

Mr John Hyde; Mr John Day; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Paul Miles; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Albert Jacob

Division 49: Western Australian Planning Commission, \$152 124 000 —

Mr M.W. Sutherland, Chairman.

Mr J.H.D. Day, Minister for Planning.

Mr G. Prattley, Chairman.

Mr A.H. Evans, General Manager/Secretary.

Mr E.W. Lumsden, Director General, Department of Planning.

Mr G. Finn, Director, Landmark Projects, Department of Planning.

Mr S.M. Henriques, Director, Operations, East Perth Redevelopment Authority.

Mr R.H. Wilson, Acting Chief Finance Officer.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Perth has a question.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I refer to the third dot point on page 572 and to page 187 of budget paper No 3. Has the government researched and assessed the impact that closing Riverside Drive will have on patronage of the belltower and other businesses in that precinct during construction of the Waterfront project and the closure of Riverside Drive? Can the minister table that information? Has the minister made provision in the budget for compensation to local businesses for any lost revenue that may be experienced as a result of closing the road and the many years of construction works that will happen during the Waterfront project?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Is the member for Perth aggrieved that the belltower might have less patronage as a result of this project?

Mr J.N. HYDE: I would be very, very aggrieved if patronage were cut to anyone in that precinct.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Fine.

Some work certainly has been undertaken on traffic management in the area. A lot of planning work is being undertaken by the Department of Planning and within the Department of Transport and Main Roads WA on traffic management issues. Some specific work has been done on the predicted impact on businesses in the area around Barrack Square. I am sure every effort will be made to ensure there is no undue impact as a result of this very important and long-awaited project. I will ask Mr Finn to comment further.

Mr G. Finn: Yes, there has been a fair degree of transport modelling and planning for the Perth Waterfront project. Transport planning has been undertaken at regional, local and micro levels to inform not only traffic movement around the project but also the implications for traffic around the city generally. The modelling shows that a lot of the traffic that uses Riverside Drive as a bypass route across the front of the city will choose other routes. The traffic modelling shows that access to the local area will be maintained, if not improved, because of some loss of bypass traffic from Riverside Drive. Riverside Drive will become less of a bypass route and more of a destination route to the city and to areas such as Barrack Square.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Will the minister table the modelling advice with the traffic figures?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I do not think it is appropriate to table that information at the moment. Do we have that available?

Mr G. Finn: There is a fact sheet and modelling summary available on the Department of Planning website. That information is fully publicly available.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I am happy to provide that by way of supplementary information if the member wants, or he can look it up on the website.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I would prefer to get it from the minister in case we are told to go to the Manila office of the Perth Waterfront project.

[*Supplementary Information No A17.*]

The CHAIRMAN: Is the Manila office in the Philippines or manila stationery?

Mr J.N. HYDE: Probably both, Mr Chairman.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: I refer to “Asset Investment Program” at the top of page 575. In the second and third lines of the first paragraph it refers to the continuation of the Bush Forever program. Will the minister please outline how many properties have been purchased and how much of the \$100 million budget allocated for expenditure over 10 years for the implementation of the Bush Forever policy in 2000 has been spent?

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Mr J.H.D. DAY: The Bush Forever project has been very important. It started in 2000 when the Liberal–National government was in office. It is a very important environmental initiative to ensure that high-value vegetation on the Swan coastal plain is protected in perpetuity. It came out of concern that existed during the 1990s about the amount of bushland being lost to urban development and a conscious decision by the then government that there needed to be appropriate action to ensure that sufficient remnant vegetation—rare flora in particular—was adequately protected. In 2000, \$100 million was allocated out of the Planning Commission budget over 10 years for the purchase of land to be retained under the Bush Forever program. So far, 111 properties have been purchased at a cost of \$83.5 million, totalling 1 028 hectares. Of the \$100 million originally allocated, \$8 million was for management, so the amount for acquisition of sites was \$92 million. It has been a very effective program in relation to environmental protection. I am pleased to say that the major amendment to the metropolitan region scheme, which was necessary to play a major role in finishing off the project, was completed in the past two years. It ended up being delayed somewhat in the previous several years, unfortunately, but it has now been completed and agreed to by both houses of Parliament, and has taken effect. That resulted in an additional 94 sites being rezoned and reserved for parks and recreation purposes. There is an additional area right across the Swan coastal plain where land is indicated as being of high conservation value. Although it has not actually been reserved for parks and recreation, an indication is given to property owners that some of their land may need to be conserved for environmental protection and the conservation of species and so on, but some development on the land may still be possible. Therefore, that aspect of the amendment has been approved now, and there was the rezoning, as I said, of 94 sites to parks and recreation, so it is a significant step forward.

