 billion for the North East Link; \$6.6 billion to plan and deliver an additional 25 level crossing removals by 2025; and \$12.3 billion towards our major public transport projects, including the Melbourne Airport Rail Link, the suburban rail link and the Western Rail Plan. As I indicated earlier in my presentation, Victoria's population is growing at about 2 per cent, and it is important that we make the investments to keep up with our growing suburbs and regions.

Significant investment in infrastructure and good planning obviously assists in managing and accommodating our population growth. As I indicated earlier, Plan Melbourne does paint a picture of an integrated approach to planning and development, not just in metropolitan Melbourne but right across the state. Obviously with all of these very significant projects we want to ensure they are built to the highest environmental standards. That is why I determined that many of these projects require an environment effects statement—what is in shorthand called an EES—to be prepared, including Melbourne Metro, West Gate Tunnel and obviously a number of the level crossings, as you are aware, Mr Richardson, including Edithvale and Bonbeach. In Victoria assessments of the environmental impact of proposed developments are conducted under the Environment Effects Act. The assessment is transparent and the process, I believe, is very thorough. My department coordinates the process, implementing the ministerial guidelines that set out the process for both the EES and indeed how the community have the opportunity to engage in the EES process. So the EES process is important to reduce negative impacts and help shape the outcome of these projects for the broader benefit of the community.

Melbourne Metro is a good example of that. In December 2016, I signed off on the EES for the Metro Tunnel project, as people will remember, and there was obviously significant concern, particularly with the interchange at St Kilda Road and the potential destruction of some listed heritage trees, particularly around the shrine, and obviously also concern from people that Fawkner Park was going to be taken over as essentially a construction site for the project. Indeed also at the Kensington end of it there was potential for property acquisitions of up to 22 homes in that part of the world. The reality is through the EES process we saved 119 trees. That was very important. We managed to essentially not impact in any significant way on the historic row of trees on St Kilda Road. Obviously moving the construction area out of Fawkner Park was a very, very good result for that community—a very important park actually—and property acquisitions that were originally slated to be 22 went down to one. So you can see how that process is actually very good in terms of being able, one, to flesh out the issues, but also to ameliorate some of the potentially deleterious impacts that might occur through the EES process.

In Edithvale and Bonbeach there were obviously two others. The EES process highlighted the potential for negative impact on groundwater as it impacted against the Ramsar wetlands, and through the EES the proponent was able to amend the design to avoid any impact from groundwater—and that through the design process. And again, when you are talking about the Ramsar wetlands, obviously you interact with the commonwealth government's responsibilities as well.

I could talk a little bit more about the North East Link if you wish, Mr Richardson, or we can—

Mr RICHARDSON: Yes, absolutely. I guess the projects that you mentioned, Minister, go to the heart of those that are underway now. Obviously the commitment made by the government for the North East Link is well underway, but take us through how the community will have their say on this project and how that interaction will take place.

Mr WYNNE: The proposed North East Link is the biggest transport project actually in Victoria's history to date. It comprises a new freeway connection between the M80, the Metropolitan Ring Road, and the Eastern Freeway widening, and also the Eastern Freeway widening with new dedicated bus lanes as well. The North East Link is budgeted to cost in the order of \$16.5 billion. During 2018–19 the North East Link Project refined the project reference design and prepared the EES, and my department administers, as I indicated earlier, the environment effects statement process, including chairing the technical reference group and coordinating its review of the draft EES documents. I should say the EES will be on exhibition. It is on exhibition now until 7 June, and because of the scale of the project, the exhibition period would normally be 30 days, but I actually got it extended. I agreed to extend it by another 10 days, because this is a very, very big project, quite a challenging project both in its potential execution but also for communities in that area. As I said, the EES will be on exhibition until 7 June, and I expect hearings to take place in July through to September, and I will be hoping that those hearings will be held locally in the area to give people as much opportunity to access the process as possible. My expectation is the committee will submit its report to me probably sometime in October. So that is the whole EES process, a really strong and robust process and one that I think lends itself to giving both the proponent and the community a really good opportunity to understand and to obviously submit whatever concerns they might have.

Mr RICHARDSON: Minister, if you will indulge me, I want to take you to green wedges, something that is of significance to the south-east of Melbourne in my electorate of Mordialloc as well as through Kingston council and Dandenong council areas. I will draw your attention to budget paper 3 once again, page 184, and objective 6 in particular around 'quality built environment'. There is a commitment from the government to better protect Melbourne's green wedges against overdevelopment. Are you able to take the committee through what this commitment is and what it means and explain it in more detail?

Mr WYNNE: Thanks, Mr Richardson. There is a bit of history to this, which I will just briefly outline. We are pretty fortunate. I mean, this is quite unique to Victoria, to have 12 green wedge areas surrounding our city which people, when it was initially proposed, described as the lungs of Melbourne. Our green wedges of course were first recognised as an asset for Melbourne in the 1971 strategic plan by the then Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, and driven for protection, I have to say, by the then Premier of Victoria, Rupert Hamer, when he was at that point not the Premier; he was in fact the Minister for Local Government—I mean, a great reformer too, former Premier Hamer. The sense that he had about these green wedges was as follows:

... nobody could happily contemplate a future metropolis of seemingly endless suburbia spreading out to infinity—

and

It must be strongly emphasised that the future planning should take account of the surrounding countryside as a vital part of the metropolitan environment.

