



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

2019-20-21-22

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

No. 714

FRIDAY 1 APRIL 2022

(The Questions and Answers Paper published on Monday to Friday of each week will contain, by number and title, all questions to which answers have been received the previous day and any new questions asked that day. Consequently, the full text of any question will be printed only twice: when notice is given; and, when answered.)

Notice given on date shown.

Publication of Questions	Answer to be lodged by
Q & A No. 699 (Including Question Nos 8417 to 8430)	1 April 2022
Q & A No. 700 (Including Question Nos 8431 to 8450)	4 April 2022
Q & A No. 701 (Including Question Nos 8451 to 8475)	5 April 2022
Q & A No. 702 (Including Question Nos 8476 to 8479)	6 April 2022
Q & A No. 703 (Including Question Nos 8480 to 8487)	7 April 2022
Q & A No. 704 (Including Question Nos 8488 to 8490)	8 April 2022
Q & A No. 705 (Including Question Nos 8491 to 8500)	11 April 2022
Q & A No. 706 (Including Question Nos 8501 to 8540)	12 April 2022
Q & A No. 707 (Including Question Nos 8541 to 8575)	13 April 2022
Q & A No. 708 (Including Question Nos 8576 to 8583)	14 April 2022
Q & A No. 709 (Questions—Nil)	-
Q & A No. 710 (Including Question Nos 8584 to 8587)	18 April 2022
Q & A No. 711 (Including Question Nos 8588 to 8590)	19 April 2022
Q & A No. 712 (Including Question Nos 8591 to 8597)	20 April 2022
Q & A No. 713 (Including Question Nos 8598 to 8600)	21 April 2022
Q & A No. 714 (Including Question Nos 8601 to 8603)	22 April 2022

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(Paper No. 699)

* 8417 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT—The Hon. Mark Buttigieg to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) How many employees who identify with having a disability are employed by:
 - (a) Department of Education?
 - (b) NSW Education Standards Authority?
- (2) How many senior managers who identify with having a disability are employed by:
 - (a) Department of Education
 - (b) NSW Education Standards Authority

Answer—

- (1)
 - (a) As of June 2021, 164 (3.86%) Department of Education corporate employees identify as having a disability.
 - (b) As of June 2021, 164 (3.86%) Department of Education corporate employees identify as having a disability.
- (2)
 - (a) As of June 2021, 10 (2.26%) Department of Education senior managers (corporate employees) identify as having a disability.
 - (b) As of June 2021, three senior manager employees out of 14 identify as having a disability.

* 8418 ENERGY—CARBON EMISSIONS—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (!) The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) together with the Australian National University (ANU) recently published research showing that one in three fossil fuel projects in Australia emits more pollution than was estimated by the company when the project was approved:
 - (a) Given these concerns, has consideration been given to an urgent review of Environmental Impact Statements for existing fossil fuel projects to ensure the Government and the public know how polluting they are?
 - (b) Has consideration been given to reviewing and fixing the Environmental Impact Process for new proposals, so we have a truer picture of the emissions of all projects?
 - (c) What measurements for emissions is the Minister relying on in order to plan this state's transition to net zero by 2050?
 - (i) How might this be impacted given the ACF/ANU research demonstrating that many projects are drastically underestimating their emissions?

Answer—

- (1)
 - (a-b) These questions should be referred to the Minister for Planning, the Hon Anthony Roberts MP.
 - (c) The NSW Government undertakes emissions modelling for all sectors of the economy to plan the State's transition to net zero by 2050.
 - (i) The Government's emissions modelling is informed by data and information from a range of sources including: facility data reported under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting scheme; data used by the Australian Government for the National Greenhouse Accounts; and information from other sources. I am advised the ACF

and ANU research is being considered by the Department's scientists as they progress the next update of the State's emissions projections.

* 8419 ENERGY—ENERGY EFFICIENCY—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) Will the Government allow local councils to set stricter standards than the new building sustainability index (BASIX) requirements, if deemed appropriate for their local communities?

Answer—

This question should be referred to the Minister for Planning and Minister for Homes, the Hon Anthony Roberts MP.

