

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

2021–22 ANNUAL REPORTS



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2022**

**SESSION ONE
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, LANDS AND HERITAGE**

**Members
Hon Peter Collier (Chair)
Hon Samantha Rowe (Deputy Chair)
Hon Jackie Jarvis
Hon Nick Goiran
Hon Dr Brad Pettitt**

Hearing commenced at 10.34 am**Hon SUE ELLERY****Minister representing the Minister for Planning, examined:****Mr VAUGHAN DAVIES****Acting Director General, examined:****Ms KATHLENE OLIVER****Assistant Director General, Business and Corporate Services, examined:**

The CHAIR: On behalf of the committee, I would like to welcome you all to today's hearing. It will be broadcast. Before we go live, I remind all parties that if you have any private documents with you, to keep them flat on the desk to avoid the cameras.

The committee acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today and pays respect to their elders, both past and present.

You will have signed a document entitled "Information for Witnesses". Have you read and understood this document?

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The CHAIR: These proceedings are being recorded by Hansard. Please note that this broadcast will also be available for viewing online after this hearing. Please advise the committee if you object to the broadcast being made available in this way. A transcript of your evidence will be provided to you after the hearing. To assist the committee and Hansard, please quote the full title of any document you refer to during the course of this hearing for the record. Please be aware of the microphones and try to talk into them. Ensure that you do not cover the microphones with papers or make a noise near them. If you make adverse allegations during your evidence, the committee may release that information to allow the other party a chance to respond. Please try to speak in turn, which I am sure you will do. I remind you that your transcript will be made public. The committee will place the uncorrected transcript of your evidence on the internet a few days after the hearing. When the transcript is finalised, the uncorrected version will be replaced by the finalised version. If you wish to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should ask the committee whether you can give your evidence in private. If the committee grants your request, any public and media in attendance will be asked to leave the room.

Would you like to make an opening statement to the committee, minister?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will not, but Mr Davies just wants to make clear that there has been some correspondence about what we can cover and what we cannot cover.

Mr DAVIES: The annual report, as you would have seen in front of you, is for the department as well as the Western Australian Planning Commission, the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority as well as the Heritage Council of Western Australia. Under *Treasurer's Instruction 104*, which is the annual report exemptions, the department opted to submit, I guess, a reduced annual report, which is how we compressed the four annual reports into one. We sought clarification from the committee secretariat about which component of the annual report we will be responding to, and it was confirmed that it is for the department only, so not for the Planning Commission, the Aboriginal

Affairs Planning Authority or the Heritage Council of Western Australia. If I say it is part of another annual report, it is probably that.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much. I have a couple of questions and then I will move to the committee and to Hon Neil Thomson, who wants to ask a couple of questions. I draw your attention to page 24 of the annual report, Aboriginal Lands Trust estate. On page 24 it states –

In 2017, the State Government set a two-term election commitment to divest the then 311 properties ... held in the ALT estate to appropriate Aboriginal organisations.

...

Divestment of the ALT estate is central to increasing direct Aboriginal control of land to strengthen communities, fostering economic activity and securing improved outcomes for Aboriginal people.

...

... as at 30 June 2021, 53 properties have been approved for divestment by the ALT Board and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and five properties have been transferred under the ALT divestment program.

This leaves 306 properties still require divesting. Can you tell me whether the divestment is likely to be completed by 2025 as promised; and, if not, why not?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Mr Davies to make some comments.

[10.40 am]

Mr DAVIES: As you can see, there was a commitment made. We share that commitment with the Aboriginal Lands Trust, which is part of the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority. I guess the commitment was really around increasing direct Aboriginal control of land to strengthen communities, foster economic activity and things like that. The overarching approach to divestment has been by agreement with Aboriginal people and communities, working with stakeholders to identify and support their aspirations. There is a bit of, I guess, two-way conversations around what divestment might look like. We also know that there are a number of constraints on Aboriginal Lands Trust land, so there are liabilities or, well, constraints that we need to sort out before we can transfer or Aboriginal groups are willing to take ownership of that land. There are also some limitations around how we can do that with particular parts of the act, particularly part 3 of the act, which is the bit that almost gives Aboriginal groups control over some of those areas. We have done about 67 of the 300-odd parcels of land to this point in time. We are obviously aiming to achieve the target, but there will be some that will not be achieved I think, particularly some of the more complex parts of the Aboriginal Lands Trust such as remote Aboriginal communities and things like that. We are also looking at potential reforms of the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act that could make it a bit easier for that divestment to occur. The short answer is that we are trying to. There is a possibility that target will not be met because of the complexities around some of the Aboriginal Lands Trust land.

The CHAIR: I understand just how complex it is, believe me. As I said, 53 out of 311. Thank you for your response; I appreciate that. Just with regard to page 30 and the temporary streamlined development of assessment process, it says that as part of the government's COVID-19 recovery plan, a temporary assessment pathway for development proposals was introduced in July 2020. "Significant development proposals" are defined as those worth \$20 million or more in metropolitan areas, or \$5 million or more in regional areas. Applications for significant developments could be

lodged under this pathway until 6 January 2022. Can you explain how this pathway streamlined the development approval process?

Ms OLIVER: The pathway facilitated the exchange of information across the agencies and the collaboration around the referral process, and that is where the efficiencies were gained compared with the pathway through local government.

The CHAIR: So it has actually streamlined the approval process?

Ms OLIVER: It has. With the agency being the central point for all the referrals across the agencies, we have seen improvements in the time frames for the referrals.

The CHAIR: Has it resulted in any issues at all—for example, compromises made to safety or amenity?

Ms OLIVER: Not that I am aware of.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: To follow up, I am interested in that. Were there some metrics around reduced turnaround times and those kinds of things—I cannot see them in here—that you are able to share with us?

Ms OLIVER: At the time of the report, obviously there had been only nine approvals that had been through. We need to obtain information from local governments around their time frames. We do not have that information with us today, unfortunately, to be able to provide you with that comparison.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Just to clarify, if I may, are we referring here to the development application process through the State Development Assessment Unit?