So this is a great legacy of former Premier Hamer, and one that of course we need to both respect and indeed protect as well. So our green wedges in Melbourne today not only have the role of being Melbourne's lungs through green space and rolling hills, but they also provide for non-urban land uses that would otherwise be incompatible inside Melbourne's urban growth boundary. But they still need to be close to our city, such as market gardens supplying us with asparagus, broccoli and cauliflower; wineries and vineyards; landfills that service most of Melbourne; and indeed even a sewage treatment plant. When we think about green wedges what comes to mind is that this is beautiful parklands and so forth. It is not, but it is an important buffer and one that, as I indicated earlier, is something that I think—this legacy—is very important to us. Through Plan Melbourne we are committed to protecting Melbourne's green wedges for those different uses, and we have set a permanent growth boundary for our city. That has been our position for successive elections, and we will not be breaching the urban growth boundary, and obviously it cannot be changed without ratification through both houses of Parliament. It also recognises that planning controls only go so far; green wedge management plans must be in place to support the achievement of the desired green-wedge outcomes.

My department has commenced an audit of our green wedges, including our industrial and agricultural lands that cross into them. This is a crucial piece of work to highlight any weaknesses in current green wedge policy. They have reviewed the effectiveness of green wedge planning controls and management plans with councils and found that there were opportunities to streamline and better coordinate efforts across government. So we need to set a clearer vision for our green wedges to ensure that the rural and green character is not dominated by buildings or inappropriate land uses. Initial recommendations—first-cut recommendations—of this process include reaffirming the commitment to the permanent location of the UGB; defining appropriate development indeed in relation to size, bulk, scale, sighting and design; reviewing and updating permitted and prohibited land uses; better protection for prime agricultural land; and improving the effectiveness of planning controls and policies going forward.

Just in relation to the importance of protecting our agricultural land—because this is actually part of this conversation as well—Victoria’s food bowl around the green wedges and urban hinterland areas of Melbourne is obviously important locally for jobs and contains our most highly productive land. Agricultural land within 100 kilometres of Melbourne grows 10 per cent of Victoria’s gross agricultural product, and contributes in the order of \$3.3 billion to our economy. It is most at risk to pressure from urban uses. Significant competitive advantages, proximity to markets, access to labour, good infrastructure, fertile soil, being close to recycled water and supportive rural industries really capture just how important this land actually is.

In 2015 research for the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab at Deakin and Melbourne found that Melbourne’s food bowl currently produces—and these are phenomenal figures—more than 90 per cent of our perishable crops—berries, asparagus and cauliflower; 100 per cent of our poultry and eggs; 82 per cent of our vegetables; 63 per cent of our red meat; 39 per cent of our dairy; and 13 per cent of our fruit. Our inner food bowl, such as Wyndham, Casey, Melton, Whittlesea and Cardinia, are producing 96 per cent of our fresh berries, 94 per cent of asparagus and 92 per cent of cauliflower, and on it goes. These are extraordinary, extraordinary figures, and that is why it is an incredibly important process to actually understand just how critical this productive agricultural land is to the broader Victorian economy. That work will be completed soon, and I look forward to being able to put that out from broader community comment in the next few months.

Mr RICHARDSON: Minister, carrying on the theme of the balance between a growing population in Victoria and the protection of regions, I want to draw your attention to the protection of our coastline and some of the incredible communities in our region along the coast. Again, on the theme of objective 6 in budget paper 3 it talks about the planning for future growth and the transformation of cities and regions, and the aim is to provide leadership on the built environment. Minister, can you direct us, and our committee, on what your department is doing to ensure the protection of our coastal regions from development pressure?

Mr WYNNE: Thanks very much, Mr Richardson. The government is committed, obviously, to protecting Victoria’s precious, distinctive areas and landscapes from overdevelopment and sprawl. Plan Melbourne of course outlines the government’s commitment to ensuring strengthening planning protections for our distinctive landscapes and non-urban areas, and we are getting on with that work. In May of last year, as members of the committee will recall, I introduced landmark legislation, the Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Bill 2017, which provides for a never before seen level of protection for Victoria’s most iconic, historic and environmentally sensitive areas. Once passed, the legislation allowed Macedon, as a pilot site, to be declared a ‘distinctive area’, strengthening the planning controls and better protecting the area from inappropriate development. Macedon Ranges has some of Victoria’s most scenic and picturesque settings, stunning wildlife and, obviously, is a renowned location for food and wine. Thanks to our legislation it will remain that way and protected for years to come.

As members of the committee will be aware, at the 2018 election the government announced that a further three coastal areas will be declared as ‘distinctive areas and landscapes’, including the Bellarine Peninsula, Surf Coast, Bass Coast and Phillip Island. Sprawl and overdevelopment in the Bellarine, Surf Coast and Bass Coast is a serious issue. Throughout Torquay, Jan Juc and the Bellarine communities, consultation has commenced to inform my decision to declare these distinctive areas under the Planning and Environment Act. Consultation in Surf Coast has been well received with obviously very significant community interest. We have had five community sessions down there with more than 200 people attending and 156 submissions have been lodged

online. Consultation in Bellarine is open as well and has received 76 submissions online to date. In Bass Coast and Phillip Island the consultation will commence in July of this year.

So my decision on any township boundaries will be finalised following the community consultation, and we are committed to ensuring that the unique character of these beautiful coastline communities is preserved, not only for those people who live there—obviously it is important to them—but also for the rest of us who get the opportunity to go down there and visit these areas. These are really precious parts of our state. They are very important also, obviously, in terms of tourism.