* 8420 ENERGY—EU TAXONOMY AND GAS - KURRI KURRI—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) Regarding the European Union's (EU) sustainable finance taxonomy, which classifies a list of economic activities and environmental criteria that each must meet to earn a green label:
- (a) Given the carbon emissions intensity of the Kurri Kurri gas power generator is double the maximum allowed under EU standards for sustainable gas investment (according to Credit Suisse), have the increased emissions as a result of this project been factored into the Government's roadmap to achieve halved emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2050?
- (b) What modelling is the Government relying on to estimate increased emissions as a result of the Kurri Kurri gas power plant?

Answer—

- (1) I am advised:

- (a) No, the emissions from the proposed Kurri Kurri Gas Generator have not been explicitly factored into current projections. The maximum emissions from the proposal is 0.41 million tonnes (Mt) CO₂-e per annum. Current central policy projections have NSW emissions at 83.3 and 73.3 Mt CO₂-e in 2030 and 2050, respectively. The proposal will increase projected emissions by 0.5 per cent in 2030 and 0.6 per cent in 2050 at most. The NSW Government's projected emissions reduction is between 47% and 52% by 2030 and this adjustment will not materially impact the achievement of the 50% emissions reduction target by 2030 as outlined in the NSW Net Zero Plan.
- (b) Modelling for the proposal was carried out by Jacobs in the Environmental Impact Statement. Modelling of NSW emissions uses the Department of Planning and Environment's current policy projections to 2050.

* 8421 ENERGY—GLENCORE MINE—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) The trend in the National Electricity Market is for wind and solar renewables to replace ageing coal-fired generators, why isn't this being considered as an option for the Hunter region instead of another expanded coal mine?
- (2) Why is the Government allowing expansion of open-cut coal mining at a time when the market and the climate demand that they close?
- (3) What is the forecast for increased emissions as a result of the proposed expansion of the Glencore mine, the Glendell Continued Operations Project?
- (a) Have the increased emissions as a result of this project been factored into the Government's roadmap to achieve halved emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2050?
- (b) In light of recent ACF/ANU research showing emissions are regularly underestimated in Environmental Impact statements, what modelling and estimates is the Minister relying on to plan for increased emissions as a result of the expanded Glencore mine?

Answer—

- (1-2) The Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) will help to create jobs and diversify local economies in light of changing global demand for different energy sources. Commercial interest in renewable generation and storage projects representing almost 40 gigawatts and more than \$100 billion of potential investment have been received in the registration of interest for the REZ.
- (3) I am advised that the total scope 1 and 2 emissions from the Glendell Continued Operations Project are 6.52 million tonnes CO₂-e or 0.27 million tonnes CO₂-e per annum.
- (a) The emissions from the project were included in the Department of Planning and Environment's NSW emissions projections published in the 2021 NSW State of the Environment Report.
- The Department's 2021 projections predated the most recent emission estimates for the project included in the Environmental Impact Statement. These emission estimates will be considered in the Department's updates to the NSW emissions projections. This adjustment will not materially impact the achievement of the 2030 and 2050 emissions reduction targets.
- (b) The Department's emissions projections rely on emission estimates from Environmental Impact Statements for proposed projects where such estimates are based on robust methods.
- The Greenhouse Gas and Energy assessment prepared for the Glencore project Environmental Impact Statement used the more advanced methods from National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting approaches to estimate fugitive emissions. Incorporation of these estimates by the Department is expected to improve the accuracy of the NSW emission projections.

* 8422 ENERGY—RECYCLING AND RENEWABLES—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) What is the Government doing to encourage neighbourhood batteries at substations?
- (2) What steps are being taken to adapt the grid to renewables to allow households to install large batteries and solar panels?
- (3) What systems are in place to facilitate recycling of medical waste?

Answer—

- (1) The NSW Government supports the Energy Security Board's recommended Implementation Plan to enable the effective integration of Distributed Energy Resources (DER) and flexible demand into the electricity system. The actions under the Plan will support the deployment of neighbourhood batteries by considering the responsibilities of distribution service operators and network operators in relation to community storage tariffs, load control and procurement and delivery of DER network services.
- (2) The NSW Government has taken action to remove barriers to household solar generation by significantly increasing the allowable capacity thresholds for a solar Photo Voltaic (PV) system before it requires local council approval.

I am also advised that the Department of Planning and Environment has commenced consultation with stakeholders to ensure the electricity grid is able to support households installing DER, including batteries and solar PV.

