

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 1

Friday 16 August 2013

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Committee met at 2.00 p.m.

MEMBERS

Reverend the Hon. F. J. Nile (Chair)

The Hon. C. Cusack
Dr J. Kaye
The Hon. M. R. Mason-Cox

The Hon. M. J. Pavey (Deputy Chair)
The Hon. W. Secord
The Hon. M. Veitch

PRESENT

The Hon. Brad Hazzard, *Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Infrastructure NSW*

CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

Corrections should be marked on a photocopy of the proof and forwarded to:

**Budget Estimates secretariat
Room 812
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

CHAIR: I declare this hearing for the inquiry into the budget estimates 2013-14 open to the public. I welcome Minister Hazzard and accompanying officials to this hearing. Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Planning and Infrastructure.

In accordance with the Legislative Council guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings, only Committee members and witnesses may be filmed or recorded. People in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photographs. In reporting the proceedings of this Committee, the media must take responsibility for what they publish or what interpretation is placed on anything that is said before the Committee. The guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings are available on the table by the door.

I note that today's hearing is open to the public and is being webcast live via the parliament's website. Before we commence I will make some comments about procedural matters. Any messages from advisors or staff seated in the public gallery should be delivered through the chamber and support staff or the Committee clerks.

Minister, I remind you and the officers accompanying you that you are free to pass notes and refer directly to your advisers. Transcripts of this hearing will be available on the web from tomorrow morning. The House has resolved that answers to questions on notice must be provided within 21 days. I remind everyone to please turn off their mobile phones. All witnesses from departments, statutory bodies or corporations will be sworn prior to giving evidence. Minister I remind you that you do not need to be sworn as you have already sworn an oath to your office as a Member of Parliament

SAM HADDAD, Director General, Department of Planning and Infrastructure, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: I declare the proposed expenditure portfolio of planning and infrastructure open for examination. The questioning of the portfolio of planning and infrastructure will run from 2 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. As there is no provision for the Minister to make an opening statement before the committee commences questions, we will begin with questions from the Opposition.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: Thank you, Minister and Mr Haddad, for being with us this morning. I apologise for my voice. Like everyone else I have the dreaded lurgy at the moment.

I would like to go to the draft Sydney Metropolitan Strategy. In the executive summary of the strategy you claim that the strategy has been informed by what the community has told you is important to them. In the strategy you have divided the Blue Mountains Local Government Area into a metropolitan urban area east of Faulconbridge and a metropolitan rural area located west of Faulconbridge. What informed you to make that demarcation?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The Metropolitan Strategy is one of the principal growth plans for the Government. The history of such plans, under the former, Labor Government was that there was no consultation to achieve the growth plans. We have now escalated the level of growth plans to being one of the hierarchical planning instruments that will form part of the new planning system. I am sure the Hon. Helen Westwood would be aware of that.

It is therefore important that opportunities be there for community consultation. The department took a number of meetings with various interested individuals and groups throughout Sydney as part of the growth plan. The growth plan is not just about the Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountains is one small area of the growth plan. It is a draft at this point. It is out for further public consultation. The issue that you raise, with regard to why that demarcation was chosen, has been raised with me. Like most things in planning, it was about weighing up the relative merits, costs, benefits and so on for the community.

That particular issue is one that is of some concern for some Blue Mountains residents—not all. I would not, at this point, rule or rule out the change. I think that the consultation that is being undertaken and the submissions that are coming in, indicate a level of concern. As the Minister, I have taken that on board. If the honourable Member is expressing her concern also, then that will be added into the considerations. Have you made a submission in relation to it?

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: I have not, but I am certainly aware of members who have.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Please do. It would be helpful if you did.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: I note that the council has made a submission. The council is opposed to it.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Blue Mountains City Council have expressed some concerns. Roza Sage, the local Member of Parliament has also indicated that there are a number of members of the community who have had a concern. Like most planning decision with regard to growth plan issues, this is about consultation and listening to what the community has to say. At this stage I would say that the issue is under consideration. It is not locked in concrete. It is not locked in one way or the other. I am happy to look at it. If you would like to make a submission and add that to it, we will certainly factor that in.

All the submissions, by the way, are going up on the website. Everything in planning is so difficult and so controversial. Whatever decision you make a fair percentage of the community will be concerned about it. So it is important that the community know that at the very least their views are being heard and considered. One way of doing that is to put these submissions up on the website. I indicated to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, as soon as I became Minister, that every submission would go up on the website. It does not matter whether they are critical, or otherwise, of government; they need to be out there for discussion. So this matter is being considered at the moment as part of the overall metro strategy.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: It is hard to understand why that decision was made. As I said, the document suggests that is based on desires of the community that have been expressed to the department. I have certainly not been able to locate anyone in the Blue Mountains who supports it. I acknowledge, Minister, that you said there are groups within the Blue Mountains Local Government Area which support it. They have been silent since this strategy was first announced. The real concern is that the greater Blue Mountains is seen as a whole area. It is part of the World Heritage Area of the Blue Mountains.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Exactly.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: It is seen to have the same value. The lower mountains are seen to have exactly the same value as the upper mountains or the rest of the mountains. It seems to be an artificial demarcation. I cannot understand what has informed that. What was the thinking behind that?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The draft plan is a function of the consultation that took place beforehand and the consultation that will continue. It is also very much a function of the advice of the various agencies, including each of the Government agencies. It was the same when the former Government was in power. You have to take advice from your agency and your departmental officer. That was their advice. I acceded to that question on the basis that it was only a draft document and that we would put it out for public consultation and discussion. That continues.

Again, I give the honourable Member an undertaking that those issues are being looked at closely. That is one of the issues that have really stood out in the consultation phase as having some concerns for the community. So we will certainly look at that. It is pretty important that we get the growth plan right. The growth plan is very challenging because it is for the whole of Sydney—for millions of people. It involves new transport connections, new job opportunities and everything that flows from that particular plan.

I can assure you that the honourable Member's concerns, the residents' concerns and the council's concerns will be factored into the final growth plan that will be issued.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: I note too that in the section it talks about the metropolitan rural area, which is that part of the mountains west of Faulconbridge, that demarcation line. It is noted that this area is going to be managed and monitored for possible future extension of the metropolitan urban area. So even though in the draft strategy it talks about that area west of Faulconbridge being considered rural, the document is saying that it could be opened to further development. When you look at the intensity of development that is proposed in the strategy, the growth both in housing and in employment or industrial lands, it is of great concern that that would happen within the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage area. I do not think even people outside the Blue Mountains would believe that that is an appropriate use of land there.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The area that is obviously designated as a World Heritage area will never have any substantial growth. There might be some modest growth in the villages and so on, but the concept of having that demarcation is one that all cities around the world face, and it takes you back into that debate about whether or not you want your city to expand endlessly or whether you want your city to consolidate. There are

some cities around the world where they have already decided that they will put a line around the boundary—some of them by default. For example, in Vancouver they have particular recognition of their parks and their natural environment that limits the growth of Vancouver.