Mr RICHARDSON: Minister, you have taken me to the distinctive areas that you have outlined in the landscape program. How does that provide that greater certainty for developers and the wider community?

Mr WYNNE: Yes, that is an important point. So a declaration of an area as distinctive under the Planning and Environment Act triggers a requirement of what is called a statement of planning policy. These statements set permanent high controls and town boundaries obviously to protect the environment, landscape and lifestyle of those communities. So you are putting in place certainty—certainty for the communities that live there, but also certainty for people who would seek to develop in those areas of what actually can be done. So by establishing permanent high controls and town boundaries everybody is very clear on what the ground rules are. Obviously any attempt to change those controls has to be agreed to by the Parliament. So there are very appropriate checks and balances.

Mr RICHARDSON: Can I take you, Minister, on that theme then to how the distinctive areas and landscape program complements the government's adoption and implementation of the Great Ocean Road Action Plan?

Mr WYNNE: Well, the Great Ocean Road Action Plan of course was a fantastic piece of work that was co-chaired by two former transport ministers, actually, in Terry Mulder and Peter Batchelor, both of whom would be very well-known to committee members. They put a huge amount of work into this project and, I have to say, produced a really fantastic piece of work which actually sets a model for how we look to plan for development, particularly along the Great Ocean Road.

So in addition to the distinctive areas and landscapes program the government is taking action to strengthen the protections of the Great Ocean Road through the minister for the environment, who at the moment is considering some new legislation and implementation, obviously, of the Mulder and Batchelor Great Ocean Road Action Plan. Indeed one of their key recommendations was the establishment of a dedicated authority, because if you actually read their report there are any number of local governments, state government instrumentalities and local committees of management—all utterly uncoordinated—down the coast. So one of their key recommendations was to say, 'We need one authority to manage the whole of the Great Ocean Road so we get a consistent application'. They tell stories of how one council will maintain the roadside to a certain point and the next council does nothing. This really inconsistent application is just unacceptable for one of the great tourist destinations in this state. I am looking at the Chair here because he would be able to tell me the visitor numbers down the Great Ocean Road. I mean, they are massive.

The CHAIR: Well, from my recollection it was the most visited, or is the most visited, part of Victoria—

Mr WYNNE: Correct.

The CHAIR: with the lowest spend per person as well, but that is a different issue.

Mr RIORDAN: Chair, I will just point out it is also in the best electorate.

The CHAIR: Let me just say that whilst we have had some challenging times I will happily and openly admit that the Great Ocean Road is one of the most pretty, scenic and beautiful areas that Victoria has to offer the world.

Ms VALLENCE: As is Evelyn in the Yarra Valley.

The CHAIR: I am not sure that Evelyn quite compares, but nevertheless I am sure they are great people.

Mr RIORDAN: It is the quality of the people, Chair.

Mr WYNNE: And no doubt the quality of the representation, I am sure.

The secretary kindly has provided me with some data here. Each year there are more visitors to the Great Ocean Road region—this is phenomenal—than to Uluru and the Great Barrier Reef combined, and in the year ending June 2017, 5.8 million visitors spent \$1.3 billion supporting more than 11 000 jobs in the region. I mean, that is just how important this iconic Great Ocean Road is to our economy. That is why the work of the Mulder and Batchelor review is so important to get implemented, and obviously the legislation will be another significant step forward for us in terms of protections.

Mr RICHARDSON: Minister, I want to draw your attention to the living heritage program—

The CHAIR: Just one second. Mr O'Brien, did you want to have a response about how wonderful Gippsland is, by the way?

Mr D O'BRIEN: I think I have put it on the record that—

Mr RIORDAN: He knows he is going to lose that argument.

Mr D O'BRIEN: It is commonly agreed that the Gippsland South electorate is the best in the state; everyone accepts that.

The CHAIR: I am sorry, Mr Richardson. Continue.

Mr WYNNE: As they say, a self-evident truth.

Mr RICHARDSON: I will power through. Minister, if you will indulge me, I will take you to budget paper 3, pages 39 and 40, and table 1.9, and in particular the funding for the living heritage grants. Are you able to explain to the committee how the funding is allocated and the benefits that will be derived for Victoria and Victorians more generally?

Mr WYNNE: Victorians are obviously very passionate about their heritage. The 19–20 budget provides \$20.5 million over four years to the living heritage program. The fund builds on the \$38.5 million previously allocated in the 2016–17 budget to the program. It does mark the largest state government investment in the conservation of heritage places in Victoria's history. So \$10 million over four years has been added to the Living Heritage program competitive grants stream, and that is by way of application. This will likely fund somewhere between 20 and 30 conservation projects each year, and over the last four years between 80 and 90 projects of at-risk state-listed heritage places across Victoria. A further \$10 million has also been provided for completion of conservation and activation works at the Melbourne Trades Hall—the oldest operating trades hall in the country and possibly one of the oldest operating trades halls in the world. It is a very, very important building, a great example of the work of one of Melbourne's most prominent young architects, Joseph Reed, who as we know also designed the Royal Exhibition Building, the state library and various other significant buildings in our state. I could go on about that, but I will not.

Mr RICHARDSON: Minister, what then is the government's focus on the spending in particular?