In 2021, the Australian Energy Market Commission published a package of reforms, which aim to enable more DER to be integrated into the electricity grid. The reforms require electricity networks to efficiently invest to accommodate more DER, including household batteries and solar PV, into the grid.

In addition, the National Energy Minister's forums are supporting the Energy Security Board's recommendation to proceed with an Implementation Plan to unlock value for customers from the effective integration of DER and flexible demand into energy markets.

- (3) This question should be referred to the Minister for Environment and Heritage, the Hon James Griffin MP.

* 8423 ENERGY—RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) Given the over-subscription of Renewable Energy Zones, how is the Government engaging local councils and community representatives to participate in the assessment and decision-making process regarding renewable projects in their region?
- (2) Will the Government support regional communities by developing planning standards that require a proportion of the value of a development to be set aside for community benefit-sharing schemes?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) The Energy Corporation of NSW is consulting extensively with local councils and communities in developing the Renewable Energy Zones (REZs), including regional reference groups, community consultative committees and direct consultation with landowners.

All renewable energy projects in the REZs will also require planning approval, which includes opportunities for local councils and communities to make submissions on renewable energy projects in the REZs. Public submissions must be considered by the relevant consent authority in making a decision on the merits of these projects under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

- (2) Planning standards already apply to the development of renewable energy projects in the REZs under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, including the NSW Wind Energy Guideline and the NSW Large-scale Solar Energy Guideline.

The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap plans for access fees to be collected from renewable energy projects that participate in REZs. A portion of these fees will go towards community benefit sharing within the REZs.

* 8424 ENERGY—SNOWY HYDRO 2.1—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) The \$3.3 billion extension cord that will transfer power generated by the new Snowy Hydro project to the New South Wales electricity grid is in danger of arriving years after the project comes online in 2025. When it is completed in early 2025, Snowy 2.0 will deliver 2,000 megawatts of dispatchable power to Victoria and New South Wales via two giant interconnectors which have connectors that will allow its electricity to reach New South Wales and Victoria. The interconnector which will deliver power from Snowy 2.0 is scheduled to be built by 2031 at the earliest, six years after the Snowy is scheduled to come online. Snowy Hydro has attacked a planned national energy blueprint, warning a failure to push ahead with crucial investment in new electricity transmission could trigger higher power prices, blackouts and dangerous system instability:

- (a) Recent reports suggest that electricity from Snowy 2.0 could be wasted for up to a decade because critical pieces of its infrastructure may be built years after the project comes online. How is the Government seeking to address this?

- (b) When will New South Wales be able to use electricity from this project?

- (2) Snowy Hydro has said a failure to invest in electricity transmission infrastructure now could trigger higher power prices, blackouts and dangerous system instability. What modelling has been done regarding this?

- (a) When will the necessary transmission infrastructure for Snowy 2.0 be delivered?

Answer—

I am advised:

(1)

- (a) The NSW Government continues to work closely with the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), and other market bodies to ensure the timely delivery of HumeLink and other major transmission projects to keep NSW's electricity system affordable and reliable.

- (b) The Australian Energy Market Operator released its Draft 2022 Integrated System Plan (ISP) in December 2021, which concluded that HumeLink should continue to target delivery by 2026-2027. This is consistent with Transgrid's project schedule to complete construction by late 2026.
- (2) The modelling that has been undertaken is presented in the Draft 2022 ISP.
- (a) The AEMO's draft 2022 ISP concludes that HumeLink should continue to target delivery by 2026-2027 and that the Victorian and New South Wales interconnector be delivered by 2030-31.
- * 8425 ENERGY—WIND ENERGY—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—
- (1) What steps has the Government taken to put in place a positive regulatory framework for offshore wind?
- (2) Are there any plans to extend either the Newcastle or the Illawarra Renewable Energy Zones offshore, at least to the edge of the State limits?

