

Division 44: Western Australian Planning Commission, \$87 562 000 —

Ms L.L. Baker, Chairman.

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

Mr G. Prattley, Chairman.

Mr T. Evans, General Manager/Secretary.

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

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

Mr M. D'souza, Executive Director, Strategic Corporate Support, Department of Planning.

The CHAIRMAN: We have a quorum, members, so I think we should start, given the time constraints. We are dealing with the WA Planning Commission, division 44.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I refer the minister to page 562 and the Perth waterfront project. A total of \$21 487 000 has been allocated. Firstly, when does the minister expect to start major work on site for the Perth waterfront? Secondly, and probably more importantly, how will the minister resolve the issues of cutting off or suturing Riverside Drive, and what will happen to the traffic that ordinarily would proceed along Riverside Drive?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: In relation to the waterfront project, as the member says, \$21.5 million has been allocated for the next and important stage of detailed planning and environmental assessments and so on. It is expected that work will start in early 2012 on a lot of the works that need to be undertaken. We expect it will be underway in 2012.

In relation to the management of traffic, as the member probably would have seen from the concept design put out in December last year, the intention is for traffic to be directed around the northern side of the project between where The Esplanade is at the moment and where the northern boundary of the project will be. Essentially, traffic coming along Riverside Drive from the east will be directed around to the right and will extend northwards a bit and then cross over to William Street and then head southwards again. Traffic will be diverted northwards around there. I will ask Mr Finn to provide a bit more information on traffic management.

Mr G. Finn: A significant amount of traffic modelling has been undertaken in relation to the Perth waterfront project. The issue of Riverside Drive is an important one. The major impact will be on bypass traffic that use Riverside Drive as a route from essentially the Causeway to the freeway. One of the primary reasons for construction of the Graham Farmer Freeway was to take the majority of that bypass traffic and reduce the impact on Riverside Drive. What we are planning is consistent with that intent. As a result of the Perth waterfront master plan, there will be a redistribution of some of that traffic away from Riverside Drive to Graham Farmer Freeway but also two other streets within the City of Perth itself—St Georges Terrace and Wellington Street, major east-west streets that run through the city. The modelling has shown that there is capacity to accommodate that redistribution that will occur as a result of the project.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Considering that modelling and studies have been done on this issue, of the traffic coming from both the east and from the west that ordinarily would have used Riverside Drive and that will not now, how many car movements per day does the Planning Commission envisage will be directed into the city?

Mr G. Finn: I do not have the exact numbers with me. The suggestion is that, from a current volume, in the order of 25 000 to 30 000 vehicles a day that currently use Riverside Drive there will be a redistribution of about 40 per cent of that traffic to either the Graham Farmer Freeway for bypass traffic or to other city streets. As I said, I do not have the exact volumes of those city streets.

Mr M. McGOWAN: How can only 40 per cent be redirected to the Graham Farmer Freeway or the city? What happens to the other 60 per cent?

Mr G. Finn: The 60 per cent can still access the city from Riverside Drive. Although a section of Riverside Drive will be removed, as the minister mentioned, people will still be able to drive east to west along the front of the city. If people are travelling east from the Causeway, when they get to Barrack Street, they will turn right along Barrack Street, turn left onto The Esplanade and then either continue along Mounts Bay Road or continue left down William Street. People will still be able to make that movement, but for bypass traffic it will be less convenient than some other route through the city and through the tunnel.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Just so I get it completely clear, that 60 per cent that Mr Finn says will still be able to access Riverside Drive will be directed off Riverside Drive and up into the city to get around the foreshore development and then come back onto Riverside Drive.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: A new road will be constructed to provide for that east-west movement of traffic so they are not directed up onto St Georges Terrace, if that is what the member is thinking. There will be a northern side of the waterfront development between there and St Georges Terrace.

Mr G. Finn: The majority of that traffic will use The Esplanade but an additional road, Waterfront Drive, is being planned immediately adjacent to the water. That will be a lower speed pedestrian-friendly road that does not act as a barrier between the pedestrian access to the waterfront.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The majority will use the esplanade.

Mr M. McGOWAN: In any event, approximately 30 000 cars a day need to be dealt with. Will they be coming from the east and the west?