We obviously have some parts of Sydney that are limited by that intrinsic value of national parks—whether it is in the south, whether it is in the north or whether it is in the west where we have, of course, the World Heritage area. If there are areas in between and areas further around the perimeters that may see growth, that is just what happens with cities. But it is certainly not intended by this Government, and it was not intended by the former Government, to see any growth into the World Heritage areas or into any of the national parks areas. That is a bipartisan approach; there is no doubt about that one.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Can I put to you, Minister, that it would be commonly understood that the western boundary of the Sydney urban area has been the Nepean River rather than halfway up the Blue Mountains. Would you agree with me?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes, I think it is reasonable to say that that is a concept that has been held by some people. But I think the other aspect is that some of those villages have grown quite extensively in recent years under the former Government. But they are exactly the sorts of issues that we will look at. I assume you probably made a submission as well as the shadow Minister. Have you made a submission on that?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I do not make submissions; I speak in the Parliament.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I will listen to your words of wisdom. Have you spoken in the Parliament on this issue?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I certainly will, and I am today.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You have not yet? If you had I was going to look it up.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Can I put to you that I understand that people in your department would wish to extend the metropolitan urban area through another eight or nine Blue Mountains villages, but surely next to no-one from the Blue Mountains community has advocated for that, have they?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The department undertook the consultation and I will certainly follow it up with the department to find out exactly what it is. But at this stage I would have to say that the document is a draft—it is nothing more than a draft—and it covers millions of residents of Sydney from the south to the north to the west. You are raising one issue—which is an important issue—amongst many issues, which I will look at when the final recommendations come from the specialists within the department after the consultation is considered.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Has a single member of the Blue Mountains community made a submission supporting the extension of the metropolitan urban zone to Falconbridge?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Has a single member? What do you mean by that, sorry?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Has anyone from the Blue Mountains community made a submission on your draft Metropolitan Strategy supporting the extension of the western boundary to Falconbridge?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: There were obviously consultations taking place with a range of groups, and those were in some public forums and others and some may or may not have. Those are issues for the department to advise us on.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Can I turn to urban activation precincts? Why has the Carter Street, Homebush, area been designated as an urban activation precinct?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The department identified a number of areas across Sydney as urban activation precincts and the criterion that was generally applied was that it was close to public transport. Obviously the department sought advice from councils and a number of councils have taken the opportunity to say that they would like particular areas to be considered. The areas that have been proposed, therefore, are a function principally of consultation with local government, but sometimes the department has—

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: But Auburn council did not nominate this one, did it?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I was about to say that sometimes the department has identified areas, and that is the nature of the working relationship that occurs in planning. It is a little more consultative than it was under previous Ministers—in fact, considerably more consultative than it was.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: That is not what Auburn council is saying about this.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Auburn council may or may not be saying that to you but I am telling you, and I do not think too many people would for one moment say that the consultation has not been dramatically improved since we came to government—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That is a pretty low bar, Minister.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: We have even got Mr Shoebridge agreeing with me, albeit with faint praise, but still.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: You might have a complete unity ticket on that one.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: We could have. So individual streets, individual areas within each of those urban activation precincts are obviously subject to discussion between council officers and council staff and the departmental officers, and sometimes individual streets may or may not move in or out of that urban activation precinct. They are undergoing the consultations necessary at the moment. One particular precinct they know has had some concerns and the decision has just been taken tentatively, but not confirmed yet, that there will be a part taken out of it. That is just part of the planning process.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Mr Haddad, could you enlighten us on who came up with the idea to include Carter Street, Homebush, in the urban activation precinct?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am answering your questions. If I want the director general to answer I will ask him to answer. I have just indicated the concerns, and that is that there are some individuals that have particular concerns. It might be, for example—and I have met with many community groups who are either supportive because they are getting infrastructure or not supportive because the development is perhaps too close to them, and each of those issues will be taken into the consultation phase. Do you have a particular concern about this particular street?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I do. You tell us that one of the priorities of your planning reforms is to move jobs to the west, so it baffles me why a current industrial precinct zoned for employment in western Sydney would be redesignated for residential development that is currently excluded. It does not make sense to me. I am seeking some guidance from you or your director general on what is the thinking behind this.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: On the face of it you may be right. But, again, I have not seen any letter from you on that, and normally I keep an eye out for letters from members of Parliament on such issues because, obviously, if you are representing those concerns they may be concerns that have somehow been missed. Again, have you sent me a letter or something on that? I am not saying you have not but I do not remember seeing it.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I am raising it today, Minister, if you will answer it.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am not being deprecatory, I am just saying if it had been raised then obviously it would be something that would now be factored in. If you are raising it I will certainly have it factored in. It is like everything in the planning system, as I said earlier: nothing is perfect; it is weighing up the relative merits, whether it is a development application or whether it is a rezoning. Whether it is a change in any manner, shape or form around the planning provisions, those things need to be considered on merit, and the only way I can consider it as Minister—and I have tens of thousands of these issues; 6,500 pieces of correspondence crossed my desk this year, more last year—I need to actually have those things come before me, and I have systems in place where if one of my colleagues, including you, write to me about an issue then obviously I would escalate that. I will now raise that issue with them and ask them to provide me with advice and I will provide you with advice on it as well. I am happy to do that.

In fact, if you would like to come to the office I will organise a meeting with the relevant officers and we can have a yarn about that particular issue.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Can I put to you, in your consideration of the matter, that given that Auburn council has met its targets on dwellings, for it to be handed two urban activation precincts, against its request, is inappropriate and an overreach by Government?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Again, I would love to have that discussion with you some time because I dislike the use of the word "targets". That was developed by your Government. The reality is that 1.3 million people will move into Sydney over the next 25 years; of those, about 70 per cent are our children. That means that we need to find, through the 152 councils and, in particular, the 41 to 43 councils—depending on where you draw the boundaries—that make up the greater Sydney urban area, housing because most of those people want to move into those areas. I would prefer to think of it not as a target but, rather, reality that a certain number of people—as I said, 70 per cent of whom are our children—want to live in the areas in which they were brought up. Auburn is a popular area and has seen quite a bit of good development in recent years. However, the department considers that there are opportunities for further development in that area. It certainly has opportunities because it is on the main transport links.

Those issues need to be sorted through between the relevant community that we are talking about, the relevant departmental officers and the planning officers within council. I stress that sometimes—you have not had the pleasure of being the Minister in this portfolio—I find that councillors, the elected officials, have markedly different views to those of the staff. I will not say whether that is or is not the case in Auburn, but certainly across most councils that is one of the challenges. Often, the professional staff have views about where their particular area can or cannot, and indeed should, develop. They see that as important because they recognise, as does the new planning system that we are proposing, that if there is an increase in the number of residents living in a particular area, they are more likely to have greater access to improved infrastructure. That is the reality. It does not matter what part of the world you are in, that is the reality. I am happy to look at the issue. I am not saying that it is not an issue, but you need to give me some submissions. If you would like to bring the council representatives into my office, I have an open door policy and I am more than happy to sit with you and them and chat. If you are busy, you can report back to Auburn council, and I am happy to meet with Auburn council representatives.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: We will do that. I put it to you that, for a government that must balance Sydney's future housing needs and population growth with employment growth, and a government that has identified shifting jobs to the west as a priority, a proposal to take a precinct in western Sydney that is currently designated as an employment hub runs counter to the Government's jobs-to-the-west stated priority, does it not?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Not necessarily. I get submissions all the time. I am just thinking of one where particular developers came forward and said they would like to put housing in a particular area that a particular council had designated as being for jobs. I expressed concern about that, as one would expect any competent Minister to do. One needs to challenge those issues at all times. But it may be that as part of the broader plan, which you may or may not be aware of—and it does not sound like you are at this stage, and I am certainly not—consideration is given to employment lands or other job opportunities nearby, not necessarily in that one spot.

Mr HADDAD: It could be mixed use.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes, it could be a mixed use. We need to look at those issues as part of the big equation. You cannot just look at one little bit and say, "Maybe because they are doing this, that is not good." You have to look at the whole equation. I am happy to do that with you. As I said, there is nothing in this planning system, nothing in what happens in planning now in New South Wales that as far as I am concerned is not completely open. Labor members—and there have been quite a number—who have sought my input, my advice, often have sat in with agency representatives, with no-one from my office. That is a lot different to what happened under your Government. I am happy to let you do that. You can sit with them and discuss it. I will organise for you to have that discussion. Then I will be looking forward to any substantive input you have back to me. If there is an issue, I am happy to work with you.

[Time expired.]