Ms OLIVER: Yes, correct; the part 17 pathway.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: On a different subject, on page 22 of the report, on the native title settlements, it talks about the south west and the Yamatji, and there is a good case study on page 28. I am wondering about the progress to date on those land use agreements. Where are we at are with them?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Let me make sure I match it. Which page number are you referring to?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: Page 22 of the report is the primary one. It is headed “Land administration and asset management services”. I am referring to the last paragraph —

Another key focus this year has been the continued work on a number of State Significant Indigenous Land Use Agreements including the South West Native Title Settlement Agreement, Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement ...

Could I get an update on progress?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. In respect of the south west native title settlement, it officially commenced on 25 February 2021, formally establishing the Noongar Boodja Trust. Much of the work undertaken by the department in 2020 to 2021 was to facilitate the transfer of the first parcels of land for inclusion in the Noongar land estate. Documents were officially executed on 14 July 2021 to transfer 13 lots. As part of meeting the state’s Aboriginal heritage commitments under that settlement, a senior heritage project officer has been employed, working with and co-located at the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council since April last year. By 2030, the state government will invest some \$25 million to deliver land and heritage outcomes as part of the south west native title agreement. In respect to Yamatji, the final registration of the Yamatji nation land use agreement was completed in October 2020. That will see 150 000 hectares of crown land transferred to Aboriginal ownership or management to create the Yamatji land estate. A further 690 000 hectares

will form the new Yamatji conservation estate, which includes a national park. That agreement also includes funding for business development, cultural heritage management, services infrastructure, recognition of native title and the transfer of land for commercial outcomes. Since November last year, there have been two dedicated departmental Aboriginal heritage staff co-located at the Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation. Work continues on the implementation of the Yamatji Government Standard Heritage Agreement and to progress the land assembly requirements. By 2030, the state government will have invested \$21 million to deliver land and heritage outcomes for the Yamatji people.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I am referring to page 8 and the 79 historic and Aboriginal heritage grant applications that were processed. What are some of the outcomes that were delivered through these grants?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thanks, member. There are two annual heritage grants programs. The first one, Preserving our Aboriginal Sites, offers grants to undertake projects that protect and preserve registered Aboriginal sites. Those are grants up to \$30 000. In 2021, \$240 000 in grant funding was shared by 11 Aboriginal not-for-profit groups and the University of Western Australia. Of the projects that have been completed—this will test my pronunciation—the Malgana Aboriginal Corporation in the midwest got just over \$22 000 to install interpretive signage and to rehabilitate cultural sites, the Winun Ngari Aboriginal Corporation got \$23 000 to install fencing around the Bungarun leprosarium—the cemetery. Albany Aboriginal Corporation got just under \$30 000 to restore and preserve a former bush site in memory of Paddy Coyne. The University of Western Australia school of Indigenous studies got money for mapping the Noongar knowledge in the—I should know this—I am going to say Djarlgaroo Beeliar catchment. I should know because it is in my electorate I think. The program empowers Aboriginal people to care for important heritage sites and ensures cultural knowledge is passed on. Then in respect to the Heritage Council, they offer grants as well to support conservation and interpretation of places that are listed in the state heritage register. They are grants of up to \$40 000 for conservation projects and up to \$20 000 for events and activities. In 2020–21, 49 applicants shared \$1.1 million in grants. Completed ones include \$40 000 towards the restoration of London Court, and then there are a range of others as well.

[10.50 am]

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I have another one on Girrawheen. It is page 16, and it is in relation to some surplus land that the government has in Girrawheen. I am wondering whether you are able to update us on what that—it has been repurposed for the Vietnamese cultural centre, I believe. Is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think you may be right, but let me find the Marangaroo records in particular in my file. In 2020, we announced a portion of land adjacent to Girrawheen Senior High would be transferred for the development of a new dedicated Vietnamese cultural centre. That is bound by Curtis Way and Marangaroo Drive. It is about 1.7 hectares. It was transferred to the Vietnamese Community in Australia—WA Chapter by way of a conditional freehold, providing long-term security. The cultural centre will provide a dedicated hub for a whole range of sports, cultural practices, language classes, and serve as a meeting place. The land has been made available. More than 21 000 Western Australians have Vietnamese heritage. Many of them came here after the Vietnam War and settled in Perth as skilled migrants or international students.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Do we know when it will be completed?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am trying to find a date. Do we know that?