Mr WYNNE: Some of the projects that have been completed—I think it is worthwhile giving you a bit of a snapshot of those—are Reid's coffee house in Ballarat, the Bendigo RSL, the paddle-steamer *Gem* in Swan Hill, the Camperdown Turf Club grandstand. Other projects funded by the program: Captain John Mills House at Port Fairy, the pumping station in Mildura, Barmah Punt at the Barmah near Echuca, the water tower at the former Fletcher Jones factory and gardens in Warrnambool—I mean, there are a significant number of these. I know that from the point of view of local members we all get representations made to us about the importance of heritage sites, and I think this is a well-used program and one that I know really does a fantastic amount of work to deal with often buildings that are at quite significant risk.

Mr RICHARDSON: Just finally in the time that we have got left, Minister, how is Victoria's local heritage and precincts then being protected?

Mr WYNNE: Heritage Victoria is responsible for places and objects of state-level significance which are included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act. They include obviously places like Flinders Street station, Parliament House, the Macedon Avenue of Honour, the Eureka flag. And a place or object listed on the Victorian heritage register is legally protected and cannot be altered without a permit. Councils are obviously responsible—

The CHAIR: Minister, let me interrupt you there. You will be able to take that question on notice. Thank you, Mr Richardson, and over to you, Mr Riordan.

Mr RIORDAN: Minister, thank you. My question of course—you highlighted it in your presentation—is around the government’s inaction over cladding. Noting today that there are some people in the gallery who have come who sadly are left with the aftermath of that lack of support for the private residences, Minister, the Neo200 building in Spencer Street has been advised by its insurers that given the number of claims and the constant vertical rise of cladding their policies for compulsory building, public liability and owners corporation insurances will not be renewed. The body corporate has been actively working to find a new insurer both domestically and offshore but they are unable to find one, and with only 12 days to go the current indication is that they will not be covered and therefore will be in breach of the Owners Corporations Act. My question therefore is: if Neo200 manages to find an alternate insurer, given their risk profile, much higher premiums will be charged than previously. Will the government look to fund the increment of new policies or will the owners yet again have to fund that bill as well?

Mr WYNNE: Thank you, Mr Riordan, for the question. It is an important question. I just want to go back. I will come to answer the question, but I need—

Mr RIORDAN: We have got a lot of questions on this, so not too much history, because we are well aware—

Mr WYNNE: Okay, all right. I will just simply say this: the genesis of this of course was the privatisation of building surveyors that a—

Mr RIORDAN: But that is—

Mr WYNNE: I mean, it is important that this—

Mr RIORDAN: I know, but we have got a problem now—

Mr WYNNE: Yes, absolutely.

Mr RIORDAN: And we have this issue with cars on quality safety recalls—we do not sort of tell people in dangerous cars ‘Just keep driving around in them and hope they don’t crash’, you know?

Mr WYNNE: Yes, sure.

Mr RIORDAN: These people need to know: in 12 days will they be insured?

Mr WYNNE: Sure. I understand the question, and can I say that from the point of view of the government, obviously we are rectifying the state government-owned buildings—that is clear from the budget papers; you have seen that.

Mr RIORDAN: That is great for 9-to-5 workers—really good. They will be safe. They have probably got safety wardens that can chase them out of the building. These people will be asleep at night-time in their beds, no insurance, no public liability and in worthless things. What is the policy of the government? In 12 days.

Mr WYNNE: The policy of the government is to seek the advice of the bipartisan cladding task force, which I know you are aware—

Mr RIORDAN: Well—

Mr WYNNE: It is jointly chaired of course—

Mr RIORDAN: Yes, but we did not select the person on it; you have found people for it.

Mr D O'BRIEN: Just because there is an ex-coalition member on it does not make it bipartisan, just for the record.

Mr WYNNE: I am simply saying that the two people—

Mr RIORDAN: We are failing on an answer here, so just—

Mr WYNNE: The two people—

Mr RIORDAN: As of 19 June—

Mr WYNNE: I am attempting to give you the answer, okay. I await the advice of the cladding task force, which—

Mr RIORDAN: Are they reporting by 19 June?

Mr WYNNE: They will be reporting in the next short while—

Mr RIORDAN: That is 19 June?

Mr WYNNE: I am not prepared at this—

Mr RIORDAN: So we are going to have 315 units in Spencer Street, on 19 June, uninsured, no public liability insurance. What will the government be doing with that?

Mr WYNNE: I will tell you what the government will be doing about that: we will have a further response from the cladding task force. I expect—

Mr RIORDAN: So we are failing a response by 19 June and we will have uninsured—

Mr WYNNE: I expect to have their recommendations to me on the next stages of rectification, and I will await that advice, but in relation to—

Mr RIORDAN: So—

Mr WYNNE: But in relation—

Mr RIORDAN: It is important, Minister—19 June is a very clear deadline.

Mr WYNNE: But in relation to—

Ms VALLENCE: It is a yes or no question.

Mr RIORDAN: It is a yes or no, so it is a no.

Mr WYNNE: But in relation—

Ms VALLENCE: Yes or no?

Mr WYNNE: In relation to this particular building, Neo 200, the Victorian Building Authority has obviously been actively engaged with them and—

Mr RIORDAN: But they have not got an answer for them. Okay, so if they have been actively engaged with the private thing, have we got a costing? Has this government got a costing on the amount of private buildings—apartments particularly—in the state of Victoria that are in this predicament, and is there a cost? Do we know how much it is going to cost to make these literally thousands of homes safe?

Mr WYNNE: No, they are not that. That is just not—

Mr RIORDAN: Well, there are 315 in one building

Mr WYNNE: No, no. It is not correct to say that.

Mr RIORDAN: What is not correct? What, they are safe?