[8.10 pm]

Mr P.T. MILES: Minister, Bush Forever, which I agree was a great program, has taken 10 years to, I guess, get to the point that it is almost completed, but there is a landowner in my area of Wanneroo whose land still has not been purchased. The local authority has indicated that there is no way that it can purchase the property from them or compensate them in any way. Does the minister not feel that the department should obviously offer some form of compensation on their behalf or remove the Bush Forever zoning from the title so that they can move on and do something with their land?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Presumably it is not land that has been actually rezoned to parks and recreation?

Mr P.T. MILES: It has, yes.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Has it been fully rezoned to that?

Mr P.T. MILES: Yes.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Therefore, a process should be available, particularly if they are applying for some development on the land that would trigger the compensation process. In any case, I think an effort has been made by the Western Australian Planning Commission to acquire land in those circumstances in which people desire that the land be purchased.

Mr G. Prattley: I know that we are in the process of negotiating some of the final remaining large parcels of land in that area. It requires a willingness of the other parties to want to sell the land or, alternatively, to trigger an application that would create a compensation mechanism. Some of those have taken quite some time to come to fruition, but my understanding from the officers involved is that we are getting pretty close to resolving the remaining parcels in that area.

Mr P.T. MILES: I have a follow-up question. Should I ask the minister to check with Mr Prattley whether the two landowners that I know of are the landowners with whom the Planning Commission is negotiating, and see when we will have a timetable in which these people can finally put to bed this land that currently they can do absolutely nothing with?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Obviously, I do not think it needs to be done in the public arena, but if details are given to me, I am certainly happy to get the issues investigated. As I mentioned, quite a lot of money has been expended on this program. I am not sure whether the case I am about to mention relates to an actual Bush Forever site, but I earlier today signed an approval for the expenditure of \$10 million for the acquisition of a site in the Neerabup area, I think. It is a significant amount of money being paid out on behalf of the public.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Is it the WA Planning Commission's intention to keep the management responsibility of all Bush Forever sites or is the intention to hand it over to the Department of Environment and Conservation?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: It is definitely the latter. It is the appropriate policy that management is handed over to the Department of Environment and Conservation as soon as that can be achieved. Obviously, DEC needs to be in a

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position to undertake effective management and it needs the appropriate funding to do so. However, the Planning Commission was certainly never intended to be the end manager; it was intended that DEC would do that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: My question relates to the second dot point on page 572 of the *Budget Statements* about promoting development in Western Australia's regions. What is the status of the Bunbury waterfront? Is money allocated to the Bunbury waterfront? We cannot see it in the budget papers.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Expenditure on the Bunbury waterfront project is the responsibility of LandCorp, so any funding allocated would be through LandCorp. The Minister for Regional Development and Lands is obviously the minister primarily responsible for LandCorp. In relation to development that may occur, there is now agreement to two amendments to the Bunbury region scheme for the Marlston North and the Koombana North sites. The Koombana South site was the subject of quite a bit of public discussion in Bunbury. The South-West Region Planning Committee recommended not to go ahead with that amendment at this stage, but I think it is certainly desirable, and most people have the view that it is desirable to get some development occurring in that part of Bunbury. We could make much better use of the land—have a much better connection between the Bunbury city centre and the waterfront, get much more effective activation and provide much greater amenity—therefore, further work will be done on what can be achieved in that part of Bunbury.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The Minister for Planning was supposed to introduce three scheme amendments, but then he pulled the expensive amendment at the last minute. All the real development will be happening in the Koombana South area of the waterfront project. We cannot find any money in the minister's budget for that waterfront project in Bunbury for the next four years.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: As I just mentioned, maybe the member was distracted —

Mr J.N. HYDE: No, I was listening; there are no dollar signs!

