

**ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE**

*Tenth Report — “Response to House — Matter of Park Home Residents” — Tabling*

**DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton)** [10.10 am]: I present for tabling the tenth report of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee titled “Response to House — Matter of Park Home Residents”.

[See paper 4140.]

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** In April this year, the Legislative Assembly requested that the Economics and Industry Standing Committee consider the appropriateness of undertaking an investigation into all park homes that have been closed or have collectively evicted long-stay tenants since 2006, to ensure compliance with all aspects of the appropriate legislation. To some extent, this was a follow-up of the committee’s investigation into caravan parks that was completed in 2009. The committee went about its work in two ways. Firstly, it requested six departments to provide an update on the performance against the recommendations of the earlier report and, secondly, it sought to address and ascertain the questions that the Legislative Assembly asked the committee to find out, particularly those relating to the closure of the parks. The one thing that we did not get was a definitive answer, although I believe we got close to it. The data is improving but we did not get a definitive response, in large part, due to the lack of comprehensive data collection and proactive monitoring.

The Department of Commerce, which is responsible for administering the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006, reported that since 2006 five parks have closed, affecting 323 long-stay sites. That is a bit under what I thought was going to be the case but there are a couple of caveats to it. First, the Department of Commerce only responds to complaints. Therefore, some parks might have closed or shut down long-stay sites whose residents or otherwise did not complain. Second, the department only started the compliance assessment in August 2007 when the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act came into effect.

We asked the Department of Local Government to undertake a review of all caravan parks. The Department of Local Government identified six additional parks in addition to the list that the Department of Commerce provided that had closed since 2006. There is no clear reason for the discrepancy. Some of those parks identified by the Department of Local Government may not have long-stay sites or may not have a serious issue but some of the evidence showed that they did. There are discrepancies between the two sources of data. That problem spreads across the industry.

We also wanted to ascertain what parks, particularly those with long-stay sites, were under threat of closure. The Department of Commerce identified six sites—six parks, comprising 584 long-stay sites—that it considered were under threat of closure. The Department of Commerce undertakes proactive monitoring and audits of parks now. It ascertains if a park is under risk by reading the media, listening to scuttlebutt and forming links of communication with people in the parks. This is not a foolproof method. The Department of Local Government identified five additional sites—that is, sites in addition to the ones identified by the Department of Commerce—that were under threat of closure. The names of the local government sites were provided but the names of the parks identified by the Department of Local Government were not provided. It is not clear whether they included long-stay sites. Nonetheless, there appears to be up to 11 caravan parks under threat of closure, a large number of which relate to long-stay sites. The issue that gave rise to this committee report is serious, ongoing and, given the evidence in this report, will probably be with us for a while.

One of the first and most important recommendations is that the Department of Commerce and the Department of Local Government need to get together and liaise as a matter of urgency to ascertain the full list of caravan parks in the first instance and those that are under threat of closure. If government or local government are to help parks, particularly those with long-stay sites that will be closed, we have to know in advance so we can put the processes in place.

There are many positive aspects to the report compared with, say, negative ones. One of them is that the Department of Commerce has stepped up to the plate. It has taken this issue on seriously. During the 2009 report it clearly considered it a serious issue. As debate in this house on the related issue of retirement villages shows, this is a very serious issue. It affects people, particularly those in the lower income span with not too many assets behind them, who lose access to their home for whatever reason in a crowded market—that is, one in which there are not too many alternatives.

The Department of Commerce has undertaken a series of proactive compliance visits. In 2010 and 2011 it has visited 90 different caravan parks and ascertained that it is complying through a checklist according to the act. It is quite comprehensive. If it finds an anomaly or lack of compliance on a specific issue, it institutes monthly audits and revisits. It has committed to expanding the number of parks that it will audit in the future and also having random audits over time. It has set up a good process. Over this two-year period the department found

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51 separate issues of noncompliance by parks. Most of those related to the failure of the parks to pass on information or the failure of long-stay recipients to receive that information. If there is no pressure, people living in long-stay parks appear to be lackadaisical in certain instances to ascertain their rights and obligations of both parties. In 11 instances, formal contracts with the long-stay sites were not signed or completed. Again, in about half the instances it was because the people living in the long-stay sites were not interested in doing so. Overall, DEC found pretty effective compliance with the act and is satisfied that there is not widespread breaching of the act or that where there is noncompliance, compliance is improving, not in a major manner. When noncompliance was brought to the party's attention, it was quickly and effectively remedied.