Mr WYNNE: Mr Riordan, give me the opportunity to answer the question.

Mr RIORDAN: Well, you just said it was not true.

Mr WYNNE: No. You talked about thousands of buildings. It is not thousands of buildings—

Mr RIORDAN: No, I said thousands of homes.

Mr WYNNE: Oh, okay, thousands of homes. Yes, there are a lot of properties engaged in this and that is what—

Ms VALLENCE: And they are not safe.

Mr WYNNE: Well, that is not the case. That is not the case because—

Mr RIORDAN: What, so they are not flammable? We did not see the flames whip up the side of the buildings?

Mr WYNNE: Well, of course we saw flames up the side of the building.

Mr RIORDAN: So they are not. I think it is pretty—Grenville, Neo, I think there is—

Ms VALLENCE: How many other buildings are at risk?

Mr RICHARDSON: Who is asking the questions here?

Mr RIORDAN: Minister, on one hand you are saying they are safe.

Mr WYNNE: No.

Mr RIORDAN: Are you saying they are safe?

Mr WYNNE: What I am saying, if you would allow me to actually answer both of your questions, is that the VBA has undertaken extensive audits of more than 1300—

Mr RIORDAN: The audits do not make people safe, Minister. We are waiting for the result. Will they be insured?

Mr WYNNE: They have undertaken—

Mr RIORDAN: And are they safe, and how much does it cost to make them safe?

Mr WYNNE: They have undertaken audits and inspections—physical inspections—of in excess of 1300 buildings, and at this stage they have identified, through their expert work, in the order of, I think, 600-odd buildings—

Mr RIORDAN: 600 private buildings?

Mr WYNNE: Yes.

Mr RIORDAN: I am looking at Ms Eddy. Is that right?

Mr WYNNE: I will just give you the gradings of these buildings. On private buildings, through the work of the VBA—

Mr RIORDAN: Private buildings?

Mr WYNNE: Private buildings, yes. Seventy-one have been classified as being of extreme risk, 368 of high risk, 342 of moderate risk and 150 of—

Mr RIORDAN: The difference between extreme and high?

Mr WYNNE: of low risk rating.

Mr RIORDAN: Extreme and high—I mean, I would not like to know that I went to bed at night-time in an extreme-risk building. That is an awful lot of extreme-risk buildings and we got—

Mr WYNNE: And that is why the Victorian Building Authority—you have asked the CEO of the building authority to be here today, and she can absolutely take you through what the VBA is doing proactively to support those body corporates.

Mr RIORDAN: We are actually now past the proactive. We have got 12 days and hundreds of people will be uninsured in their homes, potentially breaking the law. So it is problem on top of problem on top of problem, and you have had a long time to deal with this. Ms Eddy, can you tell us what the current figures are on high risk, extreme risk and whatever other profile you have for buildings that have this problem?

Mr WYNNE: I have just read what they are, but anyway—

Mr RIORDAN: Is that the current? Is that the most current?

Ms EDDY: Yes, it is. My understanding is that it is the most current, and I must say that the audit is ongoing.

Mr RIORDAN: And have you costed that problem?

Ms EDDY: In relation to that, we are advancing about inspections and that includes a range of things that need to be done that do focus on making those buildings safer, right from the moment after that panel has been done.

Mr RIORDAN: Yes, but have you costed it? Have you costed it?

Ms EDDY: We are in the process of working, as you would appreciate, with owners and owners corporations through this. It involves—

Mr RIORDAN: Have you got a timeline for costing it?

Ms EDDY: Well, each building is different. Every building is a case-by-case assessment. As we get—

Mr RIORDAN: And all the people in those buildings will be given those results?

Ms VALLENCE: Average timeline?

Ms EDDY: Can I answer the first question?

Mr RIORDAN: Yes.

Ms EDDY: So as we get appointed the municipal building surveyor, we go through a range of processes with people around notices and orders and the preparation that needs to be done to fully assess what works are required at that building. In some cases the works are in relation to cladding—

Mr RIORDAN: So how much longer is this? Sorry, but we are limited on time. How much longer is this process taking? Have we got a complete finish on the job in the next three weeks?

Ms EDDY: So, we were provided funding this year to inspect 1000 buildings. We have done about 900 and we expect to get to 1000 buildings by the end of this year. In the budget papers you will see there is funding for

the next financial year for 480 buildings to be inspected, so we have got a target of about 500 buildings that we are working on, across—

Mr RIORDAN: So those other 480 that will be another year away from happening, are they extreme risk as well? Are there extreme-risk buildings out there that have not yet been assessed?

Ms EDDY: As you would appreciate, the process of the inspections is actually to assess the risk, so—

Mr RIORDAN: I think it is actually more important that this is a matter—I mean, I come from an electorate where people were burnt. They had their houses burnt in the middle of the night. This is a fear people live with and living in a building that can combust and be an absolute deathtrap—it is not good enough to say it is in forward estimates and it is going to be done next year. There is an urgency to this.

Ms EDDY: Absolutely, and we are leaning into this. We are leading, beyond any other state in Australia—

Mr RIORDAN: Because we have done all the public buildings, haven't we?

Ms EDDY: In relation to these buildings, we are working aggressively through a program based on the resources that we have. We are inspecting, with municipal building surveyors and the City of Melbourne, between 20 and 50 buildings a week. Notwithstanding that, there is also broader information out there now in relation to combustible cladding. If you look on our website, there is a range of materials that we have got there for owners and residents, those we have not come to inspect, about the really important things they can do about keeping their building safe for general occupation—

Mr RIORDAN: But they are going to have to pay for it. It is all at the cost of the owner.