Answer—

- (1) In December 2021, the Commonwealth Government passed the Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Bill 2021. The Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (DISER) is currently working on the regulations that outline the process to declare specified areas suitable for offshore renewable energy infrastructure from three nautical miles and grant exploration and infrastructure licences.
- The NSW Government has offered assistance to both the Federal Minister for Industry, Energy and Emissions Reduction, the Hon Angus Taylor MP, and DISER, to support the implementation of the legislation, including prioritising consideration of areas offshore from both Newcastle and Wollongong.
- At this stage, information from the industry indicates that the best locations for offshore wind projects would be at least 20 kilometres off the NSW coast in Commonwealth waters and utilise floating wind turbine technology.
- The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is currently considering the design of the Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra Renewable Energy Zones (REZs), including opportunities to support the development of offshore wind projects in consultation with the Australian Government and other stakeholders.
- (2) EnergyCo will define a geographic area for the Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra REZs which will be informed by the outcome of the industry registration of interest process and further consultation with relevant stakeholders in the coming months. At this stage, EnergyCo anticipates that offshore wind projects would be located outside of the REZ geographic area in Commonwealth waters and connect to REZ network infrastructure located on land within the REZ geographic area.
- * 8426 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE—ABORIGINAL HERITAGE—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Regional Youth representing the Minister for Environment and Heritage—
- (1) NSW Planning has recommended the approval of Glencore's Glendell Continued Operations Project to continue mining to the north of its existing operations. This recommendation for approval has been referred to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) for final assessment and determination:
- (2) Was the Minister for Heritage consulted on this recommended approval, given the irreversible impacts on Aboriginal and colonial heritage?
- (a) If so, what was the Minister's response?
- (3) What is the Minister's position on the Glendell Continued Operations Project?
- (4) What actions has the Minister/Department taken in relation to the Glendell Continued Operations Project?

- (5) What actions does the Minister/Department intend to take in relation to the Glendell Continued Operations Project?
- (6) Given the Department of Planning's own report acknowledges that First Nations groups and the NSW Heritage Council consider the whole region to have high cultural significance, what is the Minister's position on the destruction of heritage as part of this project?
- (7) Given the Department of Planning's own report acknowledges that if approved the project will cause "unavoidable impacts to the Ravensworth Homestead," what steps has the Minister taken to prevent heritage destruction on the site?

Answer—

- (1) I have been briefed on this issue and am aware that the Glendell Continued Operations Project has been referred to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) for final determination.
- (2) The Heritage Council has provided advice in regard to the important Aboriginal and post-contact cultural and historical values of the Ravensworth Estate.
 - (a) The matter has been referred to the IPC for determination. The IPC will undertake a number of public and agency forums prior to any decision being made.
- (3) The State Significant Development status of the mining proposal means the approval provisions of a range of NSW acts, including the Heritage Act 1977, are suspended. The Heritage Council of NSW and the Minister for Heritage have an advisory role only. It is the view of the Heritage Council that the Ravensworth Estate in its setting is likely to be of NSW state heritage significance.
- (4) Heritage NSW and the Heritage Council have continued to provide advice and meet with all stakeholders regarding the Aboriginal and post-contact cultural significance of the Ravensworth Estate.
- (5) Heritage NSW and the Heritage Council have provided detailed submissions and briefed the IPC on 28 March 2022 in order for an informed determination to be made.
- (6) The Heritage Council have provided advice that the Ravensworth cultural landscape is likely to have aesthetic, historic, scientific and social heritage values of state significance, which will be seriously impacted by the mining proposal. The Heritage Council's submission stated that it did not support the relocation of Ravensworth Homestead as this would result in an unacceptable heritage impact. The Heritage Council strongly supports Ravensworth Homestead being retained in its current, highly significant location with a curtilage around its equally significant cultural landscape.
- (7) I have ensured that comprehensive expert heritage advice has been provided to aid the Independent Planning Commission in making a determination.

* 8427 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE—GLENLEE—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Regional Youth representing the Minister for Environment and Heritage—

- (1) Given the historic property 'Glenlee' at 80 Boronia Parade, Lugarno, is now up for sale, has the Minister given consideration to advocating for Government funding to be allocated to purchase and protect this historic property?
- (2) Given there is an Interim Heritage Order in place under the NSW Heritage Act 1977 and the site has been listed by the National Trust for its early settler history and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage:
 - (a) What steps has the Minister taken to protect its heritage values?
 - (b) What steps has the Department taken to protect its heritage values?
- (3) What meetings has the Minister and/or Department had in relation to Glenlee?
- (4) Has the Minister and/or the Department met with Georges River Council to discuss the historic property 'Glenlee' at 80 Boronia Parade, Lugarno?

Answer—

- (1) This question should be referred to the Minister for Planning, the Hon Anthony Roberts MP.