Mr DAVIES: Not that I am aware of.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We can take on notice; if we are able to give you a date, I am happy to do it.
[*Supplementary Information No A1.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, during the reporting period the Auditor General undertook an audit or inquiry into the department's handling of staff exiting the department. A number of recommendations were made by the Auditor General, the first of which was to minimise the risk of unauthorised access to premises when staff leave.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Can I interrupt you, chair? Can I get a report reference in the annual report? That helps me find the note in the file.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I was curious; I do not know why the department did not decide to mention it in its annual report. I take the comments that were made earlier that it is obviously struggling to fit four things into one and trying to compress the report as much as possible, but something as significant as the Auditor General's inquiry—I could not find reference to it readily in the annual report.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not think I will be able to provide an answer but put your question on the record.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The Auditor General has said to minimise unauthorised access to premises when staff leave the department, it should maintain a register of all access passes, including returns, cancellation and deactivation. I am interested to know whether that is happening.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is not in the annual report. I do not have the material in front of me. I am happy to note the honourable member's question and I will give you an undertaking I will raise it with the minister but it is not in the annual report.
[*Supplementary Information No A2.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Further to that, while the minister is looking into that, could she also advise the committee whether the department is conducting regular audits of all active passes held by staff?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am going to give you the same answer. It is not in the annual report so I do not have material in front of me to provide an answer. I will give an undertaking that I will raise it with the minister and it is up to her or whichever minister it is as to whether they will provide you with the answer.
[*Supplementary Information No A3.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Further to that, minister, can you also advise whether the department is immediately ensuring that all unclaimed, duplicate or lost access passes are cancelled or deactivated?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will give you the same answer: it is not in the annual report. There are other ways of asking those questions on notice or with some notice to get an answer. I will give an undertaking that I will raise it with the minister. I cannot give you a guarantee that you will get an answer that way.
[*Supplementary Information No A4.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: To conclude on that recommendation, minister, can you indicate whether the department is ensuring that all access passes are returned when staff leave?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will give you the same answer it is not in the annual report. There are other ways to get that information. I give undertaking to raise your question with the minister. As to whether she provides you with an answer—that is up to her.
[*Supplementary Information No A5.*]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I refer to page 56 of the annual report, which looks at some of the key performance indicators of the department. My first block of those is around “Desired Outcome: An effective planning system that supports the development of communities in Western Australia”. I am interested in a reflection on those, because every single one of those KPIs is around how quickly things are dealt with; and there are no KPIs that I could see for the department around quality or outcomes of meeting key planning goals. To put that in context, you can very quickly approve housing on the urban fringe and exacerbate sprawl and make the city the longest in the world or we can actually—what Planning should actually be measuring is how we are getting communities in the right places and designed well. As a bit of a question around why are we only measuring speed, and is there any further reporting that talks about the quality of development?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I might make a general comment, I guess, because I have been asked questions, maybe in my own portfolio or representing others, about the KPIs that appear in annual reports. I think there has been some work done—Vaughan will correct me if I am wrong—across government around the kind of KPIs that are to be used in annual reports generally because that is really a question; that is not about specific KPIs. It is about why you use these KPIs and not other KPIs. I will allow the director general to make some comments but my recollection is that there has been—I do not know if I am going too far to call it a standard but there has been some work done across government on what are good governance KPIs to include. I will ask Vaughan to make some comments.

Mr DAVIES: The efficiency indicators are determined by negotiation with the Office of the Auditor General, so we look at the various parts of what we are going to measure and then reach an agreement on how we measure those. There are some standardised processes around how we achieve those, but we are really guided by the Auditor General’s department on what we measure and how we measure it.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: My concern with these is that it actually gives you perverse outcomes standardised developments—it is the complete opposite around what I think our planning system should be doing. It actually encourages the opposite of that, because there is a whole bunch of stuff that is easy to approve and it is a tick box, but the more complex things that we actually need to be doing around getting developments around key activity centres and the like would take longer and be more complicated, and it encourages the department not to engage in those. I make the comment. I might have asked the minister as well. Were your comments that these were going to change or that these were what government expected of departments?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, not necessarily. I was trying to make the point that I think there had been an effort across government—I cannot remember who it was through, but the director general was saying it was through the Office of the Auditor General—to try to have some consistency and some standard in what those KPIs are. The question you raise is a legitimate question about: Are we are measuring the right things? Do the KPIs match the policy settings we want to achieve? That is a policy matter, a matter for government, so I will happily raise that issue with the minister as to whether she has a view about whether there are KPIs that better manage the general policy outcomes that government is trying to achieve in that space. I am happy to raise that with the minister.

[11.00 am]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: What was apparent to me from reading through this report was, for example, there was no, that I could find, reflection on one of the government’s key targets, which is 47 per cent of new dwellings should be within the existing urban footprint not on the urban fringe. It is silent on that and what I think should be the key job of planning is actually stopping what we all

agree—every report that comes out of this government is that the way we are designing the city is deeply unsustainable and is going to cost us serious money in the future if we do not get on top of it. The whole annual report is silent on that and I just find that a very key gap and we are, instead, measuring how quickly we are processing standardised applications.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thanks, member. I do understand and I get the point that you are making. Like I said, I am happy to raise that with the minister about whether something that government would consider doing is perhaps better aligning those KPIs. But that is a policy matter for government to make and I am happy to pass that on to the minister.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: On page 21, we talk about precinct design, and the importance of precincts is obviously on everyone's mind at the moment, particularly with the rollout of Metronet. I am just asking in relation to the role of the department of planning with respect to the precinct design process in and around the recent announcement by the minister to elevate the four stations that are going to be built between Victoria Park and Cannington. Has there been any involvement to date in relation to the department of planning on those precincts?

Hon SUE ELLERY: You are certainly not going to find reference to that in the annual report. That was an announcement just a matter of days ago—a great announcement, which aligns well with the commitments made by the federal government in the 2019 election. The specific question that you are asking is not included in the annual report. There are other ways that you have to seek that information, but you will not find reference to the involvement of the department of planning in that specific announcement. It was only made days ago.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Thank you, minister.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: Can I follow up on that? I appreciate that is not in the annual report, but surely what happened in 2019—and I think the page that Hon Neil Thomson said, page 21, is a relevant one. It has “Five indicators guiding community benefit.” Number one is productivity. Surely the department was involved, given that Infrastructure Australia looked at productivity of that; it had that terrible BCA of 0.37 from memory. I think a key question here is actually: what is the involvement of planning in planning for projects like this that then get announced? I hope it is not something that happens in retrospect.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is a different question to the one I was asked. I am happy for the director general to make some comments about that. I am not in a position to provide information to the committee about an announcement made three days ago.

Mr DAVIES: For the project Metronet, there is an office established—the Metronet office—that deals with the precinct planning for the precincts around the stations and the rail precinct as well. We have provided staff to that team and then they have obviously engaged their own team as well to really deal with the precinct planning around that. The department is involved, but almost at arm's length in terms of the precinct planning.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I just have a clarification on that if I could, minister, in relation to the planning work. What I am hearing the acting director general say is that there has been involvement by the department in those precinct designs. I am just wondering specifically on the Armadale line as to what involvement that has been against those “five indicators guiding community benefit”?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think you are just asking the same question in a slightly different way about a specific project, which is not referenced in the annual report. I am happy, if we are able, to give you some more information about how, in a general sense, those five elements—the indicators of precinct design that are referred to on page 21—are applied to projects. I am happy to give you some further information about that.