Ms EDDY: The general awareness in relation to management of the building and—

Mr RIORDAN: No, excuse me. So the only policies you are coming up are things that the owners will have to pay? The only solutions?

Mr WYNNE: Mr Riordan, as I have indicated and I will just repeat, the cladding task force is finalising its final reports to me. They will be making recommendations to government about the next stages that the government may wish to consider in relation to further rectification.

Ms VALLENCE: Given that I think the quantum that was just stated was 600 known high-risk buildings, Minister, won't your government immediately have this extremely dangerous material removed?

Mr WYNNE: Sorry, dangerous material removed?

Ms VALLENCE: From the buildings, from the high-risk buildings. I think the quantum that was specified was 600 buildings assessed as high risk. Won't your government immediately have this material removed from those buildings?

Mr WYNNE: Well, I mean, it is—

Ms VALLENCE: Given that you know that they are high risk, will you commit to having that material removed?

Mr WYNNE: From?

Ms VALLENCE: From the assessed high-risk buildings.

Mr WYNNE: Private buildings?

Ms VALLENCE: Yes.

Mr WYNNE: Well again, Ms Vallence, I simply again repeat that I will be guided, and the government will be guided, in the decision-making around the next stages of any further interventions that the government will be taking in relation to rectification by the cladding task force.

Ms VALLENCE: Is it that with the state of the budget you cannot afford to help the most vulnerable in this case?

Mr WYNNE: Well, I completely reject that. I mean, that is just not the case at all. At the risk of sounding tediously repetitious, we will await the further advice of the cladding task force, and when that advice is in and the government has considered it we may well have more to say on this matter.

Ms VALLENCE: So can you guarantee today that every tenant of every building in Victoria clad in dangerous combustible material is aware that they are potentially living in a firetrap?

Mr WYNNE: What I can guarantee is that the government will continue on with the work that we have undertaken. Ms Eddy has already indicated the scope of works that the Victorian Building Authority has undertaken to date. Those buildings to date that have been inspected and particularly where—

Ms VALLENCE: I will just reiterate the question: can you guarantee that every tenant in every building, particularly those that have been assessed—expressly those that have been assessed—as high-risk, clad in dangerous material are aware that they are living in a potential firetrap?

Mr WYNNE: Well, those buildings, Ms Vallenge, that have been audited by the Victorian Building Authority, yes, clearly. People who are living in those are well aware—

Ms VALLENCE: They have been communicated to by the government?

Mr WYNNE: Here is the CEO. You can ask her yourself.

Ms EDDY: Our direct communication is to the owners through the owners corporation. As you would know, the owners have a duty of care to pass that information on to tenants. We have taken a lot of different angles at communicating to owners and owners corporations, and just in recent months we have recommunicated to all owners corporations in relation to—

Ms VALLENCE: Thanks, Ms Eddy. So, Ms Eddy, you can confirm today that all owners have been communicated to by the government?

Ms EDDY: I can confirm that the Victorian Building Authority, for the buildings that it has inspected, has been engaging not just once but multiple times through the owners corporation, as a conduit to owners, to pass on their information around duty of care.

Ms VALLENCE: I understand that owners have a duty of care, but do you think that in this case also the VBA has the duty of care to know that that information has flown through to tenants that are living in a firetrap?

Ms EDDY: We have been working right across government in this complex issue about making sure information gets to those who need it. The whole focus of this audit has been about site-specific information, and when we even arrange the audit we do a call on the day of the audit. We drop something in the letterbox of every single unit there so we know that that information is getting there.

Ms VALLENCE: Thank you, Ms Eddy. We are not asking about the pre-emptive situation. We are asking about once we know that is assessed as being high risk.

We will move on. Page 40 of budget paper 3—Minister, this provides funding of \$165.3 million for the cladding rectification program over the next five years for only government buildings and TAFE sites. There is ongoing work by the VBA in identifying risk assessments for private buildings impacted by combustible cladding as well. For owners of private dwellings that are victims of the current cladding crisis, a crisis in which they are not responsible, when will the funding, technical or social support be provided to assist these individual consumers?

Mr WYNNE: Ms Vallenge, I will indicate again to you that when the cladding task force has completed its deliberations and furnished me with its final report, which may well go to—not may well, will go to—the

question of what further effort government can make in relation to rectification of private buildings, the government will make some decisions around that.

Ms VALLENCE: Okay. When is not enough. I guess, for the committee's sake, we would like to know what time line, and if you have got any involvement in having an expectation of a time line. But I will move on to the building inspector. We know that in the cladding task force interim report on 1 December you promised to appoint a state building inspector. Have you made the appointment?

Mr WYNNE: Well, I am delighted to say, Ms Vallence, that an appointment has been made. It has been an extensive search which has been undertaken by the VBA. The final details—I think some contractual details—are at the moment still to be resolved, but a very distinguished and experienced person has been selected for this incredibly important job. Of course this was subject, as I am sure you are aware, to some questions in the Parliament about that, and, as I indicated then, we were undertaking this national search for the position.

Ms VALLENCE: So can we hear who that is?

Mr WYNNE: No, not yet.

Ms VALLENCE: What date will you be making that announcement public?

Mr WYNNE: Well, the contractual arrangements are a matter for the CEO of the VBA, and she can perhaps advise us of when those negotiations are finished.

Ms EDDY: Sure, Minister. At this stage we expect to have that announcement out by the end of next week.