- (2) I understand the former Minister responsible for heritage, the Hon Don Harwin, wrote to the Heritage Council of NSW in October 2021 requesting that it consider a State Heritage Register nomination of Glenlee, as a priority.

I made an Interim Heritage Order over Glenlee, gazetted on 28 January 2022. This gives the property twelve months of statutory protection. The IHO requires any changes or works proposed during that period to be reviewed and approved by the Heritage Council of NSW, or by its delegate.

The period of the IHO also allows for consideration of Glenlee's potential heritage values, appropriate statutory protection on Georges River Local Environmental Plan and its possible inclusion on the NSW State Heritage Register, should the Heritage Council of NSW recommend this to me.

- (3) Heritage NSW has met with Georges River Council staff in relation to making the 2021 local IHO, seeking a copy of Council's independent heritage assessment report and a nomination for possible State Heritage Register listing for the property.
- (4) See response to question 3.

* 8428 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE—THE FORMER HUSKISSON HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH SITE—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Regional Youth representing the Minister for Environment and Heritage—

- (1) What is the status of the Huskisson Heritage Association application in relation to the former Huskisson Holy Trinity Anglican church site?
- (a) When will this application be considered and responded to by the Heritage Council?
- (2) Are the Minister and Heritage Council aware of the great local historical importance of the former Huskisson Holy Trinity Anglican church site, including that there are up to 70 unmarked Aboriginal and European graves on the site?
- (3) What measures have been taken to prevent the destruction of Aboriginal and European heritage on this site?
- (4) How many heritage applications have been made in relation to the former Huskisson Holy Trinity Anglican church site?
- (a) of these, how many have been responded to?
- (5) Has the Minister or Heritage Council or any Departmental representatives met with any community representatives or groups in relation to this site?
- (a) If so, which individuals and groups have met?
- (6) What works have already been completed on the site?
- (a) of these, how many involved the destruction of heritage?
- (7) What approvals and/or processes have allowed for work to be undertaken on the site despite community opposition and objections by the Jerrinja Land Council, the Huskisson Heritage Association and others?
- (8) How many trees will be cut down as part of this project?
- (a) How many trees have already been cut down?
- (b) How many of these are identified as the marker trees for the burial of James Golding (aka King Budd Billy II, King of Jervis Bay)?

Answer—

- (1) Heritage NSW has received the Interim Heritage Order (IHO) request and is currently preparing a response.
- The Heritage Council or its delegate will make a decision once the HNSW response is prepared.
- (2) Yes

- (3) On 6 February 2019 the State Heritage Register Committee (SHRC) considered a request for a stop work order and Interim Heritage Order IHO. On 22 February 2019 the Chair of the Heritage Council wrote to Shoalhaven City Council urging it to consider the site's heritage significance in any development. Heritage NSW wrote to the Huskisson Heritage Association on 1 March 2019 noting that the SHRC had not recommended that the Minister make an IHO.

- (4) In September 2018 Heritage NSW received a request for an IHO over this site. The former Minister decided not to place an IHO, citing insufficient evidence, requesting further information on its Aboriginal cultural heritage values and inviting the Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) to meet to discuss their concerns.

A request was made in December 2018 to add Lot 7 on Hawke Street and Lot 8 on Currumbene Street to the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS). This was not registered as an AHIMS site, as Heritage NSW did not receive sufficient information.

In June 2019 Heritage NSW received a request for a stop work order under s.136(1) of the Heritage Act 1977. In July 2019, the former Minister refused to issue the stop work order over the property.

A subsequent request in August 2019 sought a stop work order and IHO, which were refused.

In September 2019 a potential Aboriginal culturally modified tree was reported. Heritage NSW officers assessed the tree and found that the scar was most likely caused by natural processes.

An additional request in June 2021 was to list the site on the State Heritage Register. Heritage NSW continues to work closely with local council and state planning bodies to manage this site appropriately.

- (5) Yes

- (a) The owner's representative and a community representative have discussed the site and their respective concerns at a State Heritage Register Committee meeting on 6 February 2019.

- (6) Works already completed on the site that Heritage NSW is aware of:

- September 2018, demolition of the church hall
- September 2018, five mature trees cut down, under Council's '45-degree' asset protection policy

- (a) All of them have approval within the remit of local council planning laws.

- (7) An application has been approved (14 March 2022) under Section 140 of the Heritage Act 1977 to undertake archaeological test excavation works to determine if grave sites are present in this area.