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Funding for the project itself is not the responsibility of the Department of Planning or the WA Planning Commission. The planning portfolio undertakes amendments to the planning schemes and therefore approves what can happen on the site or sites. However, in this case, the project will be delivered by LandCorp. Therefore, the Minister for Regional Development and Lands is responsible for LandCorp in relation to Bunbury.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Does the minister plan to bring back the amendment for Koombana South within the next four years? If that area will have the development, the minister will need to make planning decisions. What developments will happen there? What part of public funding will be involved in funding the public facilities there as well? They will have budget ramifications elsewhere, as the minister rightly said, but it all comes down to the planning.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Some development will be undertaken, of course, in the Marlston North and Koombana North sites, so they should not be overlooked. However, a very important part of what happens in Bunbury, I agree, involves the Koombana South area. I doubt that I will bring back the amendment in exactly the same form as was proposed last year; however, I certainly think it desirable that there be some development in that area on the southern part of the waterfront and the Bunbury estuary area. The task force that the member for Bunbury chaired will continue to undertake some work about what may happen in that part of Bunbury; further work will be done. I think that some development needs to occur to make much better use of the area. The redevelopment that has occurred in Bunbury over the past 15 years has been very effective, but I think we can do a lot better by activating that area as well. I ask Mr Prattley, given that he is the Chairman of the Planning Commission and chairs the South-West Region Planning Committee, to make any additional comments.

[8.20 pm]

Mr G. Prattley: The great bulk of objections to those amendments were to the southern site, and they primarily related to a very strong feeling in the community that there needed to be a lot more of a community facility focus on that site, rather than just be a by-product of urban development. Therefore, it was a fundamental issue for that site. I think it is the strong view of the South-West Region Planning Committee, and most people probably, that there should be some development on the site.

A lot more work is required with the community. Even the Bunbury council requested that we not proceed with the amendment at this time because there was no clear community consensus about what should happen on the site. Some unresolved issues need to be worked through, and when they have been worked through, it will come back up through the normal channels. In terms of budgeting, the planning process does not require a separate budget; it will be dealt with as part of the commission's normal statutory responsibilities. It would not be possible to predict the types of facilities until that work is completed and some thought has been given to what the area should be used for. That then provides the opportunity for government, the council or even the private

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sector to examine how that might be funded once it has been determined what the community would like to see in that area.

Mr A.P. JACOB: I refer the minister to page 571 and to the fourth dot point under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, which refers to Directions 2031 providing a high-level framework for strategic planning for Perth and Peel. Will the minister please outline how the Directions 2031 strategy will provide this high-level framework?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I am happy to do that. Directions 2031 is a very significant document that has of course been adopted by the Planning Commission and also endorsed by cabinet to guide growth over the next 20 years and beyond in the Perth metropolitan area and the adjacent Peel region. It was prepared on the assumption of a population growth of at least 550 000 people over the next 20 years in the Perth and Peel regions, which will require about 330 000 additional residences. The accepted notion is that we cannot rely on peripheral urban development, greenfields development, to the extent that we have in the past and that, therefore, quite a significant increase in the amount of residential development will occur through urban consolidation and urban infill projects in existing urban areas; particularly those within 15 to 20 kilometres of the Perth central business district. We expect that the proportion of residential development in the Perth and Peel regions will increase by about 47 per cent; that is, we expect 53 per cent of development to be provided through greenfields developments, but the provision of urban infill projects will increase quite significantly over the next decade or two. We see some of that development now, but we need to see a lot more if we are to provide a city that is both livable and effective and that does not rely on the same extent of greenfields developments and the establishment of further urban sprawl. That is one of the essential elements of Directions 2031.