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Good afternoon, Minister.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Good afternoon, Mr Shoebridge. I cannot say that I am looking forward to this.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is always a pleasure to see you, and the director general.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: To have your infinite wisdom assisting us is very helpful.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am looking forward to having your direct and short answers.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No. This is not court so I can answer as fulsome as I like.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: When you sought public submissions on the white paper, you did so because you realised that it is important not only to get submissions but also for the department, yourself and others to read and digest those submissions. Is that right?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I assume you have entered into a contract with an entity to assist you with those submissions, reading and understanding those submissions?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: What is the question, sorry?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Is there a contract? Have you contracted with an entity to assist you with digesting—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have asked the departmental officers to ensure that all of the submissions are considered. Some of them are not as lengthy and detailed as others. Of course, there are some substantive ones from, for example, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Better Planning Network, the Total Environment Centre, a number of environment groups, the Local Government and Shires Association, Sydney City Council—the first draft of that submission had about 185 pages. Many of those submissions are well on the way to being considered. I read quite a few of them. A range of departmental officers are reading them and we are cataloguing them. In fact, I have had a number of briefings already in terms of the major issues that are being considered.

It is fair to say that public consultation is a challenge. It has not actually happened. I think Mr Shoebridge will recollect that he did not allow much public consultation to occur under the former Labor Government when it made its changes—it was actually your predecessors in 2008; you were not here until a little more recently, which was a fortunate moment for the New South Wales Parliament. When the last major changes were made in 2008 under Minister Sartor, there was one public meeting; everyone was charged \$250 a head and it was held at the Australian Technology Park. That is the complete opposite of this case, where we have had hundreds of public consultations around the State during the green paper stage. We have had another 100 or so in the white paper stage. We have had a couple of thousand people at various forums that I have attended. Were you at the one at—no, it was Alex Greenwich.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is a simple question. Have you and the department contracted—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am answering your question.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, you are not. The question was: Have you and the department contracted an entity to help you deal with those submissions?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Internal departmental issues about whether or not we need to get external people to do it is a matter for them. What I am saying is that we have—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am asking you. I will ask Mr Haddad then.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, I am answering the question. We have ensured that we put in place the appropriate processes to ensure that all of them are dealt with. Are you suggesting that we have missed something from you? Is that what the problem is? What has happened?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No. I was going to ask a question about the contract but you will not allow Mr Haddad to even get a word in. You are protecting him.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am answering the question. I am the Minister.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am asking you: Do you know if there is a contract?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: And I am saying to you that the department will take such steps as are necessary to ensure full consultation.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I will ask you this question and perhaps you can take it on notice. Is there a contract with an entity to review the submissions, a term of which contract is that it is not required to actually read the submissions? Is that true?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That sounds like a very odd arrangement.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It does indeed. Perhaps you could answer it on notice.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: All right. I do not know what you are talking about.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I can see that.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I would not mind a contract like that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am sure many people would like a contract like that.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It would be good if I did not have to read all of them.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No doubt you would have been greatly disturbed to see that the department has been providing incorrect information about some key issues in the white paper relating to environmentally sustainable development, the power of the Heritage Council and judicial review rights. I am sure you would have followed that reporting this week and been disturbed.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, I was not disturbed. I was a bit surprised that a relatively new group that we have spent so much time working with, that is represented almost at every meeting by the same one or two people but purports to represent a very broad group of people—and I have sat for hours in meeting with them; they have been invited to every consultation since they made us aware that they existed—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Is that a shoot the messenger response?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, it is not.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You are concerned about who presented the message, but I am asking you about the substance of the misinformation.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, you asked me whether I was concerned, that was your question.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That is right.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am telling you that the group that has made those assertions—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It was your Director-General in his own letter who made those assertions.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, no. He actually just simply told the truth which is what this Government encourages—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Which is what your department has not been doing since the release of the white paper?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, that is ridiculous, silly.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I will put some things to you. Your own Director-General said that the principles of ecologically sustainable development are enshrined in the legislation, yet the precautionary principle, one of the key elements of ecologically sustainable development, is found nowhere in your legislation.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: How do you tally those two facts or are you just okay with that kind of misinformation?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You are a very senior barrister, as I understand it, and you would know it is not legislation; it is a draft bill. In fact, it is quite unprecedented for a Government to do what we are doing which is to put out, after consulting with tens of thousands of people, after hundreds of public meetings, after I personally have attended numerous public meetings, after the white paper, you should know that at the white paper stage, normally, a government is locked in and that is where they go. They have their bill and it is introduced in Parliament.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am asking you about what the Director-General said about this bill that you put out.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Mr Shoebridge if you are not prepared to listen to the answers I am not prepared to listen to you. If you want to listen to the answers after you ask a question I will provide them but otherwise—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You are not answering them.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am answering them.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Let me hear your answer to that question.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: He is not hearing what he wants to hear.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You just have your own agenda, I am sorry, Mr Shoebridge, and it is not unusual. That is a draft bill, as I said; it is not legislation so please do not mislead this Committee. It is draft legislation which is a combination of all of the work that has gone on, and it has been thousands upon thousands of hours of consultation, and the draft bill has been put out for discussion and for precisely the reason that is now being raised, that is, of course we want to make sure the bill adequately represents and reflects the white paper. In government, and I know you have never been in government and will not ever be in government, the way it works is that after the policy is enunciated through, whether it be a white paper stage or some other process but in this case the white paper stage, then goes to Parliamentary Counsel.

Parliamentary Counsel in Parliament House are drafting a bill which has not been drafted, not been done for 33 years; it is quite complex. There are some issues which the Parliamentary Counsel may or may not get right, but that is exactly why we have a white paper and why it has been out for public discussion and why we have a draft bill. I accept completely there are some issues which need to be worked through. We are working through those issues. As I said, I am a little disappointed when the Director-General sends out a letter to a group, and acknowledges that there may have been some issues that still need to be worked on, that somehow that becomes the basis for allegations of all sorts of inappropriate activity. I would have thought what he did was show exactly that this Government has a structure around it that says "We expect you to be absolutely honest with people and if you get it wrong, tell them." And he did. What is the problem? I know The Greens never acknowledge they get anything wrong.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What about this problem: departmental officials have been attending public meetings and saying that the white paper and the draft bill that is attached to it has no reduction in judicial review rights when the draft legislation removes judicial review rights? Again, is that just a modest slip-up that you have drafted an entire clause in this draft legislation removing judicial review rights and then you attend public meetings and say directly the opposite?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Are you suggesting that departmental officers are deliberately misleading people? Is that what you are suggesting?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am suggesting they have either been grossly misinformed or they are grossly incompetent and you should be looking to your Director-General to show at least a basic level of competence in the information he gives in public meetings.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I will tell you what, given a choice between the Director-General and about 1,000 of you, I would take one of him.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Are you going to answer the question or are you comfortable with departmental officials going in and misleading the public about the removal of judicial review rights.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am totally comfortable. There is no misleading but I have actually attended a number of public meetings and I have heard those discussions. I think that the issues that the Director-General set out in his correspondence were an honest assessment of the fact that these issues need to be looked at. The judicial review issue is one of the issues that we are looking at. I am quite happy to look at that. It is certainly not the intent of this Government to be reducing judicial review. You as a lawyer, instead of running a fear campaign, would know that in fact you cannot reduce judicial reviews anyway. It is an inherent right of the Supreme Court and the Land and Environment Court exercises the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If you had any advice you would know it is a deeply complex issue about those kinds of privative clauses. Have you not got that advice?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am very aware of those issues Mr Shoebridge but really instead of scaremongering you should be talking to us about making sure these issues—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Instead of drafting legislation that you say goes 100 degrees different to where you have policy, you should look to your own camp.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: David, you are very excitable, but it is not legislation, it is a draft bill for precisely the sorts of discussions you and I are having. It would be much nicer if you actually talked to me about it and just had those discussions.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I put in a submission and I have spoken with you on many occasions.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: And your submission is being taken into account, like all the others.