During the debate that led to this committee report, there was a lot of widespread concern by members in this house that the act in question was not being effective. We did not investigate that. We asked whether, on the evidence provided, we should undertake a review of the act. The Department of Commerce, off its own bat, has decided to move forward the review of the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act. It was scheduled to be undertaken after five years; that is, in 2012. It is being undertaken now. The Department of Commerce is undertaking a review of the act. When that is completed, perhaps the house can consider what other actions it or this committee should undertake. In short, the committee decided not to pursue a further review of the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act at this time or until the house requests it, and we suggest that at the earliest that would be after the Department of Commerce completes its review.

We used this request from the house to review more widely our 2009 report. We called in six government departments that had relevance to the act and that had recommendations for action in an earlier report, and gave them a check-up. This committee has not done that before but given the nature of the importance of this issue and the recurring concerns expressed in this house about some aspects of it, we thought it was a worthwhile exercise. On a positive note, some of the departments have taken it on with vigour, more than we expected. Some have taken it on with more vigour than they initially did when they responded. Some departments are dragging the chain. Indeed, when the 2009 report was first released, most of the responses were noted. The responses from most of the departments were lukewarm to tepid. In fact, the majority of the departments have taken it on with some vigour. The Department of Commerce has performed admirably. One of the key issues with the caravan parks, long-stay sites and the retirement villages is that the problem really springs from when residents invest into or move into the parks. The committee held the view more widely that many people bought into a caravan park without recognition of what they owned, what they were buying and what the tenure of the arrangements were, even though they could find it if they searched. There were a range of reasons for this. Some of them were sold by real estate agents. Some people were not aware of these things. Some people made assumptions that were incorrect.

What we needed was a good document that was vigorously presented and clear, and that stated in no uncertain terms—particularly for long-stay sites—the responsibilities and rights of both parties. The Department of Commerce has done that. It has prepared and distributed that document, and it is enforcing its distribution to new and old tenants so that they are clear about these issues, particularly that when a person goes onto a long-stay site, they do not own the land and there are limits to the tenure, unless otherwise specified. This document is quite good. In the debate yesterday there was reference to the Department of Commerce's Seniors' Housing Centre, which I went along to the opening of. It is a very effective tool, and we urge all members of Parliament to obtain a briefing on that. The only thing I might add is that access through the website is a bit, let us say, difficult, particularly, I think, for seniors, because the Department of Commerce's website has so much material on it that one might get lost trying to get to the Seniors' Housing Centre area. It could be made more efficient. I think the Department of Commerce is doing a fine job.

The major focus of the committee's earlier report was tourism. There are issues with long-stay sites, but caravan parks are still fundamentally about tourism. They provide an essential piece of infrastructure, particularly for low-income people and grey nomad tourists. It is a very important issue. We urge the Western Australian Tourism Commission to take leadership on that. The evidence it gave during the inquiry, and its response to the report, was, again, tepid; it did not take the bait. Well, it has changed. Without question, the Western Australian Tourism Commission is making caravanning a priority and undertaking a systematic policy of finding out what exists and developing a policy, and it is linking with other departments and agencies on it—that is a big tick for it. It is undertaking an audit of all caravan parks, which should be finished by the end of this year, and it is active on a whole range of fronts, including planning and other areas, to make sure that if caravan parks are closed, replacements are found.

One of the problems with the Western Australian Tourism Commission is, again, the information issue. There are four different departments using different focuses to collect information on existing parks and what they do. The Department of Local Government has completed a review; it is not comprehensive—certain local governments failed to respond—it has not been updated, and it is not linked with the reviews undertaken by

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Tourism, the Department of Commerce, or, for that matter, the Department of Housing. The Department of Local Government appears to be reluctant to take on the leadership role in this information collection and dissemination task; we would argue strongly that it is its role because it has the legislative power to ask local governments to provide the information that, under law, it must have. We urge the Department of Local Government to take a leadership role—not a dominant one—and to go to local governments and collect the data and disseminate it. In that sense, the Department of Local Government is dragging the chain on this issue.

The Department of Planning is another agency that the committee made reference to in its report. It has a very important role, because when it goes out there and does structure plans on a regional basis, its task is to identify the priorities of land use and try to identify land for various purposes. Let us face it, if it does not do it, there will not be new caravan parks to replace old ones. It also has a responsibility for developing local tourism plans, which we thought was a very effective mechanism for local governments to identify which parks to protect, which parks to allow to have long-stay sites, and which parks to be relaxed about. The Department of Planning showed, if anything, a diminished priority in finding and procuring land for the long term for caravanning. To be honest, caravan parks are not a priority for local planning departments. Also, there has been no progress on the Department of Planning's tourism plan. I would urge the minister to tell his department to get its act into gear on this issue; it is, again, dragging the chain.

