

Mr John Hyde; Mr John Castrilli; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Paul Miles; Mr Andrew Waddell; Chairman; Mr Ian Britza

Division 62: Heritage Council of Western Australia, \$6 721 000 —

Mr M.W. Sutherland, Chairman.

Mr G.M. Castrilli, Minister for Heritage.

Mr G.A. Gammie, Executive Director, Office of Heritage.

Ms S. Siekierka, Policy Adviser.

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Perth.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I refer to the second-last dot point on page 754. The last line mentions a review of the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990. How much of this review will be done in-house, how much will be done by consultants, what is the total cost of the review, and when does the minister expect the review to be completed?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The total review will be done in-house. It will be a comprehensive review. All stakeholders will be comprehensively canvassed. No external consultants will be paid; it will be done totally in-house. I want to seek consultation. A consultation paper was launched on 19 April and has been widely distributed to stakeholders. The results will be published around August this year. It will set out a possible policy framework. Feedback from that process will assist in the development of draft legislation. I intend to publish a green bill for public comment because I want public consultation to be as wide as possible. Feedback from the green bill will then determine changes that need to be made to the policy before its consideration by cabinet and Parliament.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Why was there no consultation period in the formulation of the recently announced heritage policy that encompasses this review? Was this a decision made for financial or political reasons?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: No, it was not. We have been working on the heritage policy for quite some time. Can I say, member for Perth, for the first time in the history of Western Australia—I repeat, for the first time in the history of Western Australia—we have a state heritage policy.

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is one page, minister.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: It does not matter if it is one page, half a page, or 20 pages; it is the first time it has been done. Can I say for the first time, also, that it was done in joint consultation with the Office of Heritage, the Heritage Council and the National Trust of Western Australia. It is the first time those organisations have worked together on a policy statement. I thought that was a very good achievement, being the first time it was ever done.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Why is there no additional funding listed in the budget papers to implement any outcomes of the review into the act, if the minister expects it to be ready in August?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: There will be a green bill produced. It will go out for widespread public consultation after that. I do not anticipate any additional expenditure in this coming financial year other than internal work done by the department.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The Parliament is littered with green bills that never went any further. Can the minister guarantee that the green bill will become a real bill, and when will it be debated and passed? I got the last one through in 20 minutes for the minister; I can work with him!

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is very kind of the member. If my memory serves me correct, the review of the heritage act should have been done three years ago. I think previous Labor governments attempted that —

Mr J.N. HYDE: And Liberal. That was before the minister and I were on the scene.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: You know what, member for Perth, they failed miserably!

Mr J.N. HYDE: They did; abysmally.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: The minister has not succeeded yet!

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: At least I am getting there. At least I have, for the first time, a heritage policy. With the assistance of the member for Perth—I thank him very much for that—we increased the penalties in record time.

Mr J.N. HYDE: We did.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That has never been achieved before.

Mr J.N. HYDE: No; it was ground-breaking.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: One of the initiatives of the heritage policy was the review of the heritage act. That is a major initiative. We have already started work on the policy.

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Mr J.N. HYDE: We slipped that through in the final week of November last year. I will make the same offer to the minister: if the green bill is out in August, we could get a real bill introduced in the final week of November and get it through this year.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Member for Perth, I want widespread consultation. I really appreciate the member's offer of assistance. Members of Parliament are also being consulted. I regard amendment of the heritage act as an important piece of work. I want widespread public consultation. I want to get it right. I look forward to the member's support to get it through.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Could we get a list of the people consulted, by way of supplementary information?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: To date, yes, but do not forget there will be a lot more consultation. If the member likes, I will outline the steps in that process.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Okay.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I have agreed to provide the member for Perth with a list of people already consulted and also to provide him with the steps I anticipate to engage in, in the review of the heritage act.

[Supplementary Information No B38.]

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: My question relates to the same dot point and page relating to the green paper and review. It is the dot point on page 754 relating to the review of the Heritage of Western Australia Act. Has consideration been given in that review, and as part of the consultation, to look at heritage-listing names?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Heritage-listing names?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: For example, Subiaco Oval and Patersons Stadium—heritage-listing names.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I want a broad-ranging discussion in consultation with the broader public on a range of things. I think all members would agree, as a lot of people agree, that the heritage act has deficiencies. It was 1980s thinking brought into vogue in 1991 or 1992. We were 10 years behind the times then. I want it to be open, accountable, transparent, easy to understand and contemporary.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Will it include consideration of heritage-listing names? What is the minister's view?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I have not ruled anything in or out. I want broad public consultation. Not only do I want the consultation papers in, but I also want a green bill on top of that.