CHAIR: I refer to debate about conserving the Challoner Cottage as a heritage building. The Joint Regional Planning Panel voted to save Challoner Cottage and apparently it is now in your hands to restore that historical site. It is proposed that the Department of Community Services should help restore the cottage and then given the Renwick Association a Crown lease on the building to establish it as a museum. The association has the support of local members of Parliament. What assurance can you give the community that your support will be extended to preserve this historical site which may involve some funding?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I must say this is not one of the issues I am aware of. The fact that it went to the Joint Regional Planning Panel would indicate that it is an issue that is at that level, not at the Ministerial level.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is Crown land so it will come up to you, Minister, the refusal.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I will take it on notice and I will report back to you.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: In fact, the refusal has come up to you.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have not seen it so I am happy to take that on notice. Clearly you are indicating there are some heritage issues around Challoner Cottage, is that right?

CHAIR: Yes. Will you give it approval when it comes up to you?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I will take it on notice and get back to you. I really do not know at this point. I have not seen it.

CHAIR: You have not seen the background to the cottage?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Once you have met Lee Allison you won't forget.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Who is Lee Allison?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You will find out.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is that something I can look forward to?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: She is an excellent local advocate.

CHAIR: I will send the information to you.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I look forward to that. Mr Shoebridge has given me an assurance that I will enjoy this one, so that will be good.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You will; she is wonderful.

CHAIR: New South Wales residents have sent me correspondence in relation to the planning powers in the community. What is the purpose of the Community Participation Charter and what is its value? How is it implemented?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: This relates to the proposed new planning system. I will take a few minutes to explain the background. There was a bipartisan approach initially to set it up with Tim Moore and Ron Dyer—one Liberal and one Labor former Ministers—to undertake consultation broadly across the State but not the green paper stage in July last year, and in April 2013 we released a further paper for the white paper. As far as the interim period, we had a consultative stakeholder reference group with everybody on it. I think it surprised quite a few people because there were some suggestions that there might only be particular groups on it. As the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure I valued having the Total Environment Centre, the Nature Conservation Council and other groups sitting in those meetings as well as community groups and more latterly we had the Better Planning Network.

When we were talking about moving to a system of up-front strategic planning, we asked, how do we achieve this strategic planning? How do we make sure that people are engaged? The argument is that people only tend to get involved when development applications are right next door to them. I think that is a genuine concern. If we are going to move to a strategic planning process where we are asking to engage the community fulsomely up-front, we need to find a way to do that. The environment groups suggested to us that we have a public participation charter which, in effect, guarantees that the community can be involved.

My reading of the way the environment groups were suggesting it was that it would be prescriptive, so it would have precisely how you would go that public consultation. I have to say my initial reaction as the Minister was a level of excitement that this could really be good. In the end what we have had to do is say, "Well actually we have taken advice on that and having a public participation charter that would be prescriptive across 152 councils, keeping in mind the diversity of those councils, would not necessarily work". For example, if you are in Leichhardt, Marrickville or Byron Bay people tend to have a slightly different view on development than they have in Dubbo or one of the regional areas. Out in Dubbo and the western regions they actually want development. They want to get on with it. In the more seaboard councils often that is not the case and certainly some in the Sydney subregion that is not the case.

What we said was, "We still think the basic concept of the public participation charter is a very good idea but we cannot have it as a prescriptive model because you cannot have it working across 152 councils in a State the size of New South Wales and make it work." The next issue became, "Well, there are also some legal implications because if we set out even a few categories prescriptively we run the risk that every community plan"—so the community decides on something but somebody in the community says, "We don't like this"—"it

provides an opportunity for a legal challenge", as Mr Shoebridge was just saying, this sort of judicial appeal on whether or not a local plan is valid.

Where we are at now is that we have taken a lot of submissions on this but we are still considering how we do it. I genuinely value what the environment groups did in giving us that idea. We just have to make it work in a way that sets out the broad parameters for what is expected. I have also heard some criticism that the Minister had some right of veto on some issues. It is one of the issues that does not sit necessarily all that comfortably with me. I do not want to be involved in having a right of veto but I think that at the end of the day I do have to have some right to say to a local community where I get complaints that perhaps the consultation has not been in accordance with the public participation charter or has not been done as well as it should, that I as Minister have responsibility at a State level to say, "You know what, this really should have been done better. We will work with you, council"—whichever council or community it is—"to get a better plan."

I do have that right or at least in the current proposals I do and I expect that that will probably continue. But there will be some flexibility around the public participation charter. That is the concept. We have to get them involved; the community have to be involved. In Vancouver they tell us that around about one in four people—which is quite miraculous—actually say they were involved in developing their local community plans or their local plans for development. We would like to see better than that if we can do it but it is a mighty challenge.

CHAIR: If that power of veto is included in the final legislation—and you said that you are not happy with that—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have some concerns but I think there is no alternative.

CHAIR: —how would those vetoes be able to be appealed or reviewed? Would that be just a blanket decision by you without any further discussion or consultation?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, not at all. I think the Minister has to consult broadly on these sorts of issues but it is difficult because if you have one small community group which does not like the local plan, what now is referred to as the local environmental plan, it is a little challenging to know whether a Minister should get involved. It cuts both ways. You might find others who want development and they are not happy with it. I think a State Minister for planning does have to have that power to intervene in some issues but it would be done cautiously and carefully and there have to be some parameters around the workings of how that would occur.

CHAIR: Another area of concern relates to the power of the developers. This is one of the proposals and it could be changed but developers would have the right to request spot rezonings and to ask for a review of the decision. Is that still part of your thinking and if so how is that balanced by the right of the community to have some input?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Again the strategic plan has to be the overarching document and generally it would be considered that any proposals would be in conformity with the strategic plan, but traditionally there has been the capacity for applications to occur but that would have to be a reviewable capacity; it would have to be independently assessable.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There have not been appeals on rezoning issues traditionally. That is Queensland not New South Wales

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I actually made sure that there were appeals now over a year ago.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You put them in but prior to that there have not been appeals.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is this your question time or is this his?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You are not giving correct answers.

CHAIR: We are discussing the current situation. That is what the Minister is talking about.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: So you are grateful to the Minister?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What? For turning New South Wales planning laws more like Queensland, no.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: No, putting in the appeals.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is called the Gold Coast.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Would you like me to go out for coffee while you guys argue?

CHAIR: You can conclude your answer, Minister.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Sorry, Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile.

CHAIR: The other area of concern is it has been alleged that the Director General of Planning would have power to grant developers strategic compatibility certificates as an interim measure even if the type of development that would be approved as result of the interim certificate is prohibited under the council's local environmental plan. Could the situation arise where you have a conflict with council and the director general's decision?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is one of the issues that have been raised by a number of people, including the Better Planning Network, and it is tricky because in an ideal world once you get the hierarchy of planning instruments that actually work together—so from the broad 8, 10, 12 planning principles that will be developed at Cabinet level through to the growth plans, through to the sub-delivery regional plans, through to the local plans, there would be consistency all the way. The problem really is that it is not an ideal world and it may be that, for example, some of the plans may not have caught up yet, as they have not.

One of the problems I have had as the new Minister is that there have been standard instrument local environmental plans that are not consistent with other planning instruments above it because the councils just have not got around to doing their local plans. That is the sort of situation where I would envisage the director general being able to say, "Well, this actually fits within the hierarchy of planning instruments but they haven't yet got to the point where they have done all the work on the ground in the local area", but it would be done sparingly and would be in conformity with the other planning instruments.