Mr G. Finn: Yes.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: My question refers to “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency” on page 559. Would the minister please outline the progress on the release of the final activity centre policy for the Perth and Peel regions?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Seriously, we have 10 minutes left and the member is asking dorothys now.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I am pretty concise in my answers. The activity centre policy is an important one because it relates to major retail centres in the Perth metropolitan area. Until recently there has been a hierarchy with fairly strict caps on the amount of floor space. The intention is to provide a more flexible approvals process, particularly where other uses can be incorporated into activity centres—into shopping centres essentially—to include some residential development and other commercial development, maybe educational facilities and entertainment and hospitality venues and so on. That is all happening. The activity centre policy is close to being finalised. I will ask Mr Prattley to update the committee on where that is at.

[10.50 am]

Mr G. Prattley: The commission is at this time dealing with the final version of that, and we anticipate that it will be available for the minister to release early in July, so it is progressing well.

Mr M. McGOWAN: My question relates to page 559 and to the number of planning applications et cetera. The minister can provide this by way of supplementary information, because I do not know whether he will know the answer. I refer to the land just south of Whiteman Park, on Marshall Road, that is owned by the Western Australian Planning Commission. Are there plans underway to turn this land into a cemetery, and has the West Swan east district structure plan been approved?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I presume this question comes from the member for West Swan and the member is asking it on her behalf, is he?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes. It is an electorate question.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Yes, that is fine. I am not sure whether it is right to say that there are plans for the area to be used as a cemetery, but it is one of the uses that is being considered. The Metropolitan Cemeteries Board has identified the area as a potential site for cemetery purposes. I will ask Mr Prattley to comment a bit more in a moment, and I might also get him to comment on the particular structure plan that the member mentioned. Otherwise we can provide it as supplementary information.

Mr G. Prattley: Yes, I am aware that the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board sees that as a possible site for a future metropolitan cemetery, but there are certainly no commitments to that at this point. It is, I think, a difficult issue to find appropriate sites around the metropolitan area, and that is probably one of the board’s favoured sites at this point. The commission and the government would obviously have to contemplate whether that is the most appropriate use for that land in the longer term. In terms of the structure plan, West Swan —

Mr M. McGOWAN: West Swan east district structure plan.

Mr G. Prattley: I know we have approved a structure plan in that area. I cannot, from memory, remember whether it covers the whole of that area.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Can we have some supplementary information on that?

Mr G. Prattley: I do not want to mislead the member. I think it has, but I would prefer to confirm that.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: We will provide supplementary information about the status of the east district of the West Swan structure plan.

[*Supplementary Information No B14.*]

Chairman; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr John Day; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr Chris Tallentire

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will go back to the original subject that I was asking about—that is, the waterfront. I have one last question on that. The minister said that there are 30 000 cars a day at the moment. What is that envisaged to go up to over the next five or 10 years when this project will be completed, considering that this modelling has been done?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I will find out whether a large increase is expected. The aim, of course, is for through traffic to use the tunnel and other routes, but in particular the tunnel, which was constructed with the intention of diverting traffic away from Riverside Drive. As far as growth is concerned, we would, I think, aim for much of the increased traffic to use that route. But I will ask Mr Finn to provide any more information that he may have.

Mr G. Finn: The ultimate volumes on Riverside Drive are going to be the subject of the design capacity, so really what we are talking about is the ultimate design of not only Riverside Drive, but also the roads around the Perth waterfront, which will determine the capacity of Riverside Drive.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Does the commission have any projections, at current usage, of what the increase would go to over the next few years, considering population growth, increasing car ownership and so forth?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: That is partly determined by the capacity of the road. If a degree of congestion gets to a certain point, it seems to me that that is a disincentive for people to use the road and to use other, more efficient routes. So that would be one of the factors involved, I think. Mr Lumsden?

Mr E. Lumsden: I think, to answer that question effectively, we have to look at the network as a whole. We cannot simply look at one road when there is a wider network. As correctly outlined by the minister and Mr Finn, the whole intent of Graham Farmer Freeway being constructed was to take through traffic out of the city and allow for the opportunity to downgrade Riverside Drive. In fact, in some years gone by there was a proposal to remove Riverside Drive in its entirety. What has been recognised is that in terms of the local network, as well as the regional network, Riverside Drive can be modified in terms of its capacity, as Mr Finn has referred to, but it still needs to remain as part of the overall network. However, it should not have the sole role of a bypass road for the city, which is the function of Graham Farmer Freeway.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I refer to page 559. In the first dot point, mention is made of the Liveable Neighbourhoods policy and that it is going to be reviewed to facilitate shorter assessment and approval times. Why is the commission reviewing that document when it was last updated in January 2009?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I will get Mr Lumsden to comment on that. The Liveable Neighbourhoods policy is crucial in subdivision design, structure planning and so on for urban neighbourhoods, so it is a very important policy. But in relation to any current review, I will ask Mr Lumsden to comment.