[9.10 pm]

Mr P.T. MILES: I refer to page 753. Under "Item 154 Capital Appropriation" there is an amount of \$1.6 million over two years. Can the minister explain what that investment will be used for?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: It is \$1.59 million over two years. The Office of Heritage maintains more than 1 300 places on the Register of Heritage Places in Western Australia. In addition to that, more than 21 000 places of local heritage interest have been identified by local governments. This capital appropriation will deliver a replacement heritage online business system that will address the risks highlighted in the 2009 strategic information plan. That includes the limited availability and costliness of technical support to maintain the current system. That system is now more than 15 years old. It does not meet the contemporary requirements that a system for the Office of Heritage should meet. It also does not meet the need to provide access to information by customers and stakeholders. Therefore, the modernisation of that core information system is paramount to better reflect current business needs and make the system easier to maintain. It will also help underpin the implementation of essential business processes. A reform process is taking place within the Office of Heritage to streamline the system and make it more efficient. It will also facilitate the relocation of the Office of Heritage to 140 William Street later this year. That is because the current system does not fit in with the system at 140 William Street. The old system is very limited and antiquated. This investment will obviously promote better risk management of heritage information than is the case now. We need to mitigate those risks.

Mr A.J. WADDELL: I think my colleague from Wanneroo may be as perplexed as I am with the minister's answer. The minister talked about a new system. Is that \$1.6 million for a new computer system or for a new filing cabinet? I am not being flippant. Is it a physical system in which documents are actually filed or is it an electronic system?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: It is a new computer system.

Mr A.J. WADDELL: Why does that system need to be moved from the current location?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The current system is based on a father-and-son software system.

Mr A.J. WADDELL: The minister said that the office has to move to another location.

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Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The Office of Heritage is moving to 140 William Street.

Mr A.J. WADDELL: Because of the computer system?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: No.

Mr A.J. WADDELL: That is what caused my confusion.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The office is moving to 140 William Street, and the computer interface there does not fit with the current system. The current system is antiquated. It is hopeless, basically. We need the new system because, apart from the need to mitigate risks, the new system will also fit in better with the new configuration at 140 William Street. I am not a computer whiz as the member for Forrestfield professes to be, so my terminology may not be up to the latest use of language. But I am sure the member understands what I am getting at.

Mr A.J. WADDELL: I do now. I was confused as to whether it was a physical system or an electronic system. That is why I asked the question.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I refer to page 573, and the 2011–12 total appropriation figure.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Is the member talking about total capital appropriations?

Mr J.N. HYDE: Everything—all the money that the Heritage Council is receiving. Has the Heritage Council received extra money from the government to oversee what the media is referring to as the Premier’s palace; namely, the plan by the Premier to refurbish Hale House to heritage standards, as the Premier announced in a media statement on 24 February 2011? I note that on the cover of the one-page heritage policy there is a picture of parts of Hale House.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Member for Perth, I refer to it as Hale House. The Labor Party can refer to it any way it would like. The short answer to the member’s question is that the total appropriation is made up of the existing appropriations that the Heritage Council would normally get, plus the capital funding for the new computer system. There is no money in the Heritage Council’s budget for the refurbishment of Hale House. If Hale House is to be refurbished, I dare say that will be done through a separate allocation, perhaps through another mechanism.

Mr J.N. HYDE: What role has the Heritage Council played, as the peak heritage body in this state, in giving advice to the minister or the Premier on this very important heritage building?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The Heritage Council is totally engaged with any developer or any person on what may or may not happen to a heritage building. Therefore, the Heritage Council would be in consultation on all buildings that are listed on the Register of Heritage Places of Western Australia.

Mr J.N. HYDE: What I specifically asked, minister, is: what was the nature of the advice? What advice has the council given on Hale House and its suitability to be turned into an office for the Premier?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: To what line item is the member for Perth now referring?