Ms OLIVER: I was just going to add that, in addition to the role of providing resources to support the planning, all of the Metronet stations have gone through state design review. The State Design Review Panel is chaired by the Government Architect, Rebecca Moore, and she resides within the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. So there is that mechanism for review of the design of structures.

The CHAIR: Neil, do you have some questions specific to the annual report?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Yes, I do. With the East Wanneroo structure plan, which is in the annual report on page 14, a number of concerns have been raised by residents in the East Wanneroo precinct, or parts of the East Wanneroo precinct. I cannot recall exactly which one, but I am wondering whether department is able to provide advice on the concerns raised by members of the community in that semirural development north of the industrial area—Landsdale, is it? They have concerns about the acceleration, potentially, of their urbanisation. I am just wondering whether there was any comment with respect to that.

Ms OLIVER: There was comprehensive consultation undertaken as part of the design process. I am not aware of any specific concerns, so, unfortunately, I am unable to provide any detailed response to that.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: On another matter, then, if you are not able to provide it, I assume this committee can get further advice, maybe after?

The CHAIR: I think if you have a specific issue, you might be able to get some advice.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: The specific issue for that is that there have been representations by the community—a number of members in the community. The point had been made that a majority of holders of semirural land were opposed to what they think is an acceleration of urban densification in that space. This is only what I have been told and I would be interested to know whether those concerns have been properly aired within the process of that East Wanneroo Precinct.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. If it is helpful, the reference is to the finalisation of the *East Wanneroo district structure plan* and I will give an undertaking that I will raise with the minister the query about what issues have been raised and how they have been resolved.

The CHAIR: Okay. There are a couple up there, I have to say, that have come to me as well around the Landsdale and Wanneroo areas. There was one group of people and—sorry; you will not know this one—it was within the Landsdale area that they felt that their subdivisions et cetera were very accelerated. Does that help you at all?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes

[*Supplementary Information No A6.*]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: With respect to the *Action plan for planning reform*, we discussed the pathway. This is on page 30, with respect to the accelerated pathway. For the record, I have been seeking a briefing from the department for some time now on the planning reform process. I would appreciate if that would be taken on notice as a matter.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am happy to raise that with the minister.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Yes, thank you.

[*Supplementary Information No A7.*]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will raise it.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Thank you. It had been put in September—the request.

The CHAIR: That is okay; we will get a response to that.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: But going forward, apart from the accelerated pathway, what other matters are we pushing through in terms of that planning reform process? What is on the agenda? Is it covering the broader statutory frameworks that exist?

[11.10 am]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Do you mean going forward?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: That is right.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Further legislative reform or something, is that what you are asking about?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Correct, yes. There is an action plan here. Amendments to the Planning and Development Act it has here on page 30.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: Are you asking for progress on that?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I am just asking for what other matters—you have talked about the accelerated pathway, but that is only one aspect.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If we are able to provide any further information about what are the other elements of the action plan that is referred to in the annual report, we can do that—if that is what I understand you are asking. If you asking about future, prospective legislation, I am not in a position to answer that.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: No, what is in the action plan.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Okay.

Mr DAVIES: The first phase of planning reform occurred during the reporting period, and that introduced measures for a more strategic and streamline planning system, consistent with the action plan. That was released in 2019 to assist the state economy recovery from COVID-19. In July 2020, tranche 1 amendments of the Planning and Development Act were given royal assent, and the amendments streamlined process and introduced new and I guess both temporary—which is part 17—and then more permanent measures as well. It is all pathways for development applications. The amendments to the planning and development regulations 2015 to streamline development assessment processes and reduce the unnecessary red tape were gazetted in December 2020. They included planning approval exemptions for small projects. Examples of that would be things like water tanks, cubby houses and certain classes of signage and solar panels, so trying to remove them from the process. There are exemptions for several different changes of land uses as well. For example, to establish a cafe or a restaurant, there are improved change of use and parking requirements for small business in certain locations. There are also consistent public consultation requirements for development applications. They were the changes within the reporting period.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: I am referring to page 25. I note the director general's earlier comments about the Heritage Council, and I am wondering whether this question might be covered in the fact that the department carries out some delegated responsibilities. On page 25, in the middle section, second paragraph, there is a section there that says that the priorities for the year include the —

registration of all interim registered places under the previous *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990* as part of the transition to the *Heritage Act 2018*

I was wondering if you could expand on that and what that means the arrangements are for the interim list?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can start, and then perhaps Vaughan might add something to it. Key changes to the Heritage Act included a streamlined process for entering a place in the state Register of Heritage

Places; more certainty for owners wishing to develop their heritage places; better protections for important heritage places; and increasing transparency by publishing the Heritage Council of WA's advice to the minister on the inclusion of the place in the state register. Under the transitional arrangements, any place that had been at the interim registration stage under the previous act had to be finalised under the new legislation within two years. That transitional period ended on 30 June 2021. Forty-five registrations occurred during that two-year transitional period. Most of those related to finalising interim registrations, including South Fremantle power station, Victoria Quay in Fremantle, the former Heathcote Hospital and the Cottesloe Beach precinct. Finalisation of those interim registrations and the modernising of that legislation was a significant milestone in managing the state's cultural heritage. I am not sure if you have further?

Mr DAVIES: I think that answers the question.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: In relation to surplus crown land, I had a question in relation to the Fremantle Technical College, which is on the "cappuccino strip". Do you have any update or info that you can share with the committee in relation to the competitive process for that former Fremantle Technical College?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will investigate whether I do.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: In the annual report, it is pages 8 through 11.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I can. In 2020, the government confirmed the sale of that to the tourism company Prendiville Group. I am not sure that I can add much more than that. The sale ensures that those listed buildings, which were underutilised, will be restored and activated, but I am not sure that I can tell you is much more than that has happened.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, at page 106, the statement "A comprehensive income for the department" the first line is dealing with employee benefit expenses. More than \$95 million was expended there. During the reporting period, were any overpayments identified?