CHAIR: To give the council the opportunity to catch up?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes. Even today the former Labor Government started doing the standard instrument local environmental plans in 2006 and I think we are up to about 110. There are still about 40 or 50 that have not actually been completed. Some of it is really difficult for them because some of these smaller regional councils just do not have the planning staff, so I need to make sure when they tell me that they are having a struggle that I find staff from the Department of Planning to go and work with them to develop their local environmental plans. That is a challenge too when you have the department feverishly working on a new planning system and there are not a lot of resources. You just have to recognise that the reality in planning is that you can head towards utopia but you will never get there.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Minister, the proposed State environmental planning policy [SEPP] for mining approval stands in your name yet your Cabinet colleague the Minister for Resources issued the release, crowing about it. Are you comfortable with this draft State environmental planning policy?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes. It is a whole-of-government issue which has been out for public consultation. The submissions are being considered. You would recollect that the mining State environmental planning policy was introduced under your Government. I do not know whether you actually were a party to it but the mining State environmental planning policy was 2007 and you made a number of changes to it. This one is one more of those opportunities for revision, but it comes about obviously with a view to having public consultation.

You might remember, Mr Foley, that one of the things that your Government did not do particularly well was State environmental planning policy changes or State environmental planning policies at all because when you did State environmental planning policies you did them without public consultation; you did them without putting them out for public consultation. One of the very first directions I gave to the Department of

Planning was there will be minimal number of State environmental planning policy changes under this Government and if they are going to be made, they will be made with public consultation; everything will go off for public consultation. This particular one is one that has been out on public consultation, I think, it came off probably on Monday or Tuesday. I cannot remember exactly.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Yes, I think it was out for two weeks, was it not?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes, it was, as opposed to no weeks when it was under Labor, but anyway those submissions are being considered. I have not actually seen that one yet but I have been pretty busy this week with Parliament and other things. I am sure when the department has gone through them I will have a look at it.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: The proposed State environmental planning policy dealing with mining approvals crucially provides that the significance of the resource is to be the consent authority's principal consideration, does it not? Are you comfortable with that?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Well, you would be aware, knowing your astute understanding of the planning laws, that there are a number of considerations to any development application and principally the issues that are considered are under section 79C and there are five separate principles that are laid out under that particular principle.

The mining State Environmental Planning Policy form is part of the overall consideration that would be considered under section 79C. There are issues that have to be weighed up including particularly the environmental issues and related matters. Public interest is another one and all it is doing in the jurisdictions that would normally hear these matters, such as the Planning and Assessment Commission and the Land and Environment Court, is making clear that the value of the resource—

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: —Trumps everything else.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, not at all. You have misread it. It is within the ambit of section 79C, it is a consideration and it makes clear that it is an issue to be considered by whichever consent authority is considering it. That is all it does.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: It does more than that, with respect, Minister, it elevates the significance of the resource to the principal consideration, does not it?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am not sure whether you are a lawyer or not, Mr Foley, but you can have your interpretation as you will. I have given you the explanation. It is now part of making a clear to the consent authorities that you do have to consider it. It cuts both ways. It may be that, for example, a resource is substantial and needs to be weighed up with the other issues I have mentioned, including the environmental issues which have to be front-and-centre including air quality, noise—

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: —they are not front-and-centre, they have been down-grounded under this proposed State Environmental Planning Policy.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You are misinterpreting it. If you want to put in a submission you are welcome to put in a submission.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I am not interpreting it I am reading the exact wording. You have made the significance of the resource the principal consideration. That is not my interpretation, those are the words on the page, aren't they?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I would assume you have read it. Therefore you will be able to explain to me how you see those in the context of section of 79C?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: You raise section 79C, is it not the case that section 79C (3) of the Act provides that if any such development standard is not complied with the consent authority still has discretion to grant development consent? That is what your new State Environmental Planning Policy provides, isn't it?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You are not reading from the section 79C at all.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I am reading from the SEPP, Minister, and the changes you are making—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: —Section 79C is not in the SEPP. Section 79C is under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. I do not think you have read it at all.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I have read it. It is in front of me.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Put in a submission. I have made it clear. I have told you what I think. That is fine.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: There is a note that states all other considerations can be overridden by the consent authority, is there not?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Passion and noise does not overcome intellect and substance. I have given you my response and if you do not want to listen to that put in a submission.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: You are happy to own this State Environmental Planning Policy that utterly repudiates and reverses your election commitment to tougher planning assessments?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It does not do that. It does not do that at all. You are barking up the wrong tree.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: By changing the law to provide, for the first time, that the significance of the resource trumps the other factors and is the principal consideration is a complete repudiation of your election promise of tougher planning assessments, isn't it, Minister?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The mining SEPP was introduced by the Labor Government in 2007. It has a range of considerations that focus on the resource. You are saying it has just been introduced and this is the first time—give me a break. We have clarified that the value of the resource is something which the consent authorities have to take into account. It is one of the heads of consideration within the range of issues which are set out within the mining State Environmental Planning Policy and within section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. I would encourage you to read it and get a comprehensive understanding of what the Government is actually doing rather than speaking with passion but no substance.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Peace is war.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: This State Environmental Planning Policy does not provide merely that the consent authority shall consider the value of the resource, it provides—once again I read from your SEPP—that the significance of the resource shall be the principal consideration, doesn't it?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Do you understand that there are a range of issues in every development application that have to be considered by a consent authority and the range of issues is such that whether it is the noise, the air particulate or the environmental quality, all of those things need to be considered. The value of the resource—

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: They always have been, have they not?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: —the value of the resource has been clarified. That is the proposal. That is the draft. I gather if you are speaking with such passion and knowledge that you have put in a submission; have you?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I am asking you questions, Minister.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: My answer is again no. Seriously, we have never had a Government that is more open to having people's views heard on both sides. I am open to having your views—

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: —you are certainly open to Rio Tinto's view with this complete rort.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You should not try to point score here when you have not read section 79C and you do not know about the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. You should think about it and I am happy to take your submission and happy to make sure it is factored in along with a substantial number of other factors.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I will keep making them on the Alan Jones show when he has me on to expose what you are doing here, which is downgrading every other consideration other than the significance of the resource. That is the big change here, is it not, Minister?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am not sure why you are persisting with a line that is clearly erroneous. I saw that people at the demonstration the other day were misled into thinking that this relates to coal seam gas and it does not. I hope you make that point. You understand that, do you? It does not relate to coal seam gas.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I have never said it relates to coal seam gas.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I thought you were part of the people that said it was. If you put in your submission I will have a look at it and we will work with you to see what the best outcome is to achieve the balance of protecting the environment and ensuring that the State can still access the opportunity for \$23 billion of resources that come from mining.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Can I take you to the subsection of the proposed State Environmental Planning Policy that you are happy to take ownership of?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Are you anti-mining?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: He was anti-Rio Tinto and anti-jobs for blue collar workers.

CHAIR: Let the member ask the question.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Can I take you to the subsection dealing about cumulative air quality?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Which document are you reading from?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Your State Environmental Planning Policy.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Which one?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: The one I have been asking you questions about for the last 10-minutes, section 12AC (4), non-discretionary development standards for mining, cumulative air quality level. Why are you reducing the air quality standards in this proposed State Environmental Planning Policy?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: We are not, we are clarifying the issue as set out in the State Environmental Planning Policy.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: You are introducing a weak annual limit as opposed to the national 24-hour limit with this change, aren't you? Or are you not aware of that?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am aware of everything in that State Environmental Planning Policy, everything in section 79C and everything in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act that relates to these issues, which you are obviously not. You have been fed something from somewhere. As I said, it is out for public consultation and if you wish to make a submission, make a submission.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: If you are aware of everything in it explain to me why you have weakened the air quality standards?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: We have not. I do not consider we have.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: You have moved from a 24-hour test to an annual test. That is a weakening of the obligation that a proponent—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is your assertion and I do not accept that.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: —must clear.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The mining State Environmental Planning Policy has been changed in consultation with the entire relevant ministry and the issues are now out for public consultation. If you wish to have your voice heard on that issue give me a substantive submission, do not pick little pieces out and say this is what your view is. Give me a substantive submission and I will consider it.