While Heritage NSW notes the concerns over any disturbance of Ancestors who may be buried in the vicinity, this is a very standard non-disturbance method which aims solely to identify where any grave cuts may be, to better inform any future impactful development proposal.

On 30 April 2020, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment issued a gateway determination over the planning proposal, requiring the following assessments be done prior to public exhibition:

- A new independent GPR survey of the entire site by a grave detection specialist using best practice methodology
- An independent assessment by an appropriately qualified historical archaeologist of the entire area, to determine the status of the graves and if any are 'relics' under the NSW Heritage Act 1977
- A full Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report of the entire area, in accordance with OEH 2011 guidelines, including Aboriginal community consultation and archaeological survey and reporting.

- (8) Heritage NSW has not seen the detail of the project proposal. A formal referral of the planning proposal has not yet been made.

- (a) Unknown.

- (b) Unknown. It is not known if trees were planted to act as grave markers.

* 8429 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE—YASMAR HOUSE AND GARDEN—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Regional Youth representing the Minister for Environment and Heritage—

- (1) What annual maintenance budget has been allocated to protect Yasmar house and garden?
- (2) What monitoring is being undertaken to ensure the heritage values of Yasmar house and garden are being protected?

Answer—

As the questions relate to maintenance and monitoring, these questions should be directed to the owner of the site, Crown Lands, noting that Youth Justice NSW manages the site.

* 8430 TREASURER—\$5 MILLION GRANT PROVIDED TO THE ST AGNES CARE AND LIFESTYLE FACILITY—Mr David Shoebridge to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) What advice was provided by Treasury officials in relation to the \$5 million grant provided to the St Agnes' Care and Lifestyle facility in Port Macquarie?
- (2) What was the rationale provided by Treasury officials for recommending the grant not be supported, in advice provided to the Government's Expenditure Review Committee?
- (3) When did Treasury become aware of this proposed grant?
- (4) When did the Minister become aware of this proposed grant?
- (5) When did Treasury provide its advice to the Expenditure Review Committee about this grant?
- (6) Was there any other correspondence made by Treasury officials in relation to this grant?
 - (a) If so, to whom?
 - (i) What was the substance of the correspondence?
- (7) After the grant was approved contrary to advice provided by Treasury, was this expenditure flagged as concerning or unusual in any way?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1-2) I refer the member to answers provided at the Treasury and Energy Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 February 2022.
- (3) The proposal was first raised with Treasury on 30 June 2020.
- (4) This question is best directed to the Minister for Health.
- (5) I refer the member to answers provided at the Treasury and Energy Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 February 2022.
- (6) No.
- (7) No.

14 MARCH 2022

(Paper No. 700)

* 8443 FINANCE—COVID-19 PENALTY NOTICE REVIEW OUTCOMES—The Hon. Tara Moriarty to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations—

- (1) Of the approximately 1,200 successful reviews processed by Revenue NSW at 31 January 2022:
 - (a) How many resulted in a fine being withdrawn?
 - (b) How many resulted in a caution?
- (2) How many review decisions for COVID-19 public health order penalty notices were made:

- (a) Between 1 June 2020 and 30 June 2021?
 (b) Between 1 July 2021 and 30 September 2021?
 (c) Between 1 October 2021 and the present date?
- (3) How many decisions resulted in a fine being withdrawn or cautioned in each of the above periods?

Answer—

- (1) As at 28 February 2022: 1,152 fines were No Actioned; 121 were Written Off; 62 were Annulled; 42 were Cautioned; and 1 was Withdrawn.

This data includes outcomes from all processes, not just those resulting from a formal request for a review.

- (2) As at 28 February 2022 a total of 8,647 formal request had been processed including 56 between 1 June 2020 and 30 June 2021; 415 between 1 July 2021 and 30 September 2021; and 8,176 between 1 October 2021 and 28 February 2022.

Of these 8,647 requests for review:

- 588 were No Actioned;
- 36 were Annulled; and
- 31 were Cautioned.

For 1,469 fines, engagement with the customer through the review process resulted in the customer voluntarily entering into a Payment Plan or a Work and Development Order.