Ms OLIVER: I do not have the figures with me specifically around overpayments. We do maintain a register of overpayments and put in place mechanisms to recover overpayments. I cannot give you any specific quantum of what occurred but we can take that on notice, if the minister is happy to. [*Supplementary Information No A8.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I appreciate you will come back to us with the quantum. Are you in a position to identify whether there were any overpayments at all?

Ms OLIVER: I am not in a position to, and I would not want to mislead the committee.

The CHAIR: That will come back in that response.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, if I can get you to turn to, in the annual report, page 10, where it states that —

We respond to the economic, demographic and environmental challenges facing our State with new thinking and approaches to planning and managing land and heritage.

Can you advise the committee how closely the department works with DWER to ensure that planning decisions, and, more broadly speaking, the planning system does not negatively impact the environment?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Who can make a comment about that question? It is fairly general.

Mr DAVIES: DWER or the EPA are part of the referral process for planning decisions, so we would seek advice from that department as well as the EPA around matters that are going through the process.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: With respect to waste management, is that something that is a shared responsibility or is that something that lies squarely with the department?

Mr DAVIES: Which page are you talking to?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Perhaps I will ask you this question: is waste management addressed in the annual report?

Mr DAVIES: I am not sure. It is not really a responsibility of our department. We have waste management facilities on land that is managed by the department.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right. The reason I ask is because the Auditor General says that it is something that should be shared by all of government.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Noted.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Further to that, Mr Chairman, the Auditor General in a report that was tabled during the reporting period on 20 August 2020, states —

There has been some progress on land use planning for waste infrastructure, as DWER has begun working with the Department of Planning.... In December 2019, they began preparing a 'planning instrument' to agree on an approach, which will guide decision-making for authorities involved in developing waste management infrastructure.

Are you in a position to give us any further information on that?

[11.20 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will just see but it might be something that we have to take on notice.

Mr DAVIES: Yes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is something we will have to take on notice. I give an undertaking that I will raise that with the minister.

The CHAIR: Just before we move on, I have just had a thing from my office. That area where I spoke to those people who came to see me was Spring Park Trail in Carramar, if you could take notice of that one.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will add that.

The CHAIR: Yes, add it to the question about the subdivision that Neil was referring to. They came to see me a few times, so if you could just check on that one.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

The CHAIR: There was one question on notice we did not identify from Nick.

[*Supplementary Information No A9.*]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I have another high-level question, partly because I am still trying to understand how these bits fit together. I note references to transport within the annual report are few and far between, although there are some, for example on page 13 where it talks about the Bayswater town centre and also the train station there and also the Ranford Road station. What I am trying to say, and hopefully we all agree, is that good greater Perth planning would be around transport planning and land-use planning together but it feels like certainly the way the department works is very separate. My question is, what has been done to make sure there is a proper integration of land-use and transport planning within the state, because it is certainly not reflected in the annual report?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will make some comments and then, perhaps, hand over to Vaughan. Metronet is the classic example of that. Metronet is not just about train lines. Metronet is about how we use

transport-oriented developments. It is about all those things together and it is a huge piece of work that brings together all those policy elements. I think that is the best, most high-level example you can get of how government has implemented the very policy position that you comment on about bringing those things together. I might ask Vaughan to add some comments to that.

Mr DAVIES: I think where you see the transport elements that intersect with the planning framework is through the development of subregional planning frameworks as well as the broader planning system. It is really just around that and I think that we work very closely with the Department of Transport on where the transport goes, the transport requirements, and try to build that into the planning process. It is not in isolation. It is absolutely through process.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: In response to both of your comments, thank you for those. I think Metronet has some potential in this regard. I guess what I get concerned about is that that is the only place it is happening. It is only on new Metronet stations. That is a really key point. We are now trying to integrate those into density in relatively far-flung places, which, again—I will be fascinated to see how the market response to that because I do not think you are going to get a lot of density on new Metronet stations, Bayswater perhaps being the exception. What I am looking for here is where is the department working around getting transport-oriented developments around existing train stations and other key transport nodes? Is that something we will expect to see in future annual reports? It is just not in this one and that feels to me like it should be core business.

Mr DAVIES: Probably the indicator in an annual report would be with the Planning Commission. That talks about densities within a certain radius of regional centres and also transport-orientated development. It would be in the WAPC annual report.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I can add to that, I know from my portfolio in education that a lot of work has been done between education and planning on how we better predict, for example, population growth so we know where we need new schools. It is not just happening in this agency, the Planning Commission or in the Department of Transport. Certainly, my involvement in it is, across government, we are trying to get better in how we do this planning and trying to exactly stop that kind of silo thing where education used to go off and kind of do its own projections on population growth and residential developments that did not necessarily marry with what planning and transport were doing. I do not know whether you have more that you want to add that.

Mr DAVIES: No, that sums it up pretty well.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Just on that, it says at paragraph 4 of page 21, it says —

Precinct design promotes a place-led approach that puts people and communities first in the creation of sustainable, prosperous and liveable places.

Following on from the honourable member's question, in relation to this precinct design, how does the department of planning oversee that precinct design? Does it oversee it, or does it simply have the role of providing those principles and that is pretty much left out there to the broader process through transport? Is this something the department monitors and assesses against those five principles? Is there some sort of group in the department that monitors how those five principles are delivered through this statement here, which is in the annual report?