CHAIR: What is the closing date for those submissions?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: A week ago.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: They closed on Monday but if Mr Foley wants to make a submission I will keep it open until Monday or Tuesday just for him. I look forward to getting a submission from Mr Foley. I have not had a submission from Mr Foley since he became the shadow Minister. I have not had a letter or a question from him either. I have not had anything. I look forward to receiving something.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Minister, the national standard for PM10 is a 24-hour average of 50 micrograms per cubic metre and that national standard does not include an annual average, yet here you are moving to a consent standard based on a cumulative annual average that provides a much lower level of protection than the national standard, are you not?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have indicated my view on that. Each of these issues has been drafted in consideration with other agencies, including the Office of Environment and Heritage. Those issues are now being considered as part of the submission process. If you wish to make a submission, please do so.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: What was the thinking behind the weakening of the air quality standards?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: They are not being weakened. I have indicated that the purpose of the mining State environmental planning policy is to clarify for consent authorities the issues that need to be considered.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: What you are introducing is like an annual speed limit for cars. Every hour a car is garaged could be used in the overall average calculation of its speed. It is a great rort.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Do you want to ask me about anything else, or is this it?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I have plenty of questions, but I am asking about a proposed change to the consideration of mining approvals that is causing community outrage. People up and down the State are saying that it is a huge departure from what you promised before the election. Can you not at least take it seriously?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You have forgotten where I started in this discussion. You are up on the grandstand, but the reality is that this Government has put out its proposals for public consultation and is considering each of the submissions. Your Government used to put these things out without any public consultation and caused angst left, right and centre. We are listening to the community and doing all that we promised we would do. We are consulting with the community and trying to strike the right balance between all the issues involved in a merit-based development application. In this case it appeared that some of the consent authorities did not have the resource issue as clearly in front of mind as the Government thought they should.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: You have rewritten the rule book so that David can never again defeat Goliath.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is the pot calling the kettle black. You blokes had so many State environmental planning policies that you gave up numbering them and started giving them names. You realised how many you were doing without consulting the community. We are not doing that; we are consulting with the community about the balance that governments must strike.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: So this mining State environmental planning policy is not only Hartcher's baby. Are you happy to have a share of ownership?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am not going into that.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Does this meet your election commitment to introduce tougher planning assessments?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It does.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: What—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It certainly does.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: —by weakening them?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is your erroneous assessment. Clarification of what issues need to be considered does not equate to weakening. In fact, your argument is quite weak and quite wrong. It would appear to indicate that you have no interest whatsoever in about 13,000 mining jobs. I would have thought that the Labor Party would support those jobs. It would appear that you are going to spend your time during this hearing attacking the Government because it has tried to strike a balance between environmental, heritage, planning and job issues that are dealt with every in planning process. That is a matter for you. However, I make it clear to unionists across the State that Luke Foley is stuck on one issue and obviously has no interest in jobs in the mining industry. Good on you, Mr Foley; good on the Labor Party!

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I am happy to go with you to the Hunter Valley and sit down with the miners' union any time you like.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: They are not happy about meeting you. They said that they have not seen you.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Set a date.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: What, with him?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Yes.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Have you been to Bulga?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have. Have you?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Yes.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Good for you.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I have met with the community.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Hurry up and get there before it is gone.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: It will not be there for long. Is it not the case that the balance to which you just referred applies and has applied but will not apply if and when this draft State environmental planning policy that bears your name is officially implemented? That will be the end of balance, will it not?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Can you repeat that question?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Is it not the case that the balance of which you speak will disappear if this draft State environmental planning policy is officially introduced because the size of the resource will outweigh all other considerations? The balance of which you speak and to which you claim to be committed will longer exist.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have indicated on numerous occasions, and I do not know how many times I have to say it—I am glad I do not spend my life in the upper House—that that is not correct. It is an incorrect interpretation and you are wrong.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: To your knowledge, have any contracts been put out to tender or awarded for work on the new Windsor Bridge?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not get involved in that; that is a Roads and Maritime Services responsibility. That question should be directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. I have no knowledge of that. Some issues will need to be considered and they are being considered by the department at the moment. They are the issues that you and I have just been discussing; that is, the relative merits of what is being proposed. However, I do not know anything about the contracts or whether there are any. It is not my bailiwick.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Indeed. From what you have just said it would appear that the approvals process for the proposed new Windsor Bridge still has some way to go.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes. The department is still working on it.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: It is State significant and the process is yet to run its course; it is far from over. Is that not the case?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not know. The department is due to give me some advice on that at some stage, hopefully in the near future. Are you talking about Windsor Bridge and Thompson Square?

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Yes.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It is one of a million issues being considered by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure at any time. The department will provide me with advice in due course. Of course, it is significant infrastructure, so in all likelihood it will come to me. As far as I know, there is nothing in my office on it. I receive many documents every day from the department and there is some work that needs to be done, but I do not think I have anything.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Would it not be rather premature if Roads and Maritime Services were currently putting contracts out to tender or awarding contracts for the proposed new Windsor Bridge given that your process still has some way to go?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have no idea. If it is—and I gather because you are getting excited about it that it is—I know nothing about it. Talk to Duncan Gay.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I am not excited about it; I am simply posing the question. Surely logic tells us that if—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have said that it is not my bailiwick. If you want to ask me about planning issues, please do. Do not ask me about everyone else's issues.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: But it is a planning issue.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, it is not.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: If you assess it—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: What do I have to do with road contracts?

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: You are assessing it.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: What does that have to do with contracts?

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: What happens if conditions are imposed as part of the approval? Should they not be considered when a contract is drawn up? Why would anyone enter into a contract without knowing the conditions of the approval?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Talk to Duncan Gay about that. I do not know.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: It does not make much sense.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It may not. If they are doing that they may have all sorts of parameters. They may only be asking for expressions of interest. I do not know; talk to them. I have enough planning issues to worry about without worrying about issues in the other 22 portfolio areas.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I refer again to the State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) Amendment (Resource Significance) 2013. You said, and you are correct, that section 79C is the starting point for a consent authority when it is looking at approvals. However, you would acknowledge, would you not, that the first consideration under that section is an environmental planning instrument?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: There is the first subheading under section 79—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is section 79C (1) (a). Of course, the overriding environmental planning instrument is a State environmental planning policy.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It is one of the considerations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: A State environmental planning policy overrides a local environmental plan to the extent that there is a lack of harmony between the two. Is that correct?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is a matter for the consent authority to interpret.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is a matter of law. A State environmental planning policy overrides a local environmental plan.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It is a matter for the consent authority to interpret.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If this State environmental planning policy were to become law, a planning authority would look at one of its key clauses. There is no ambiguity about this clause. I will read it.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: What are you reading from?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I will read section 12AA of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) Amendment (Resource Significance) 2013.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The existing policy or the draft?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The one that is on exhibition. What you said about putting policies out for public consultation is true. Unlike the previous Government, this Government does that and that is good. The real community concern is that 12AA (3) says:

In determining whether to grant consent to the proposed development, the significance of the resource is to be the consent authority's—

that is the court, the Minister or whoever is looking at it—

principal consideration under this Part.

It is not ambiguous.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It would never be the Minister looking at it, because under the new system that we set up there is State significant development and State significant infrastructure. State significant development always goes to an independent body, which, under Labor, as you would well recollect, did not. Most of it came under part 3A and was done by Ministers behind closed doors.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Unless it was a crown application. It would be unusual if it was a crown application. I accept that that would be unusual but not impossible.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: So you accept what I am saying.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Yes. So the Planning Assessment Commission, the Joint Regional Planning Panel or whoever is looking at this—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: It is very unlikely to be a Joint Regional Planning Panel, because it is more than \$100 million, generally, for a coalmine. As a designated development it is more likely to go to the Planning Assessment Commission.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: They will look at this and be told, in unambiguous terms by your Government, that their principal consideration is to be the economic resource. There is no ambiguity about it. Contrary to what you have said in your white paper you have put the environment and society as footnotes in the approval. The principal consideration will be the economic resource. The bigger the hole, the bigger the resource, the more likely it is to get approved, regardless of the impact.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I make it clear again that under 79C, you are right—I cannot remember the sub-provisions—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: This is not a dispute about whether it is 1A, 1B or 1C; it is about your changing of the fundamentals.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: And then there are the likely impacts for the development. That is the next subsection. That covers the environmental, the economic and the social issues. Then there is the suitability of the site for the development, the public's views in any submissions on the proposed development and the public interest. Throughout that there is the underpinning requirement that environmental issues be considered. All this is saying—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is saying that the significance of the resource is to be the consent authority's principal consideration. This is not ambiguous. It is clear. This is like, 'War is peace.'