* 8444 FINANCE—INFORMATION INCLUDED ON REVENUE NSW FINES CORRESPONDENCE—The Hon. Tara Moriarty to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations—

- (1) Does correspondence from Revenue NSW to clients with fines include any information about accessing legal advice regarding fines?
- (a) If so, can an example be provided?
- (2) Does this information appear on:
- (a) Penalty Notices?
- (i) If so, on what date did Revenue NSW first start including such information?
- (b) Penalty Reminder Notices?
- (i) If so, on what date did Revenue NSW first start including such information?
- (c) Overdue Notices?
- (i) If so, on what date did Revenue NSW first start including such information?
- (3) Was any information regarding access to legal advice included on Penalty Notices or Penalty Reminder Notices for COVID-19 public health order fines issued in the following years:
- (a) 2020?
- (i) If so, can an example be provided?
- (b) 2021?
- (i) If so, can an example be provided?

Answer—

- (1) Yes
- (a) The following information about LawAccess is included on Penalty Notices, Penalty Reminder Notices and Overdue Fine Notices:

For free legal help visit LawAccess NSW at www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au for webchat, or phone them on 1300 888 529 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm (except public holidays).

In addition, penalty notices, penalty reminder notices, overdue fine notices and the Revenue NSW website contain contact details for customers wishing to get in touch with Revenue NSW by phone including a 1300 number, a number for overseas callers, special facilities for hearing/speech impaired and instructions for the Telephone Interpreter Service.

Anyone who calls the 1300 number and identifies as Aboriginal, or Torres Strait Islander can choose to be transferred to an Aboriginal Liaison Officer.

The Revenue NSW website includes information on:

- time to pay;
- accessing camera images;
- nominating another driver;
- advising of the sale of a vehicle;
- seeking leniency for a penalty; and
- applying to have the penalty heard in court.

Overdue Fine notices contain additional advice on the possibility of paying off fines through a payment plan or a Work and Development order, as well as review options and information for contacting LawAccess.

The Revenue NSW website www.revenue.nsw.gov.au also provides specific information for vulnerable customers and those facing hardship including:

- direct 1300 numbers;
- direct numbers for overseas callers;
- a financial hardship enquiry form;
- a link for sending an email or online enquiry form to Advocates and Sponsors for vulnerable customer; and
- a link for sending an email or online feedback form for Work and Development Order (WDO sponsors).

There are also direct links to key pages including:

- find a WDO sponsor;
- myPenalty portal;
- request a payment plan;
- what to do if you can't pay your debt;
- ask someone to talk to us for you;
- Hardship Review Board; and
- advocates and sponsors information page.

All of this information is designed to encourage customers to contact Revenue NSW to discuss their eligibility, their particular circumstances and all the options available to help resolve their fines debt.

- (2) Information about the free legal help available through LawAccess has been included on Overdue Fine Notices since March 2015 and on Penalty Notices and Penalty Reminder Notices since 21 December 2021.
- (3) Prior to 21 December 2021, information about the free legal help available through LawAccess was only included on Overdue Fine Notices for COVID-19 Public Health Order offences.

Since 21 December 2021 this information has also been included on Penalty Notices and Penalty Reminder Notices for these offences.

* 8446 FINANCE—REVENUE NSW ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS—The Hon. Tara Moriarty to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations—

- (1) Following the winding-up of the NSW Cross-Agency Working Group in early December 2021, what steps is Revenue NSW currently taking to hear from service providers and communities about the challenges faced by disadvantaged individuals with COVID-19 public health order fines?

Answer—

Revenue NSW engages with service providers and communities about all types of fines through strategic Fines Community Action Plan committees in target communities; Cross Government Forums, including the COVID-19 Aboriginal Communities Interagency; and, other community interagency meetings.

Revenue NSW's Outreach Team has returned to working on the ground in communities of high disadvantage following a pause in face-to-face activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This team works closely with services on the ground and directly with individuals to help them resolve their fines debt including fines issued for breaching Public Health Orders.

Revenue NSW also continue to conduct research directly with individuals with fines through our Hardship Support Program as part of our strategic work to find ways to encourage people to contact us and help reduce their fines debt.