Mr E. Lumsden: Liveable Neighbourhoods, whilst it is policy, also has to be considered in the context of the residential planning codes, as well as, obviously, just looking at the changes that may be required from a policy framework point of view over time. As mentioned earlier, as part of the feedback we had in improving the planning system, it was identified by a number of people in the planning industry, from local government through to the private sector, that aspects of the Liveable Neighbourhoods policy were in conflict with the residential planning codes and vice versa. So in carrying out a review of the residential planning codes, which we had intended to do in any event, we have also become aware that some aspects of the Liveable Neighbourhoods policy need to be further refined so that, when we review both policies, there are not various aspects that may be in conflict or misinterpreted.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Given that it was last reviewed in January 2009, is this just a sop to industry, which wants to have a quicker way of getting lower quality projects through the system? I am concerned that it is a watering down of the policy.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Where does it say that it was last done in January 2009?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I have a copy of it, and it says “January 2009 Update 02”.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: It might have been updated with some minor changes perhaps.

Mr E. Lumsden: Certainly, I can assure the member that this is not a sop to the industry. I have answered honestly the question that the member asked. There have been issues presented to me which are in conflict and which need to be reviewed, but, certainly, I do not see major changes to the Liveable Neighbourhoods policy being made. I see some very considerable changes to the residential planning codes because of the way they can be interpreted in some aspects, which can, in my view, generate poor design outcomes.

[11.00 am]

Mr M. McGOWAN: My last question refers to the metropolitan region improvement fund, which is contained in this division. Can the minister provide by way of supplementary information what the fund was spent on over

the current financial year and what it is envisaged it will be spent on in the following financial year? I am seeking some detail on each of the projects.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: We will provide a bit of information now, if we can.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I think the list of what it was spent on is quite comprehensive.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I will ask Mr Evans to provide some information about how the funds have been spent this year.

Mr T. Evans: In the past 12 months there have been some major purchases using the MRIF. I do not have those details with me. In terms of our future, we try to prioritise the requirements of the obligation to promise, and again we continue to do that and continue to manage the MRIF in accordance with our obligations. It is important that we do that because the money is limited and we manage it accordingly.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I did not think the minister would be able to give me a comprehensive list. Can the information be provided by way of supplementary information?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I will ask Mr Prattley to answer.

Mr G. Prattley: In terms of the key headline items that have been funded in the coming year in statutory planning, there is the south west regional planning framework; the greater Bunbury region scheme; the Peel region scheme; the Nambelup industrial area; a range of other projects and studies; and obviously subdivision processing, administration and other expenses.

In terms of strategic planning, the key items are coastal zone management; planning for Aboriginal communities; a boundary linkage spatial upgrade, land information and data management; a liveable neighbourhoods review; a strategic transport evaluation model; the Cockburn coast structure plan; the Burswood station precinct; investigation of intermodal sites; a state development project; the major destinations project; the Murdoch activity centre; the Directions 2031 project; the southern metro subregion strategic transport and economic assessment; a statutory assessment of surplus land and MRS backlog; a natural resources management project; the Stirling city centre project; transport-oriented development; implementation of Perth metro and Peel railway stations; transport route planning in the metropolitan area; administration-type funding and other projects; and release of the residential archives. These are the other primary strategic issues. Then, of course, there is funding for asset management in terms of regional open-space projects, an area assistance scheme, regional scheme administration and the like. These are the key issues.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: There is quite a bit of information in addition to the information we have provided on page 562, including land acquisition for either major road project extensions in the future or environmental purposes, including purchase of Bush Forever sites. All of those projects are part of the normal program.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Is it possible for the minister to give us a list?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: We will provide the member with some supplementary information.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I would like a list of what is envisaged for the current year, 2009–10, and the following year, 2010–11.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: We can do that. The member can always put a question on notice, too, of course.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the minister please repeat the information and the title of the information for Hansard?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: It will be the provision of supplementary information on expenditure by the WA Planning Commission from the metropolitan region improvement fund in 2009–10 and expenditure predicted in 2010–11.

[*Supplementary Information No B15.*]

The appropriation was recommended.