Mr DAVIES: This is probably around medium density codes as well as liveable neighbourhood reviews—review of SPP 7.1, our state planning policies around this area, as well as *State planning policy 4.2—Activity centres*. They are the elements that the department gets involved in for precinct design. It really is that policy setting and then we would work with various organisations like Metronet, local governments and various other industry groups around making sure that those planning policies are implemented.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I would not mind a quick follow-up, thank you. Following on from the comments around the Western Australian Planning Commission, I was hoping they would be here actually, because one of the KPIs that are talked about on page 60 I think are really interesting. I have feedback on those and I hope that there is some conversation between yourselves and the WAPC on this. Again, KPIs are pushing us in the absolute wrong direction. It says —

The proportion of residential land that is zoned R40 and above that is within 400 metres of a Major Regional Centre

Anyone who cares about planning in this state, if you do R40, it is a triplex or quadruplex block. If that is really the ambition we trying to get around our centres, this is actually the heart of the problem. We are setting KPIs that are asking us to carve up a city and abolish every tree on a block. All the things that we know, in fact the really good work that is reported in here around medium density zone codes, all the things that you want to achieve in that—your KPIs are forcing you in the other direction. It is fascinating reading this because it feels to me like there is not that linkage between what the WA PC is trying to do and what you are trying to achieve in terms of getting good medium density in the right locations. There is a disconnect here. I do not know if you have any comment on that, but page 60 is the reference in the annual report.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will turn to the acting director general in a moment, but in terms of comment on government policy settings, that is best directed to me not to a public servant. You would appreciate that I am the representative minister. What I can do is give you an undertaking that I will raise that with the minister. I do note that we tried to clarify which parts you wanted at today's hearing and the Planning Commission was not one of them. I note your comments and I will raise them.

[*Supplementary Information No A10.*]

[11.30 am]

The CHAIR: Just one quick one before I hand back to Neil. On pages 132 and 136 of the annual report it is indicated that there was an error in the 2019-20 annual report requiring a restatement of figures in the 2020-21 annual report. The Auditor General made observations about the error and described it as "material". I am wondering what led to the net overstatement of the department's administered land balance as at 30 June 2020.

Ms OLIVER: The restatement of the previous year's figures was a result of an error in the value of the assets, the land assets that are held between the department's crown land assets and the WAPC's freehold assets. The error has occurred as a result of the process of reconciliation being quite manual, or very manual, and some differences in the way that the Valuer-General at Landgate classifies the land versus how the department classifies the land, and that has created a manual processing error and the requirement to restate the previous year's asset values. The result of that was a total restatement of \$685.9 million in the previous year. The current year is accurate and the department is putting in place measures to avoid a reoccurrence.

The CHAIR: What are those measures, just as a matter of interest?

Ms OLIVER: We have been working closely with Landgate and the Valuer-General on how we are classifying the land within the two systems, so they are in direct comparison with each other, and we are automating a number of the processes that are manual.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: The last question relates to precinct design. I think these five indicators guiding community benefit are excellent. This question really is to help me direct future questions to the right people with respect to specific projects—for example, the Armadale line. We have productivity, quality of life, environmental sustainability, infrastructure development and equity and social inclusion. I assume someone somewhere in the public sector, and it may be in the

Department of Planning, has a matrix, can do an assessment against those criteria, and understands the community benefit. I assume someone has that both for the project time frame, like the 18-month closure and maybe the issue around the development of that project, so I am not asking for an answer in respect to that specific project; what I am asking is: who would be the entity, what entity would be undertaking that evaluation against those criteria?

Mr DAVIES: Is this to do with the project?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, we are not going to talk about the project because that is not in the annual report. As I understand the question, member, you are saying that when we look at those five indicators in the precinct design, is there a particular unit that looks at a particular project and applies those? My understanding, but I will get one of the officers to correct me if I am wrong, is that that is embedded across all of the work that the agency does. Unless someone is going to tell me otherwise, there is not one unit of people who sits there and does a check against those principles. That is embedded in the work that the agency does.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: This is just to help me for future questions. If I were to ask the Department of Planning through the minister for an assessment of a particular project against those five principles, the Department of Planning would be the one, maybe not a unit, but the Department of Planning would be doing that assessment somewhere. Is it just the Department of Planning, or would it be, say, with respect to Metronet, or would it be some other entity?

Hon SUE ELLERY: If it is planning, yes, you can ask that question, but these are high-level indicators that guide the community benefit, so you might want to assert that you do not think that a particular project has met number three, environmental sustainability. You might want to assert that. If I were to give you advice on how to ask questions, honourable member, sitting in opposition, I would say: go to the specific, do not go to the broad. That is a set of guidelines that you and I might look at and try to apply to a project, and I might come up with a conclusion that that does tick the box for environmental sustainability, but you might not, and that really does not get you or I much further along.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I appreciate that, and thank you for the response. Crown land sales in 2021, page 23, paragraph 4. It talks about delivering crown land asset sales through the identification of activation of land to support state government priorities, including Metronet. I note that as part of the announcement for the new director general, Anthony Kannis, who I believe will be coming on board at some point—I am hoping to meet him so congratulations, Anthony, if you are listening! He will be on board, so I see that the announcement of that was that the market-led proposal unit would be entering the department. The question, I suppose, with respect to the annual report, this is now embedded into the department, this is going to be the market-led proposal unit that is coming into the department as part of that crown land sales?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not know how you get that question out of that paragraph, but I will see if someone can give you an answer. I think the answer is no.

Mr DAVIES: That answer is correct. The market-led proposals, and we are still working through the more intricate matters around how we bring that into the department, but it will be completely separate to the land asset sales program that you are referring to. A separate unit within the department.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: So you are saying that is correct. It is coming into the department, but it is going to be completely separate to the crown land sales component.

Mr DAVIES: Program, yes.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I have one more question, a matter on page 68. I know we are not talking about the commission, but I also know that the employees of the commission are all employees of the department. I note that Mr David Caddy has remuneration of \$296 327 for the year for 22 meetings. I also note in the previous annual report that that figure was \$237 360 per year. Was that part of his renegotiation for his new contract?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Chair, this is a question about the remuneration of the chair of the Planning Commission. That is not who is appearing before the committee today.