One of the departments I thought was going to do, in my assessment, very little after the tabling of the first report was the Department of Environment and Conservation—well, I was wrong. The Department of Environment and Conservation has a large amount of land that is perfectly suitable for caravan parks. It has expressed some reluctance and difficulties in getting additional land for multiple uses, which it does have, but it has taken this on, on various fronts, to try to provide greater access for a variety of caravan and camping facilities on its sites, and it is working with third parties to facilitate that. It is doing an excellent job.

The Department of Housing is not the main player in this; its role is mainly in the area of trying to provide low-cost housing and adversity resources. The current minister, who was the Treasurer when we released the earlier report, is showing a great deal of open-mindedness on this issue. The Department of Housing is considering, rightly, caravan parks and long-term sites, and what are called lifestyle villages, as an alternative mechanism, and the department is looking at options. It is also examining the possibility of the state purchasing caravan park sites, particularly long-stay sites, but the problem is that it entails huge amounts of money, because possible alternative uses for caravan parks are highly lucrative.

In the two minutes I have remaining, I would like to make a comment about so-called lifestyle villages. Western Australia has a very rigid planning system that is focused on building comprehensive cities or conurbations, and it actually discourages diversity. One thing that has sprung up is lifestyle villages, which are basically for over-45s or over-55s. They keep things low cost, they are manufactured homes, and they are focused on developing a community of people with a common interest. One of the central aspects of the business plan for these villages is to keep it low cost, and they have found that the way to do that is to buy caravan parks. That is one of the reasons caravan parks are being taken over. But these lifestyle village-type organisations provide, in my view, an essential element of the housing mix, particularly for low-income people and retirees. I think there is a disdain in the agencies for these villages, but we must, I think, embrace them as an element to providing low-cost housing, particularly for retirees, and we can do that without diminishing the services provided to the residents. One of the key elements is to allow, through the Department of Planning, the rezoning of rural land for lifestyle villages. Our earlier report recommended that one way to do that was to have the regulation of lifestyle villages under the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006.

**MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington)** [10.27 am]: I rise to make a few remarks about the tenth report of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee, which looked at matters related to park home residents and other issues to do with caravanning in this state. I never really thought I would know terribly much about caravanning; my brother and sister are keen on these things, but I have never really had the desire to do it. I have now lived with caravans for a long time because of this committee, and I have great empathy for people who live in the park homes and those who use the vans for holidays.

I thank the staff of the committee—namely, Mr Tim Hughes, and Ms Kristy Bryden—for their work. I would like to thank the other member of the committee—namely, the chairman, the member for Riverton; the member for Collie—Preston; the member for Geraldton; the member for Kingsley; and our co-opted member, the member for Mandurah. The member for Mandurah will most likely make some remarks in a little while, but clearly the issues of caravan parks and people who live in park homes is very important to him, and I look forward to listening to his comments. I also thank the departmental witnesses who came to the committee and gave evidence. I want to endorse the member for Riverton's comments that we found the responses from the Department of Commerce, the Department of Environment and Conservation and Tourism Western Australia to be very good. On the other hand, as the chairman said, the responses from the Department of Local Government

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and the Department of Planning were a bit underwhelming, and I will make some comments about them in a minute.

Committee inquiries give members an opportunity to look into an issue away from the cut and thrust of party politics. Unfortunately, of course, not everybody involved in having this issue referred to us raised themselves above the parapet to understand what the committee process was about. I am of course referring to the Minister for Transport and member for Vasse. On 19 April 2011 a headline in *The West Australian* stated “Labor snares own MP in caravan park probe”. The article, written by Ben Harvey and Natasha Boddy, went on —

One of WA Labor’s rising stars, Willagee MLA Peter Tinley, could have to appear before a parliamentary committee to explain why he forced 20 residents out of a caravan park he owns.

The article goes on to refer to something that happened in November 2009 when the Minister for Transport was in fact the Minister for Commerce, who has carriage of the laws in this state governing park home residents. The minister is quoted in the article as saying outside Parliament —

“There is also the case that has previously been reported in relation to the nature in which the member for Willagee, Peter Tinley, evicted tenants from his caravan park in Port Hedland.

“My preference would be for a (parliamentary) committee to investigate those and other matters so they can be brought to light to ensure that people have acted lawfully and secondly to help provide advice as to the effectiveness of the Act in protecting tenants in those situations.”