Mr J.N. HYDE: I am referring to the whole budget.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I have just told the member that in the budget there is no allocation for the Hale House refurbishment.

Mr J.N. HYDE: But the minister is also saying that the Heritage Council is involved.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: It is. The Heritage Council is involved in all matters to do with heritage buildings. It is part of the act that people, whether they are private developers or anyone else, have to engage the Heritage Council. Under the line item that the member has referred to, there is no money for the refurbishment of Hale House.

Mr J.N. HYDE: So, no staff of the Heritage Council are spending any of their time on giving advice about Hale House? Any advice on Hale House is being given after hours, is it?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The member is talking about an allocation to Hale House. The Heritage Council staff will, in the normal course of their duties, give advice on any property that is on the heritage register.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Will the minister table that advice? What advice has the Heritage Council given on Hale House?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I will ask Mr Gammie if he wants to elaborate on the advice that was given. But of course I do not intend to table that advice, because that may be in breach of cabinet confidentiality. Does Mr Gammie want to add to that?

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Mr G.A. Gammie: All I can say is that the project is being managed by Building Management and Works. At this stage, Building Management and Works is still developing the plans and is yet to refer them to the Heritage Council for advice.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I would assume that any changes that are made to the fabric of a heritage-listed building would need to be in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Heritage Council?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Mr Gammie will respond.

Mr G.A. Gammie: That is correct.

Mr J.N. HYDE: What time frame does the minister anticipate will be required for the very important work that will need to take place to fit out Hale House to the standard that the Premier and visiting dignitaries would expect?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: As Mr Gammie has said, Building Management and Works is handling that project. It is still drawing up the scope for that project. I cannot give any information other than what I have just told the member.

[9.20 pm]

Mr J.N. HYDE: The minister has obviously read the Premier's press release or has talked to the Premier about his plans for the palace. Surely the minister must know this will be a major heritage undertaking and that if a lift is going in or a safe room is to be installed for escape from the hoi polloi or knife-wielding, electricity bill-paying people, these considerations will require detailed expert advice, which the Heritage Council is able to and is sourced to do.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Building Management and Works is finalising its scope of works. Once that is final, of course it will come to the Heritage Council for consultation or assessment or whatever. That will come in due course. I cannot give the member any information other than that. Until the department comes up with its final scope of works and presents it formally, I cannot give the member any other information.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I have a final question on this matter. The Premier has touted that one of the reasons he is taking over Hale House for his palace is to be able to restore it to full heritage standards. Would the minister expect that Building Management and Works will source advice from the Heritage Council on a cost-recovery basis or will the council do that as a normal undertaking out of its budget?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: In this budget for the next financial year there is no money for any alterations to or physical works at Hale House.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I know.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I am just pointing that out again because the member has asked me that question again.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Expert heritage advice is expensive. A person does not just go down to Bunnings to get it.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: It is not capital works.

The CHAIRMAN: We have been through this.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The member is talking about capital works. Other than that —

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is not a case of just going to Bunnings to buy a sink; the exact right fittings and the heritage equipment —

The CHAIRMAN: That is enough, member for Perth.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: I refer to page 753, "Major Spending Changes", and the progress of the distribution of the funds made available to the Goldfields since the earthquake. The member for Kalgoorlie could not be here, but he would be very interested to hear about the progress that has been made on the heritage buildings in the town of Kalgoorlie and the money that has been spent to restore them.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Thank you for the question, member.

The member for Kalgoorlie and the member for Eyre are both extremely interested in this. A lot of work has been done. As the member knows, the government gave \$5 million to that fund, and four funding streams were established. The first, for emergency relief grants, received 10 applications and grants totalling \$61 529 were approved. One preferred works grant of \$25 000 was awarded to assist an owner with the cost of keeping in place scaffolding pending the commencement of external conservation works. There were 22 applicants covering 29 properties who received earthquake restoration grants totalling \$443 143. Of those, 15 applications were for reimbursement of insurance excesses to reward those who had comprehensive insurance. Some of the owners

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have completed assessments of the damage and advise that they will not need financial assistance. The Office of Heritage is also continuing to work with the owners of 36 properties to determine whether financial assistance is required. Applications for conservation improvement grants opened in January 2011. Those grants provide up to \$250 000, with the owner having to contribute 20 per cent of the cost of completing the works. Applications closed in March 2011, and applications totalling \$1.24 million were received and approved for 18 properties. The works include re-roofing, treatment of rising damp, drainage and other urgent conservation works. That has related to a range of properties. Also, other assistance to the amount of \$200 000 has been provided. As members know, straight after the earthquake the department sent specialist heritage architects and structural engineers to Kalgoorlie to advise property owners, and \$151 665 of professional advice has been provided to date.