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You and Mr Foley must have had coffee together I think because you have both decided the same thing, which is unusual.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I can assure you that did not happen.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: There is no glasnost between Labor and the Greens anymore?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I will ask you about one other factor: the cumulative air quality level. This is to be a non-discretionary development standard.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Can I just make the point—I started to say this before—that the State Environment Planning Policy amendment does not preclude any consent authority from refusing an application on any of the above grounds. I think you are saying it does. The advice I have had is that it does not. I think that is an erroneous claim by some who are arguing your position. I do not believe that to be the case. I will certainly looking at that in terms of legal advice and so on.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: 12AC of the draft State Environment Planning Policy sets a variety of non-discretionary development standards. The effect of it is that if a development meets that standard then conditions cannot be imposed on it that set a higher standard. If I am in some way mis-describing it I am sure Mr Haddad will come in and correct me. That is the effect of it.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Right now he will sit there quietly. He will give me advice and I will talk to you about it.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The problem with 12AC(4), which is about the cumulative air quality level, is that it sets an annual average level of particle pollution. I think it is 30 micrograms per cubic metre for private dwellings. The problem with an annual average is that on any individual day, or for a week, you could have a massive spike—enormous air pollution in a locality. But then if you have a period when the mine is not operating or where they have expensive control measures in place then that can reduce the annual average. So you could have these enormous peaks of pollution—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Under the current standard that can happen.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But the most accepted national standard is a 24-hour average. So you cannot have those peaks under the national standard—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You still can.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You cannot because—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Within 24 hours you can have a spike.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You are going to have far less a chance of having a spike with a 24-hour average than with an annual average.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You put this in your submission, did you not? I think I have already read this from you.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There was a Greens submission to that effect. That is what communities are asking about. They do not want you or me to fight about it. They want you to answer the question about why you have not put in place a 24-hour standard.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am not going to fight with anybody about it. These are substantive issues that need to be considered. We will be looking at the argument you put in your submission. Others have said the same thing. There has not been a submission from Mr Foley, but there has been one from the Greens.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I go back to the draft planning bill.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The white paper bill.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The planning bill 2013 exposure draft. In the lead-up to the March 2011 election the repeated statement from your side of politics was that you were going to return planning powers to the community. I do not think I am paraphrasing. I think that was the exact promise you made. How do you couple that statement with one of the key strategic planning principles in the bill—principle 10 about local plans? It says:

Local Plans should facilitate development that is consistent with agreed strategic planning outcomes and should not contain overly complex or onerous controls that may adversely impact on the financial viability of proposed development —

Basically, that says that plans have to be simple. They have to be dumbed down. If you put in place controls for amenity, the environment or the like, and it impinges on the financial viability of the development then the local plan is going to have all sorts of trouble getting through the system. That is not consistent with your rhetoric.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is certainly not my interpretation of that, or what we intended. We did say—you are right—that we intended to provide more power to communities to determine how their areas would develop. That is precisely the direction that the strategic planning approach is taking. That is why we are looking at the issues the Hon. Fred Nile raised before about the community consultation. I make it clear, it is about trying to minimise the site-specific wars that happen quite often around developments at the moment.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But you are shackling local councils with this by saying that they cannot make overly complex plans or do controls that impinge on financial viability. You are shackling the very communities you said you were going to return power to.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not agree with you. I think the intent is that the communities will have their say, upfront, in terms of strategic planning. They will agree on what is acceptable in their areas. They will agree on what is exempt—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But the local council is not going to put in the plan; that is the point.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Let me finish, please. So we have the exempt, the complying and the code assessable. If someone comes along and wants to do something that is totally outside what the community have agreed upfront, it still becomes a full merit-based application. Keep in mind that right now in New South Wales, as a result of the former Labor Government's work on the State complying code—not everything they did was

bad; not all of it was good, either—around 23 per cent of all assessments that go through, go through the complying code. Some councils are amazing. Some of them have more than 50 per cent. From my point of view we have been consulting.

I do not mind staying for an extra couple of minutes. I hear that the Director General is bursting at the seams to say something. Did you want to say something?

Mr HADDAD: I do not want to stay anything.

CHAIR: You are a very wise, Director General. Keep your mouth shut.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The problem is that the rules cannot protect amenity. Under that principle the rules cannot protect amenity and the rules cannot—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Why do you say they cannot protect amenity?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Councils cannot put in controls that adversely impact on the financial viability of proposed developments. That would include controls that limit height and size and controls that protect the environment. That impinges on the financial of the proposed development; it cannot be done. That is what it says.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not think your interpretation is correct but I will note the time. It is now 3.18 p.m. I will look at the *Hansard* and I will look at the issue you have raised. I will raise it again with the department and the officers, because it is not my intention that it be to the exclusion of everything else. It is not the government's intention. I am happy to talk to you off-line about those issues.

CHAIR: One of the major infrastructure projects, as you know, is the North West Rail link. That is a priority for 2019. Apparently that rail link will use more steel than the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Has there been any requirement to source Australian steel for that project?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I have to say to you I do not know. That is not a planning issue; it would be something that the special team that has been established for the rail program would be doing. You would have to address that to, I think, Gladys Berejiklian or the Treasurer maybe.

CHAIR: Looking at it, it is an infrastructure issue, a major infrastructure project.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: In the sense that I am the infrastructure Minister broadly across the delivery of infrastructure to provide support for planning and for growth, yes, but I do not get into the—thank heavens—provision of who buys the steel and where they buy it from. That is something that somebody else looks after, not me. I have got enough issues to worry about. I am happy to take that on board for you and I will refer it to the transport Minister. I will see what I can do to find out.

CHAIR: The same applies to the actual construction of the new fleet of trains. Has there been any attempt to involve Australian manufacturers in that?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Again, I will take that—I probably should not but I will because you are obviously a valued colleague of both sides of politics—and we will see what we can find out. But I simply do not know the answer to that.

CHAIR: The other major project, as you know, is the WestConnex motorway project that is to complete the missing links in Sydney's road network. According to the proposal, the M4 will conclude at Taverners Hill in Petersham, as a lot of people expected it would somehow help get city workers to the city—they are going to get to Petersham and probably create another bottleneck. I know there is a diversion through the airport, St Peters and the M5 East, which is taking them away from the city. How are you planning to assist the people who work in the city to get there? Why did it not go right through to the city or link up with the city tunnel?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: There are a lot of things that the planning department would like to see happen that are not necessarily carried through because of a variety of reasons. I will take on board that question and refer it to the Minister for Roads and ask him to provide an answer to you.

CHAIR: You may not know the answer to this but the motorway will be 33 kilometres and a great deal of that will be, I understand, a tunnel—if not all of it?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not think it is all of it, but there is a fair distance. I have just forgotten the distance.

CHAIR: They said it could be the longest tunnel in the world.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I do not know. Does anybody know? I am being told that it is the biggest in the Southern Hemisphere, but I can imagine there are some longer ones heading through the Alps of Europe. I have not had the chance to do that—I must find some of those. Again, I will ask the Minister for Roads, because it is not my expertise.