That was the nature of the commentary of the Minister for Transport when he amended this resolution. Members can go back and look at the *Hansard* of the day and see what happened. The minister was trying to spin the story that somehow the committee’s inquiry was an investigation into the member for Willagee, who is a former senior officer of the Special Air Service and a recipient of the Order of Australia. It is very interesting to see the Minister for Transport, who was the relevant minister at the time in November 2009, referred to in this article. If there was something wrong with the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act, as our report shows there was, it should have been dealt with by the Department of Commerce, which is responsible for administering the act, and by the Minister for Transport, who was the minister in charge of these issues. One of the committee’s findings is finding 2, which states —

The level of compliance surrounding park closures and general operations appears sufficient to negate the need for a broader investigation by the Committee at this time.

If the issue of compliance becomes more problematic, any such investigation should first be directed to the Commissioner for Consumer Protection, given the functions of that office under Section 85(a)–(b) of the *Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006*.

In other words, our finding states that the government already has sufficient power to deal with any issue. Therefore, rather than spin some story to a journalist, the member for Vasse should have taken up his own responsibilities and done his work. He was the relevant minister at the time the issues he referred to in that newspaper article occurred. If there had been a demonstrated failing—our report shows there was no failing—it would have been a failing of his own. Rather than come into this Parliament and drag decent and hardworking members of Parliament into the gutter in which he lives, he should instead do his own job. Fortunately, the member for Vasse is no longer the Minister for Commerce. The state of Western Australia, I believe, is very lucky that he has been relieved of that responsibility and is no longer the Minister for Commerce. However, I know that he likes to spin a story. I know that, instead of debating issues, he likes to attack people. He likes to attack people on a personal level, not about the performance of their job, but by saying, “This person’s fat. That person’s bald.” They are the sorts of things he talks about, not, “Are you competent at your job?” Therefore, the next time he gets up and spins a story to a journalist, all I ask —

**Mr J.M. Francis:** You would never have done that when you were secretary of the Labor Party—the “Truth about Troy” website!

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** That is right; no, I never did.

**Mr J.M. Francis:** You would never have authorised any of that material!

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** No. I make a point —

**Mr J.M. Francis** interjected.

*Withdrawal of Remark*

**Mr M.P. WHITELY:** I distinctly heard the member for Jandakot —

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** I withdraw the statement. I can still think it.

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**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Jandakot!

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** The point I make about this is that even that website did not discuss the personal attributes of the member for Vasse. The website did not say that he is a fat, lazy person. That website had quotes from other members of the Liberal Party about his behaviour. It also had a link to a video on a website that talked about —

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** It had a link to a website of a radio station that had previously been shown on the front page of *The West Australian's* website. Let us not go there, member for Jandakot! This is another example of a person who will not stand up and do their job. This minister should not have been peddling a dishonest story around the gallery. That is what occurred here. He knew, because he was the minister responsible, that there was nothing in this story. He knew what he was doing when he went up to the press gallery and spun that story. All I am saying is that the next time a journalist has the Minister for Transport spin a story to them, they should stop and think, “Is this just another one of these things that the minister likes doing?”

I want to go on and make a very short comment about the Department of Planning's evidence to the committee. As the member for Riverton pointed out, we were quite disappointed in the Department of Planning's approach. The committee asked —

... I just want to clarify: are you saying that the WAPC and the Department of Planning are confident that that process is going to deliver a caravan park either in government land or private land in that area?

That question related to an issue we were talking about. The answer from the departmental officer was —

I could not say that.

The point is that the Department of Planning can tell us that there will be a node for health services, there will be a node for transport arrangements, there will be a residential area and there will be a business area; but it cannot say in its planning zones that there will be the opportunity for a caravan park. Until the planning is done to ensure that the land is available for the operation of a caravan park, it will not happen. I really feel for the Department of Environment and Conservation; the evidence from the officers of the department in their contribution to the inquiry was very good. They are desperate to make sure that there are appropriate recreation facilities in the Peel and the South West, but if the Department of Planning does not give them the zoning arrangements in that area—the boundary for the regional park—there will be no caravan park. It is therefore incumbent on the Department of Planning, the Western Australian Planning Commission and the relevant minister to ensure that in the Peel and in the South West additional land is made available for caravan parks; otherwise this form of recreation will not be able to take place in the South West in the future.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah)** [10.37 am]: Under standing orders I understand that as a co-opted member I have an opportunity to make comment on the report that the Economics and Industry Standing Committee has brought down today. I add my congratulations to the committee and to the staff for their work on this report, and I thank the chairman and the committee for allowing me once again to be co-opted. While I was unable to be as fully involved in the committee as I would have liked, I did attend some of the hearings and I concur with the findings and recommendations that appear in the report.