The CHAIR: That is correct. I think you might have to direct your questions somewhere else.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Fair enough, I will, but I point out that he is an employee of the department.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, there is a section in the annual report that talks about “Our People”. It starts at page 48, and —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Do you mind if I interrupt you, honourable member? I just want to correct the record before I forget to. Hon Neil Thomson asserted that David Caddy is an employee of the department. I have been advised that that is incorrect, so I just want to make that point on the record. Sorry to interrupt.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is okay. At page 48 there is a section in the annual report dealing with “Our People”, and it talks about committing to their development, staff development and the like. It also deals with situations where people are injured and the like. Do we have any data as to how many people left the department during the annual reporting period?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We do not have it here, but we could take it on notice.

[Supplementary Information No A11.]

[11.40 am]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Just to provide some context, minister, this is not for the annual reporting period, but it includes the first six months in the reporting period and the data I am about to provide you is for the 18-month period that ends in December 2020. Apparently, there were 148 employees in the department who left and 114 contractors, which makes a total number of exits of 262. I appreciate that you have taken on notice the data and we will get the information in due course. Is it the case that the department conducts exit interviews with all departing staff?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Before I see if I can provide you with an answer to the actual question, I do not know what document you are referring to, so I cannot take that as a given, because I do not know what you are referring to.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is okay.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If you are going to assert something to me, it would be helpful to me if you would identify the document that you were referring to.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is the Auditor General reports that I referred to earlier.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. We are not in a position to respond them, but your question is, as I understand it: does the department do exit interviews? The answer is yes.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Has that been the case throughout the reporting period?

Mr DAVIES: Yes. Sorry, no; I stand corrected.

Ms OLIVER: After that Auditor General audit report was finalised, we implemented staff exit surveys, so they were not routinely being done at the time of that audit, but they are now routinely done.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Do we know when it began?

Ms OLIVER: We actually instated the staff exit survey whilst the Auditor General was on the premises during the audit. It was already in our forward plan of things that we had on foot, and it is now in place, but at the time of that audit report, they will have indicated that we are not routinely doing staff exit audits.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Do you know when the practice began?

Ms OLIVER: I do not have the date of the top of my head, I am sorry.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, can you take on notice when the exit interview practice began?
[*Supplementary Information No A12.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Further to that, perhaps with another number, it is one thing for the practice to have begun but has it been implemented? I accept the evidence that has been provided that there is a new practice in place, but has it been consistently applied?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The answer is yes, it is.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The department has told the Auditor General that they would provide an analysis of exit interview data and that that would be undertaken and included in the business and corporate services report to corporate executive on a quarterly basis. Is that occurring?

Ms OLIVER: Yes.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is that something that would be able to be made publicly available, or not?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take that on notice and will ask the minister whether or not that is appropriate.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Thank you.
[*Supplementary Information No A13.*]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: You may not be held to answer this. My questions are in relation to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill, which is referred to on page 46 under the public consultation process. I am just wondering if you know how much money was spent on the consultation process and the co-design process for this.

Mr DAVIES: Not in here specifically. There is a difference between the consultation process and the report compared with the co-design process, which is a result of the act coming into play.

The CHAIR: Can I just clarify that: it is as a result of the act being passed?

Mr DAVIES: Since the act has been passed, we now need to co-design a whole heap of supporting documentation and regulations, which is different to the consultation process for the bill.

The CHAIR: I just wanted to clarify that—that the consultation was pre-the bill passing.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. The honourable members asking about both. One falls within the reporting period of this annual report, one does not. I give an undertaking that I will raise both of those issues with the relevant minister, but you might not get the part that is outside this reporting period.
[*Supplementary Information No A14.*]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I note for the record that the process that was used, the consultation process, was called a co-design process. Very often in debate on that issue it was said that it was co-design, and it will be co-design going forward, so I use co-design purposely because that is how was described in the parliamentary debate on many, many occasions. But I appreciate that consultation probably is more accurate in that regard.

I appreciate that this one is totally outside the scope, but it is of interest, and feel free to not answer it, but I have often found it very interesting that since that bill was passed, the incoming director general of the department will be on the reference group for the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill. Is that normal practice? It seems like a very high-level position to go on a reference group, and referring back to the annual report, I cannot see any other examples of that being normal practice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Chair, a generous person like myself will say that I will raise the issue you have raised with the relevant minister, but that goes beyond the scope of an annual report hearing.

The CHAIR: It does, and I appreciate you doing that, because I do think it is relevant in part to this annual report because we are talking about the reference group. The composition of the reference group is, I think, relevant, but thank you for taking that on.

[Supplementary Information No A15.]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I take you to page 22 and the land administration and asset management services group, and the reforms there. There is a paragraph there; I cannot work out what number it is, but the department continues to progress pastoral lands reform. There is talk of approvals under the Land Administration Act. I believe there have been some changes or maybe some developing policy in relation to the pastoral land reform. The annual report talks about new opportunities in carbon farming, but I would also like to know whether the department's reform program now encapsulates the broader reforms around energy and a whole range of things. Is it possible for the department to give me an update on those processes?

Hon SUE ELLERY: What you are asking for is what has happened subsequent to this annual report, which is beyond the scope of this annual report. I will see if there is any further information available; it might be that I have to give an undertaking to raise that with the relevant minister.

Mr DAVIES: With regard to pastoral lands reform, back in 2019 the state government announced that there would be pastoral lands reform—a package of statutory, regulatory, policy and administrative initiatives aimed at improving economic and environmental outcomes on pastoral estates. That was based on a response from the Auditor General—is that what the member is talking about?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Yes. I have been asked about this Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill. Is that something you are able to talk about at this stage?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, I cannot give you any information about whether or not we are proceeding down that pathway or not. That is beyond the annual report.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Fair enough.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I ask the minister to turn to page 21 of the report. Hon Neil Thomson might have previously referred you to this page, so you will be familiar with it, with respect to the precinct design and the five indicators. Are planning proposals required to meet all five of the indicators?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think I indicated in answer to Hon Neil Thomson that these are high-level guiding indicators that are embedded in the agency and that they apply to all of the work they do around precinct design. I am not sure if anyone can add anything beyond that, or if there is a specific matrix and you must meet 60 per cent of every single one of them; I do not think it works like that, but I might ask the director general to make some comments on the specifics.