Ms VALLENCE: The end of next week? Okay. So we will move on—

Mr WYNNE: And by the way, this appointment in no way impeded the work of the task force or indeed the VBA—the appointment of this position.

Ms VALLENCE: Referencing again the cladding rectification program for public buildings, on page 40 of budget paper 3, retiree Mrs Jenni Lewis has a cladding-impacted apartment in South Yarra. The building in which she lives was issued with an emergency order in February 2018 to carry out works to remove and replace APC cladding by 30 November 2018. She has been advised by the body corporate that she needs to find \$100 000 for replacement of the cladding on her property. The total cost for the building is \$1.5 million. How does this government expect retirees like Mrs Lewis to fund \$100 000 for these repairs?

Mr WYNNE: Well, we have put in place the opportunity for bodies corporate to engage in the cladding rectification agreement process—and you would be well aware of what that involves—where a local government, a body corporate and a financier come together to provide—

Ms VALLENCE: Sorry, Minister. The question expressly was: how does the government expect retirees like Mrs Lewis to pay this?

Mr WYNNE: And I will come to Mrs Lewis in a moment.

Ms VALLENCE: If you wouldn't mind answering the question.

Mr WYNNE: Well, I will answer the question because there are a range of avenues open at the moment, including the cladding rectification agreements. To date local government has not taken that up with the frequency that I would have hoped for, but we will—

Ms VALLENCE: Okay, so obviously we cannot get an answer to that in terms of helping retirees in that predicament. Further, in its emergency order—and I am conscious of time—the VBA advised the body corporate that the maximum penalty for failing to comply was 2500 penalty points at \$158.57 per unit, which works out to over \$396 000. Having obtained all the required compliance approvals from fire engineers, surveyors, builders et cetera, why are owners being pursued to fix and fund the rectification of malpractice? I am happy to take that on notice if we run out of time. I would like a response on notice if we run out of time.

Mr WYNNE: How much more time have we got?

The CHAIR: Ten seconds. Ms Vallence, did you want the previous—

Mr WYNNE: Okay, I will happily take that on notice, but can I just say the government is acutely aware of the issues confronted by many people in these bodies corporate who are—

The CHAIR: Minister, thank you. We need to change to Mr Hibbins. Can I just ask: Ms Vallence, did you want the last two questions on notice, not just that last one as well?

Ms VALLENCE: Yes. Thank you, Chair.

Mr HIBBINS: How many cladding rectification agreements have actually been taken up?

Mr WYNNE: There is only one council at this stage that is prepared to offer these agreements, and that is the City of Melbourne, but we continue to work with a number of councils, including my own, Moreland, Darebin, Dandenong. So there are a number of councils where is a significant cluster of these clad buildings. There is clearly some anxiety within local government about potential implications of the cladding rectification agreements, so we are looking, particularly through Local Government Victoria, to work with a number of those councils where you have got these clusters of clad buildings to ensure that, one, they understand the mechanism, two, they understand how they actually work, and that in fact they do not inherit any liability—this is local government—by entering into those agreements.

Mr HIBBINS: So it is information sharing. You are not changing the scheme at all. You are not looking to change the cladding—

Mr WYNNE: No, we do not need to change the scheme. I mean, the scheme, I think, is sound.

Mr HIBBINS: Well, no-one is taking it up, that is the—

Mr WYNNE: Because I think they do not necessarily fully understand it. They have received some advice, which they have furnished me with. So we are in a dialogue with them, and some of the advice they have received we think is incorrect.

Mr HIBBINS: Now you touched on in your opening statement your response to this question, Basically the issue starting with building surveyors, the privatisation of building surveyors.

Mr WYNNE: Yes.

Mr HIBBINS: This is where this all started.

Mr WYNNE: Correct.

Mr HIBBINS: It was taken out of the hands of councils.

Mr WYNNE: Correct.

Mr HIBBINS: Are you planning any reform to how building surveyors operate?

Mr WYNNE: Look, we will have a bill coming into the Parliament by the end of the year which will be looking at some reforms and also the learnings that we have got from the task force itself, so I think there are opportunities to work with the building surveying industry more generally. They are under serious pressure. But you rightly say that the realities of this are complex because in the past building surveyors actually sat within local government. There was a synergy between the planning permit process and the building process because they both sat in the same building and actually interacted with each other, so each knew what the other was doing all the time. You cannot say that the widespread use of this flammable cladding product could have been escaped through that process, but the reality, I think, is that a level of coherence that was available and the synergies between the planning and building—

Mr HIBBINS: There is also a clear conflict of interest, isn't there? There is a conflict of interest between a building surveyor employed by the person who built the building rather than the municipality that gives the permit; would you agree?

Mr WYNNE: Well, there ought not be, and indeed obviously for clad buildings the Victorian Building Authority has taken up the municipal building surveyor role to ensure that there is a consistent application in terms of our approach to that.

Mr HIBBINS: You have given some numbers in terms of around 600 private buildings being found to have flammable cladding—

Mr WYNNE: Extreme and high risk.

Mr HIBBINS: Seventy-one with extreme risk and whatnot. Can you give an indication of how many have actually been rectified? What is the state in terms of progress of rectification?

Mr WYNNE: I might refer that question to Ms Eddy, but it is only a relatively small number. Obviously the Lacrosse building has been rectified. There are a number of buildings that have been identified in the Docklands that have been rectified. Clearly there are a number of state government-owned buildings—state government buildings, hospitals and the like—that have been rectified. There are 13 schools that are in the process of being rectified at the moment. So obviously that will pick up over time.