I want to make a couple of comments on some of the recommendations and responses and certainly on the lack of response from some departments. The member for Riverton and I do not always agree on many things but I think we are in common agreement on the analysis of the progress of government departments contained in an earlier report that the committee brought down in late 2009. A couple of departments are responding to the phenomenon of the pressure on caravan parks in particular as an option for housing. I agree that caravan parks traditionally were focused mainly on tourism, but I think we saw a period, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s when, for those people who chose caravan park living and also for owners of caravan parks, they became a viable, low-cost housing option. Then towards the end of the 90s, particularly in places such as Mandurah, some of the areas in the south west and now, of course, in the north west, we saw increased pressures on those caravan parks for either redevelopment or, in the case of the north west, as accommodation for workers. As the member for Cannington said, this is an issue of great interest to me personally, not only because, to quote the chairman in a previous report, “Mandurah is the canary in the coal mine” for the loss of caravan parks. This is an ongoing issue for me, the member for Dawesville and the member for Murray–Wellington. It is in the Peel region that we have seen a significant loss of caravan parks, in particular.

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In relation to this report and the response from departments, the Department of Environment and Conservation gets a big tick for its proactive approach and its understanding that Western Australians and other people visiting our state get an opportunity to experience our beautiful landscapes and natural assets. I think DEC is doing some very proactive and effective things with new camping grounds and providing quality facilities for people who travel throughout the state, whether they be from within the state, interstate or internationally. I give DEC a big tick. I agree with the remarks of the Chairman of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee, who said that Tourism WA, prior to this report, really did not take any notice of the issue of caravan parks and camping grounds and their potentially positive impact on tourism in Western Australia. That has changed and I credit the new Minister for Tourism, my colleague the member for Dawesville, for that. The new minister understands this issue very well in the context of the Peel region. He had given me an assurance that as tourism minister he would make it a priority for Tourism WA, and he has delivered on that. We need to make sure that Tourism WA comes out of this process with some absolute commitments to act on the minister's commitment.

The disappointing government departments were the Department of Planning and the Department of Local Government. Planning is critical, and I absolutely support recommendation 10 in this report, which asks the Minister for Planning to provide for lifestyle-type villages to be developed on rural zoned land, particularly in the areas of Peel, Bunbury and the broader south west region. Among the issues that are thrown back at us is the big issue of effluent disposal, and those sorts of things. We know now that with modern technology effluent disposal has the capacity to be self-contained, with effective and environmentally sensitive treatment of effluent. The technology is there; so the excuse that keeps being thrown back by the Department of Planning in particular that we cannot do that because we do not have adequate and appropriate disposal of effluent is a furphy. I agree with recommendation 10 that calls upon the Minister for Planning to seriously look at this whole issue of lifestyle villages being developed on rural zoned land, because that will be one of the few options we have if we want to see caravan parks continue and new parks open in areas such as mine, the Peel.

The other criticism was of the Department of Local Government. Its response was disappointing. The report noted in chapter 3, page 41, that despite giving plenty of notice we unfortunately were not able to have the director general appear before the committee. I am very critical of local governments when they constantly harp on and kick up about not being consulted and about both state and federal governments making arbitrary decisions that affect them. I also get angry when local governments espouse concern about housing affordability and ensuring that their region, city or town is included in tourism plans. We should look at the number of local governments that actually have a tourism strategy. The report indicates that only five local governments have an up-to-date tourism strategy. One that does not such a strategy is Broome. I am astounded that a very, very important tourism town such as Broome does not have one. That is an abrogation of responsibility on those local governments. It is an abrogation of responsibility by the Department of Local Government to not even give credence to this report. I do not want to hear another local government say to me that it is concerned about tourism and making sure that they attract people to their region or to their local government authority if when we turn around and ask about their tourism strategy, they say they have not got one. That is a criticism of them, and quite frankly they need to pull their finger out and make sure that if they are dinkum about attracting to their region people who can make an economic contribution, they do the things they need to do. They should stop coming to government, saying it is not their responsibility or that it is cost shifting; it is not. That is rubbish, quite frankly. If local governments care about their regions, they should show some leadership and do what is required to assist their local economies and local communities to benefit from the tourism opportunities that come from having good-quality caravan and camping assets in their region.