[11.50 am]

Mr DAVIES: Through planning processes, or through the approval process, the department's staff would assess applications against a number of state planning policies, whether they meet those policies or not. That information is then provided to a decision-maker and the decision-maker would

make a decision based on that advice provided, and that would be the statutory planning committee, which is part of WAPC.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: To take one of them as an example, which is the third one, environmental sustainability, is it the case that a planning proposal can be rejected—if you want to specifically relate it to the annual report period, I am happy for it to be flagged in the sense of: were any rejected during the reporting period—are planning proposals then rejected because, for example, they are considered not to be environmentally sustainable?

Mr DAVIES: We would provide advice to the decision-maker around that aspect. We would also refer it out to other agencies, including the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and we would provide that advice to a decision-maker.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So you would only just provide, if you like, information—you have couched it as advice—with respect to each of the five indicators or only those on which you are specifically requested to provide advice?

Mr DAVIES: Our staff would provide advice on a number of different aspects, including those five as well as other state planning policies where they are relevant.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: But it would definitely include those five? It might include other things like setbacks, but the advice that is provided to decision-makers would always include some advice in respect of each of those five indicators?

Mr DAVIES: Yes. Whether it is spelt out exactly like that, I am not sure, but absolutely.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Then it is up to the decision makers whether they are going to reject a proposal based upon that advice?

Mr DAVIES: Yes.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Does the department then collect data on the number of occasions that proposals have been rejected?

Mr DAVIES: The WA Planning Commission would have that data.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: But not the department?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is correct; not the department.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Page 19 of the report talks about planning services —

The Department is supporting the \$1.5 billion Perth City Deal, which seeks to re-energise Perth and bring Government and private investment into the central business district, creating almost 10, 000 jobs ...

In what way is the department supporting that process?

Hon SUE ELLERY: A number of projects are listed as part of that in the three dot points immediately below what you have just read out. Perhaps you could provide a bit more information about that.

Mr DAVIES: Yes. I guess it varies with the different projects under that. The department works together with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, as well as Treasury, in supporting the delivery of Perth City Deal, and then we would engage with various other relevant stakeholders depending on what the project is, whether it is a university, whether it is a local government and things like that.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: You refer to the government and the city campuses of Edith Cowan, Murdoch and Curtin Universities and that you would liaise. What progress is the department making on those projects, and specifically what is the department's role on those projects?

Hon SUE ELLERY: On progress, I am not able to tell you; that is beyond the scope of the annual report, which is what has happened in the reporting period. In terms of the role that the department plays, I think the point the acting director general just made was it would depend on the specifics. There are a lot of moving parts in City Deal. It is a partnership between the state and the federal government, and local government as well. A lot of different projects are part of that. At various points, this agency will play various roles. I am not sure that we can add much more than that.

Mr DAVIES: It is probably more around land assembly and processes that are administered under various pieces of legislation that we hold.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: If I can follow on the land assembly piece, you are saying that the department does the work on land assembly. Can you clarify the distinction between the department's role and the role of DevelopmentWA in relation to land assembly? Are you able to do that?

Mr DAVIES: If it relates to crown land on various sites and programs, then we would work with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, as well as Treasury, to work through, I guess, how we make that land available.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: In respect of the Perth City Deal, let us take Yagan Square, for example, and the development in and around that process, with one of the universities looking to develop over the bus station. You are saying that the role of the department is to liaise with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. How would the role of the department be different from the agency that would hold maybe the management order or the air rights or whatever has to be held for what is going to be developed on that site? Sorry to be general, but I am trying to understand the distinction.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It will depend. As I said, there are a lot of moving parts in City Deal. It will depend on the particular components at any time as to what role each agency will play. I am not sure that we are able to add much more than that.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I am noting the time, but I have one question, or one theme, perhaps, rather than one question. Page 97 lists the administered legislation for the department. During the last two years, which of course includes the reporting period, some what I would describe as emergency powers—I am using that in a very broad sense—have been granted by Parliament to various elements of the executive. During the reporting period, has the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage been exercising any of those types of powers; that is, powers that have been specifically drafted for what is referred to as COVID-19 purposes and would not otherwise have been provided?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, is the short answer. There was the planning reform legislation, which somebody asked us about a bit earlier. I will see whether the acting director general can add some further information.

Mr DAVIES: That is, I guess, the temporary changes or amendments to the Planning and Development Act, which were around part 17, which was the significant development pathway, which is set up to make the process more relevant to economic benefits for the state.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: On how many occasions during the reporting period have those—you referred to them as “temporary”, which I think is a good way of describing them, so I will call them that, too—temporary powers been used?

Mr DAVIES: During the reporting period we received 21 applications, and nine were approved.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is the information with regard to the nine that were approved and the 12 that were rejected publicly available or able to be made publicly available?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will give an undertaking to raise that with the relevant minister.

[Supplementary Information No A16.]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: At page 94, in the table “Major capital projects”, there is the line “Asset replacement ICT”, with an expected year of completion 2025–26, an estimated remaining cost to complete as at 30 June 2021 of \$2.145 million, and then a total cost of \$19.18 million. Are you able to give a general description of what that project is, and does it refer to the streamlining of the planning system or is it simply about the upgrade of computers, for example, in the department?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get Kathlene to make some comments, but can I just ask for her to be concise because I need to be somewhere else.

Ms OLIVER: It is simply the replacement of ICT assets such as computers and laptops. The ICT development is a different project.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much for attending today. Please end the broadcast. The transcript of this hearing will be forwarded to you for correction. If you believe that any corrections should be made because of typographical or transcription errors, please indicate those corrections on the transcript. Errors of fact or substance must be corrected in a formal letter to the committee. When you receive your transcript of evidence, the committee will also advise you when to provide your answers to questions taken on notice. If you want to provide additional information or elaborate on particular points, you may provide such evidence for the committee’s consideration when you return your corrected transcript of evidence. Once again, thank you very much for your time.

Hearing concluded at 12.00 noon