Mr HIBBINS: Do we have exact figures?

Ms EDDY: Sure. Thank you for the question. So as you would appreciate, the process follows a notice-then-order process, so the notices go out after we become the municipal building surveyor. We became the municipal building surveyor late last year and then in the first quarter of this year, so two months generally speaking. We are working with owners around the first notices process to go through the information and decision-making for them, and then that progresses to orders, which progress to getting the work. So at this stage we have 12 buildings, of which five actually have the full cladding removed and seven are underway.

Mr HIBBINS: So that is out of 600 buildings.

Ms EDDY: We are working at this point in relation to the ones that we are municipal building surveyor for, so about 327 of those have started that process. And it is a long process. It requires lots of decision-making by all of the parties involved in that work.

Mr HIBBINS: I guess you can appreciate, Minister, the urgency in which some of these notices have been given to residential tenancies. The seemingly slow rectification progress, the urgency around—

Ms VALLENCE: They are doing the ministers' offices first.

Mr WYNNE: Mr Hibbins, I do not want to cut you off, but, Ms Vallence, I actually answered that question in the lower house when this accusation was put to me that somehow I was looking after the DELWP offices at 8 Nicholson Street. This was a decision that was completely isolated from me. This was a decision of the building owner, Dexus. That is a fact.

Ms VALLENCE: So you got—

Mr WYNNE: While I appreciate, I mean—

Ms VALLENCE: You got yourself sorted first.

The CHAIR: Can I just interrupt, Minister. Ms Vallence has had her time. It is Mr Hibbins.

Mr WYNNE: I beg your pardon, I am sorry.

Mr HIBBINS: Can you appreciate there is a lot of public demand for funding for residential rectification? I understand the UK has adopted a similar scheme. Can you understand the concerns about having to wait for the

task force—you know, you waiting on a task force response—given the urgency and the slow rectification process?

Mr WYNNE: Sure, absolutely. I completely understand that, and I can completely understand and sympathise with people who have found themselves in this situation through no fault of their own. That is why I am keen to receive the final report of the task force and to look at what they are going to recommend to me in relation to future opportunities to support rectification works, and I hope for that work to be finalised by the task force in the next few weeks.

Mr HIBBINS: Can I move on to a couple of projects that have been worked on by yourself. One is in regard to the proposed Federation Square redevelopment by Apple.

Mr WYNNE: Yes.

Mr HIBBINS: Was there any cost incurred to government through that process?

Mr WYNNE: Cost incurred as in—

Mr HIBBINS: Cost incurred to government.

The CHAIR: If I can interrupt, the minister responsible for Federation Square is in fact the minister responsible for tourism, industry and major events, the Honourable Martin Pakula, and he will be with us on Tuesday. So I think that question in relation to the operation of Fed Square is best directed to Minister Pakula.

Mr HIBBINS: Thank you, Chair. Now in relation to the Crown Casino development—that was the tower. Were there any costs incurred to government from that process?

Mr WYNNE: No, none.

Mr HIBBINS: None whatsoever?

Mr WYNNE: No.

Mr HIBBINS: Okay. Thank you. Can I just ask a question in terms of getting my head around we have got yourself as the Minister for Planning, but you have then got priority precincts and suburban development not even sitting in your department.

Mr WYNNE: Correct.

Mr HIBBINS: How does that all work?

Mr WYNNE: The Special Minister of State is responsible for priority precincts, and Minister Kairouz, obviously, is responsible for suburban development.

Mr HIBBINS: How is that different from what you do?

Mr WYNNE: It is quite different because we all have different responsibilities. We sit together on the same subcommittees of cabinet. So it may look from the outside somewhat curious, but there is very close coordination between the three ministers in relation to our activities. Obviously as the Minister for Planning, my responsibilities will be around any of the decisions that the government seeks to make around the priority precincts that the Special Minister of State is responsible for.

Mr HIBBINS: So they are going to propose individual projects which will then—

Mr WYNNE: I am not sure that the minister has been before you yet, but no doubt you can ask him in further detail about the priorities that he is seeking to turn his attention to in relation to priority precincts.

Mr HIBBINS: But I mean you do have a coordination role yourself. I mean, you have got *Plan Melbourne* sitting under your department. It just seems to be a bit of a duplication of role, particularly with suburban development—

Mr WYNNE: Mr Hibbins, I do not think it is a duplication, because *Plan Melbourne* is really the guiding document for how we deal with these priority precincts. I mean, I can indicate that obviously Fishermans Bend is an important one, Macaulay is obviously important, the precinct from Docklands through to Richmond is another important precinct. There will be—

Mr HIBBINS: What is Docklands through to—that is a large area. Can you define the Docklands to Richmond precinct?

Mr WYNNE: It is a ribbon of land, basically up the train line.

Mr HIBBINS: Right. Okay. A redevelopment. Okay, thanks. Can I just take you through some of the actions out of *Plan Melbourne* and just get an update?

The CHAIR: Sadly, Mr Hibbins, you are going to have to put those on notice. I do apologise for interrupting. However, as sad as it may be, we have come to an end, so I thank you very much for appearing before the committee today as the Minister for Planning. The committee will follow-up any questions taken on notice in writing and responses will be required within 10 working days of the committee's request.

The committee will now take a small break and resume at 3:45 p.m., in just a couple of minutes, with the minister's next portfolio, housing.

Witnesses withdrew.