I commend this report. Congratulations to all involved. These recommendations are very, very good. They are very pertinent to the line of inquiry. The findings are relevant. I look forward to seeing Tourism WA continuing its leadership, but more particularly I want to see the Department of Planning take seriously, and the Minister for Local Government put pressure on his department to take seriously, what has been included in this report.

**MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton)** [10.48 am]: I would like to speak briefly on this report. Firstly, I thank my fellow committee members, and also our staff, in particular, Mr Tim Hughes and Mrs Kristy Bryden, who have done a very good job.

I agree with the member for Mandurah that the tenth report of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee is a very good report. I own a caravan and I spend at least a week a year in a caravan park these days, which is not as much as I used to spend. A number of long-stay parks have closed since 2006. However, our investigations indicate that the evictions were conducted in a manner that was compliant with the act and also with the recommendations of the previous inquiry, "Provision, Use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia". There is no doubt that the closure of caravan parks has a serious impact on the tourism industry and, of course, on long-term tenants. We found that Tourism WA and the Departments of Environment and Conservation, Housing and Commerce had addressed the issues in the previous

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report. However, I would have to say, as others have said, that the Departments of Planning and Local Government have not really come to the party. It is important that we start to develop a strategic framework for caravan parks in Western Australia. It is important that the Department of Local Government plays a leading role in having an idea of where caravan parks should be located. We need to get this data and share it across all departments. Currently, individual departments seem to be collecting their own data. It is important that this data is brought together centrally and used strategically, because it is vital information, particularly for the future of tourism. I would like particularly to commend the Department of Commerce for increasing the information it provides on park living and also for its Seniors' Housing Centre. They are both very good initiatives. It is good that the department is taking a proactive role in this. There is no doubt that priority needs to be given to planning for this land use for tourism and residential villages. I commend the five councils that are up to date with the tourism strategy, being Albany, Bunbury, Busselton, Mandurah and Dandaragan. I checked with my own local council, the City of Greater Geraldton, which sent me its most recent document, but it is obviously not up to date. I am sure it will be addressing that.

The Department of Planning really does need to prioritise an increase in the amount of land available for caravan parks. DEC has taken measures to improve access for tourism. It is very important that DEC has a proactive strategy. Both DEC and Tourism WA seem to understand the importance of sites being available in some of the more out of the way places. DEC in particular has a quite innovative system under which people are in charge of 30 sites in certain national parks. I was at Coalseam Conservation Park near Mingenew a few months ago and one of those people was there. They just keep an eye on things. They do not get paid. They are basically a caretaker. They do a short course so that they understand what they are meant to do. It is a very efficient and low-cost program, and has minimal impact. It works very well. For the tourism side of things, that is a model that is really working well.

I was also impressed with the Department of Housing. It is quite proactive and interested in models that it can pursue to increase the supply of low-cost housing options. Once again, I agree with everything that other people have said; it is critical that the Department of Planning provides rural land that can be zoned for lifestyle-type villages. We can pull a strategic direction out of all of this for two things. One is for caravan parks. We need to address the supply of caravan parks across the state and we need to identify land that can be developed for caravan parks. In particular, land needs to be under a title that means that it cannot be onsold for other purposes, as this is one reason we are losing our caravan parks. They are an incredibly valuable tourism asset. We need to encourage the development of more lifestyle-type villages. They are very cost effective. They provide inhabitants with a very safe, almost village-like environment. There is only one such park in my electorate, which is Belair Gardens Caravan Park out on Point Moore in Geraldton. Models such as this are the way to go for a particular sector of the community.

Local governments should have no say in the lease amount charged for this land. We have seen a couple of incidences of metropolitan local councils not wanting land that has been identified as suitable for lifestyle villages being used as such. I would like the state government to have the power to overrule local governments so that parks can be put in those areas. The grounds on which local governments said they did not want them allocated that way were, frankly, weak and flimsy. That model can be used by Housing to develop cost-effective models and can be used as a means of getting retirees out of bigger houses, which can then be released for younger families. I will once again be writing my annual letter to the Premier on behalf of Western Australian retirees calling on the Western Australian government to bring in a one-off stamp duty exemption for retirees. I am glad to see the Treasurer here. That model is used in the Northern Territory. Once again, it is a mechanism to get elderly people out of big houses and into smaller houses. It is very efficient and sensible. One reason people do not want to make that change is purely because they do not want to pay stamp duty. If the government would provide them with an exemption, it would help make that happen. I commend the report.