15 MARCH 2022

(Paper No. 701)

* 8474 TREASURER—BUDGET PAPERS AND REPORTING CAPITAL EXPENDITURE—The Hon. Peter Primrose to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) Does the NSW Infrastructure Statement budget paper contain all infrastructure projects considered “major projects” from the general government sector?
- (a) If not:
- (i) What are the exceptions to this requirement in the 2021/22 budget?
- (ii) What are the reasons for not including major infrastructure projects in the NSW Infrastructure Statement budget paper?
- (iii) Where in the budget papers would these major infrastructure projects be listed and accounted for?
- (b) If so, who is responsible for ensuring all major infrastructure projects are included in the budget papers?
- (2) Are there differing requirements to report major projects in the budget papers depending on the source of the funding for the general government sector, for example funded projects from the Restart Fund?
- (a) If so, what are the reasons for this being the case?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) All NSW General Government agencies are required to comply with Treasury Circular NSW TC12/20 Budget Controls – Capital Expenditure Authorisation Limits which defines major works as projects with an estimated total cost (ETC) of \$250,000 or more.

In additional Budget Paper 3 – Infrastructure Statement defines major works as: “Projects with an estimated total cost of \$250,000 or above, split into new projects (approved to begin in 2021-22) and works in progress (commenced before 2021-22 but not yet completed).”

As part of budget preparation, all agencies are required to update capital projects in line with TC 12/20 and budget guidelines including the requirement to classify projects as major or minor works. Budget Paper 3 is prepared based on agency updates.

NSW Treasury analysts, in conjunction with agencies and ministerial offices, review Budget Paper 3 – Infrastructure Statement to ensure all projects are captured and reported accurately.

- (2) There are no differing requirements to report major projects based on source of funding.

1 APRIL 2022

(Paper No. 714)

8601 LOCAL GOVERNMENT—PUBLIC DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS—The Hon. Mark Buttigieg to ask the Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services representing the Minister for Local Government—

- (1) Has the Office of Local Government at any point in time reviewed any information or conducted an investigation relating to Councillor Sarah Richards and her declaration and/or her public disclosure statement?
- (a) If so:
- (i) Please provide the dates that this took place?
- (ii) What did the review of information or investigation reveal?
- (2) Has the Office of Local Government at any point in time reviewed any information or conducted an investigation relating to Matthew Bennett and property development?
- (a) If so:
- (i) Please provide the dates that this took place?
- (ii) What did the review of information or investigation reveal?
- (3) The Office of Local Government (OLG) conducted an investigation into Mr Antoine Doueihi relating to his disclosures. On the 8th of March 2022, at a Budget Estimates hearing, information was provided to the Minister regarding Councillor Sarah Richards and disclosures:
- (a) Will the Minister please outline why the Office of Local Government told the Sydney Morning Herald “The matter raised is not a matter for OLG given the issue is in relation to nomination and/or its disclosure requirements. This is a matter for the electoral commission”, when the Office of Local Government had conducted an investigation of Mr Doueihi?
- (4) Please outline the reason/s why the Office of Local Government had the authority to investigate Mr Doueihi and it was a matter for the Office of Local Government and why the allegations relating to Councillor Sarah Richards and her declaration and/or public disclosure statement are not a matter for the Office of Local Government?

8602 TOURISM AND SPORT—NAMING OF FOOTBALL STADIUM GRANDSTANDS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services representing the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney—

- (1) Has the Minister overturned the decision of the Heritage Trust to name one of the new football stadium grandstands the Garrison Stand, by replacing it with the name Arthur Beetson?
- (a) If so, why?
- (2) Why has for the first time a non-New South Wales person been honoured in the naming of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) or football stadium stands, and the military heritage of the name Garrison been discarded?
- (3) When did the Minister make his decision and by which legal instrument has he overturned the Heritage Trust?

8603 HEALTH—VISITORS TO PUBLIC HOSPITALS COVID-19 VACCINATION STATUS—The Hon. Walt Secord to ask the Minister for Women, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Health—

- (1) For visitors to public hospitals, is using the Service NSW app the only way to demonstrate proof of COVID-19 vaccination?
- (2) For visitors to public hospitals under the age of 16, is using the Service NSW app the only way to demonstrate proof of COVID-19 vaccination?
- (3) For visitors to public hospitals under the age of 16 who do not use the Service NSW app, is there another way to demonstrate proof of COVID-19 vaccination?
- (4) Are you aware that the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital has refused entry to a 14-year-old child because they could not demonstrate proof of COVID-19 vaccination using the Service NSW app?

David Blunt
Clerk of the Parliament