Another aspect is the assumption of a greater density of development in greenfields projects, not by having every lot smaller on average, but by having a greater range of lot sizes, ranging from higher density development in the centre of town to larger lots on the peripheral parts of greenfields developments—that is, a greater degree of diversity. The final point that I will make is that the changing and ageing population, with more single people, means, for a range of reasons, that there is an increasing need for apartment-type accommodation. I know that in some neighbourhoods there has been reaction to this proposal, but good urban design is more important than the mere fact that these projects occur. We need to be very careful about that. I will ask Mr Prattley to make an additional comment or two given that the Planning Commission has endorsed Directions 2031.

Mr G. Prattley: Thank you, minister. When Directions 2031 was approved, we put growth management strategies for the inner and outer sectors out for public comment. The department is in the final stages of reviewing the extensive submissions received on those strategies. I am pleased to say that we actually received a lot of support from local government and local communities for the higher population targets in each area. The submissions contained a great deal of material, research and considered thought, and it has taken a fair while to work through them. The commission will hold a workshop on its response to those submissions in the next month or so. We anticipate having the growth-management strategies finalised later this year, which is the next step in the implementation of Directions 2031.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: If I may, Mr Chairman, I will ask Mr Lumsden to make one or two comments.

Mr E.W. Lumsden: First of all, as a general rule of thumb, lot sizes throughout Perth and the Peel region have been decreasing as a result of policies such as residential planning codes et cetera. Having regard for the changing demographics of the Perth population, not only the private sector but also local government have recognised the need to re-look at their areas in providing alternatives not only for people who may be ageing and want to stay in the area, but also for those younger people who may want to be closer to regional centres. Quite a number of ongoing initiatives have been developed by local government, particularly around activity centres such as Morley, and even smaller areas such as Bassendean and Bayswater and their rail stations. Certainly, there has been an ongoing concentration around Stirling and other key areas. Even Cannington is being re-looked at; its structure planning and centre activity plans are being reviewed to generate not only a range of mixed uses, but also different types of accommodation and housing choices. That has also been reinforced by the private sector. Last week an industry commentator stated that unless the revitalisation of the centre occurs, those areas will lose population, and the economic viability of those centres will decrease. That interesting trend is being reiterated in the eastern states. There is a similar approach in eastern states jurisdictions.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: If I may add that one of the consequences of decreasing lot sizes, with more apartment development, is that it is essential that high-quality public open space is provided. In the planning frameworks being put in place, it is really important for people to have a sense of space and be able to recreate, and for children to be able to play.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I will ask my final question. I refer the minister to page 570 and to the Perth Waterfront project. Does the minister accept the wisdom and the validity of the comments by the head of the Royal Australian

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Institute of Architects, Rod Mollett, that the government has the Perth Waterfront project all wrong because it has not committed to the Indigenous museum as the centrepiece of the project and is not building it first? Is that not being left to hang around as an unfunded afterthought?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: It is necessary to undertake the core elements of the Perth Waterfront project before other parts can be added on. The proposal for an Indigenous cultural centre as an extension of the Perth Waterfront project is an important one, but one that would need to follow the construction of the main Waterfront project. That construction is the first stage that has been funded by the government at a net cost of \$270 million. All those works are being planned right at this moment, and, as I have said, major construction will commence in the early part of the new year—2012. Some initial works will be able to commence after the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting later this year, but we have to build the foundations first and then look at the additions, which, if we are re-elected, will be a project for the second term of this government. We have to do the foundations first and, with what this government has funded there will be a fantastic development in that area.

[8.30 pm]

Mr J.N. HYDE: Apart from the Queen and the Premier digging a tiny ceremonial hole on the day after CHOGM finishes, what major construction works, other than a fence to keep out the hoi polloi, and glossy signs to delude them into thinking that something is really being built, will be undertaken and completed before the end of this year?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The major construction works will commence in the early part of 2012. This project will go ahead. It has been talked about for 30 years or so. Various proposals have been made about what might be undertaken, and a lot of talk has occurred with a lot of glossy pictures. The project has now finally been funded by a government—not just being talked about or plans being prepared—and the work is going ahead. By the end of 2014, we will see all the public works completed and the commencement of construction of some major buildings around the Perth Waterfront project, where there will also be some wonderful public open space aspects, public facilities and amenities.

The appropriation was recommended.