CHAIR: You would be well aware that the M5 has been a disaster as a reasonably short tunnel compared to the proposed new WestConnex. What plans are there to try to deal with the ventilation and other issues as well as the pollution stacks that will have to be built to remove pollution?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Can I ask—I am not familiar with this—has the Minister for Roads had an estimates committee yet?

CHAIR: He has.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Did you ask these questions or were these questions—

CHAIR: No, I was not on that inquiry.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I will take on board your question, but the questions are more properly directed to him and I will refer those questions to him.

CHAIR: I just thought those issues would be going through your desk or you would see them as the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: In due course the issues around, for example, the relative merit of the development application will be considered by me and by the Department of Planning. But in terms of those precise issues, at this point there is no development application before me for consideration on those issues. The appropriate agency to deal with in that regard, therefore, is the proponent agency, which is, of course, Roads and Maritime Services.

CHAIR: You will have an opportunity though when you get the development application?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I can hear the erstwhile director general wanting to say something.

Mr HADDAD: These issues are still under consideration as part of the preparation of the development in its early stage. Eventually they will be part of the environmental impact assessment process. That means that all that will be subject to a proper public consultation and assessment by the department prior to a determination.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: But you have not got any yet.

Mr HADDAD: No, we have not got any of this yet.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That information the director general has given you is because of his breadth of knowledge of government, that there are things happening. But there is nothing before him or the department at this point.

CHAIR: I am just anticipating that.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You and he should be running government; you could do it together.

CHAIR: We could do it together and it would be on your desk. I am foreshadowing that you will take note of these issues before you get into very deep water.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I like to avoid deep water, so thank you very much for that advice.

CHAIR: I note in part of your department there is a plan for \$49 million for the Priority Infrastructure Fund to assist councils to meet costs for essential local infrastructure generated by developments. Is there a list of those councils or has there been any allocation to councils yet, or is that still to happen?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes. The two councils that received their funds last year were The Hills and Blacktown councils. Blacktown got the bigger amount. I have forgotten the precise amounts, but yes, they have been allocated and they are very happy to be taking part in that program. We anticipate that there will be other councils that will also qualify in the upcoming 12 months.

CHAIR: You mentioned Blacktown. There has been some controversy out there, which I am sure you are aware of, where residents have received notices that the council wishes to repossess their homes for future development, apparently to turn the residential areas into parkland, and I understand this could affect up to 800 homes. Are you aware of that or is any of that going through your hands? Are you having the ability to rubberstamp or approve that?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No. At this stage that is entirely a matter for Blacktown council and I trust that they would appropriately consult and listen to their community's concerns. I also acknowledge though that it is a balancing act, as I said earlier to the members who asked questions today, but it is not something that the State Government has any direct involvement in—it is the Blacktown council, and they have a right to deal with that in the way that they consider appropriate. Of course, the ultimate sanction is that if they do something which their community does not think is appropriate or in the interests of the broader community then they can be voted out. But at this stage that is their capacity to do it and they are pursuing it.

CHAIR: I would have thought though that if it involves 800 residences it moves from being just a local government issue to a State Government issue.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, not necessarily. As a number of members have pointed out, this Government has tried to ensure, and I certainly have tried to ensure, that local government is empowered, local communities are empowered. But, of course, as Mr David Shoebridge was just saying, there is a variety of views on what that actually means in the sense that we believe local communities should be empowered. But if the local council is empowered—which is something that did not happen so much under the former Labor Government—then obviously we have to let them, in a sense, pursue their agendas and allow the community to liaise with them about those agendas and to deal with it in an appropriate way. If there was some inappropriateness about that of course we would seek to be involved, but at this stage it is a planning issue which is being undertaken by Blacktown council.

CHAIR: The compulsory acquiring of the homes will not give them the normal value; it will be a lower value. They do not want them confiscated, obviously; they are all very upset and there are big protest meetings being held out there.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I understand the residents' concerns but why are you suggesting they get less value?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The Just Terms Acquisition Act.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is right. The Just Terms Acquisition Act should mean they will get paid appropriate compensation. Why are suggesting they would not?

CHAIR: Normally you do not.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Why?

CHAIR: That is just how it works out in practice. Very seldom do you get the full value of putting it on the market as compared to what a government department pays you.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I think there is a variety of views on that. Some people are very happy when a government agency comes along for just terms acquisition.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Gosford Quarry was very happy.

CHAIR: The residents are very unhappy because they have got nowhere else to go. That is basically the problem.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: On that one I am happy for you to ask the director general, but my view is that that is not an issue where the State Government should be seeking to override local government. It is striking the balance again, and local government must be empowered to make some of these decisions themselves.

CHAIR: Could you at least contact the council and ask them to provide you with the full details?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I will because you have asked me to do it. *[Time expired.]*

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: I return to the draft metropolitan strategy and the issue of the demarcation between the lower Blue Mountains and the rest of the Blue Mountains. There is concern about the additional housing targets contained in that document for the sub-region of west, which includes the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Penrith. Can you give the Committee an indication of the number of additional dwellings you are thinking about for the Blue Mountains? Given the area's topography, there is concern that it has limited capacity to absorb additional dwellings throughout the whole of the Blue Mountains but particularly because of the zoning that has been chosen for the lower part of the Blue Mountains. There is concern about how it could possibly absorb those additional dwellings. Can you rule out that there will be a requirement for high-rise housing in the Blue Mountains local government area as a consequence of the targets that will be set by the metropolitan strategy?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: As the planning Minister I do not have any predetermined view on that. The metropolitan strategy sets out what we anticipate will be the pressures on local communities in terms of where people want to live, but it is up to the local councils to determine how they might meet those pressures. There may or may not be areas that have particular changes in density but that is up to local government. Sometimes councils achieve the growth areas by not necessarily high-rise—I would not have thought that was on the agenda in that area—but perhaps smaller block sizes in some areas or townhouses. There are many opportunities. There has been some good work done in places such as Adelaide where they have seen increases in density but through houses that look like houses in the sense that from the front they look like single dwellings. I do not have any predetermined views on that and the Government has no predetermined views on how the council should determine that. It is a matter for the councils to work it through with the communities.

CHAIR: There is time for one short question, and the Minister may have to take it on notice.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Having a mix of housing is a good thing. Many folks, as they get older, would like to get out of the large block and not have to mow the lawns and that carry on.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: It is just that the topography of the Blue Mountains is unique.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I will take that on board.

[Time expired.]

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I accept that you intend your statements to be true in terms of your intention to have outreach to the community with strategic planning when you get the new planning policy through. You intend to have greater outreach to the community when you are doing strategic planning.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Yes, I do.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: How does that couple with the \$3 million that has been allocated for improving community engagement in New South Wales? If you want to beat the Vancouver goal, which you say is one in four residents in New South Wales, \$3 million is hardly more than a postage stamp.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That is only in the current period.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is for the next financial year.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: In the next financial year say, for example, we get the legislation through—I hope we will get it through, with appropriate support, if not some expressed concerns—we must then embark on a lot more community consultation and that will take place beyond this financial year with local government. Local government will have to come to grips with the new legislative framework; then we will have to work with local government, particularly in the growth areas as a priority—I do not mean the formal growth areas but where we anticipate growth throughout, for example, the 41 or 43 councils in the Sydney region. We will have to work with them to develop those eight, 10 or 12 broad planning principles that operate through the Cabinet level. , having done all that consultation, we must take them through Cabinet. I think that will take probably another 12 months or so.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But \$3 million will not even touch the sides.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I anticipate that more money will be allocated in the following financial year as it goes forward. There is no question that the next few years will require a bit more money for some of that consultation. But also we will be asking local government to look at all the new social media opportunities. There are many more opportunities to reach out to the community than has ever been done in place. But you are right: more money will need to be allocated as we go forward, but we cannot work it out right now.

CHAIR: Community consultation is a good note on which to finish. Thank you for your attendance

(The witness withdrew)

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.