The CHAIRMAN: Members, we finish at 10.00 pm, and we still have another division—the National Trust. I heard the member for Perth say that he would like to finish this division about 9.20 pm. I do not know whether he has any more questions or whether he wants to move on.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I have a couple more; I was not anticipating such robust interest from the esteemed members to my left.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: We are always interested in heritage.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I know the interest is there.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the member for Perth had a really good bash at one stage.

Mr J.N. HYDE: And as always, you indulge me, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Would the member for Nollamara like to ask a further question?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I defer to the member for Perth.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I refer to page 754 of the *Budget Statements* and “Outcomes, Services and Key Performance Information” and the “Desired Outcome” for the Heritage Council of “Conservation of cultural heritage places in Western Australia, for the benefit of present and future generations”. I refer to the minister’s statement of 19 April 2011 that Government House will be permanently entered on the state Register of Heritage Places. Has the Heritage Council been consulted on the state government’s decision to spend \$445 000 on the installation of a lift at Government House? Did the Heritage Council provide any advice about using a cheaper, less intrusive option—such as a nanna-lift on the stairs?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Yes, member for Perth, we were consulted, and, obviously, having been consulted, we provided advice. I cannot give the member the exact scope of that advice, but we were obviously consulted.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Could I ask that the minister provide that by way of supplementary information?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: If I can, I certainly will.

The CHAIRMAN: Let us be very clear what the minister is providing. What did the member for Perth request?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The member for Perth requested supplementary information on the advice given on the installation of a lift at Government House.

[*Supplementary Information No B39.*]

The CHAIRMAN: Is the member for Perth’s next question to do with the same matter, or is it about something else?

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is the same field, albeit slightly down the Esplanade.

The CHAIRMAN: You are being inventive, member for Perth. Continue.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Thank you, Mr Chair. Minister, it is the same preamble, and page 754.

I assume that the Heritage Council was asked for its advice on the Esplanade and the heritage-listed Florence Hummerston house—the old kiosk. What is the minister’s view, and the Heritage Council’s view, on a proposal to move that heritage-listed building and to chuck it in the Supreme Court Gardens or even to demolish it.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: To get this straight, is the member referring to the place where the Chinese restaurant is located?

Mr J.N. HYDE: In latter-days.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The Heritage Council will be involved and has been involved in all the consultations and discussions about that precinct. The council will provide advice to the Minister for Planning, who has, I

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think, carriage of the project. As the project progresses and moves forward, elements of that project, if they are heritage listed, will be referred to the Office of Heritage and the Heritage Council.

[9.30 pm]

Mr J.N. HYDE: The whole Esplanade is heritage listed.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Yes, for their consultation, consideration and advice.

Mr J.N. HYDE: In relation to Florence Hummerston Lodge, could we get that advice by way of supplementary information?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I am advised that that information has not yet been given.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Do the minister and the Heritage Council still adhere to the Burra Charter and its views on the moving of heritage buildings?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is part of the consideration of the Heritage of Western Australia Act, is it not?

Mr I.M. BRITZA: I refer to page 754 of the *Budget Statements* under the second dot point, “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”. Why has a review of the Heritage of Western Australia Act been initiated and what are the objectives of the review?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: As I outlined to the member for Perth, the government announced the state cultural heritage policy in April this year. It is the very first time that an actual integrated heritage policy has been adopted in this state. At its core, the policy outlines objectives to recognise, protect, promote and partner means of improving the management of Western Australia’s rich cultural heritage, and there is plenty of it about. What is important for me is that the policy ensures that that heritage and its interpretation and appreciation is transmitted to our future generations, because that is what it is all about.

Our heritage legislation is the foundation of all the things we do. There is an increasing recognition across government and the broader community that the current act has become outdated and does not reflect the current needs of the Western Australian community. We only really need to look at what I consider the lengthy and costly processes involved in adding a place to the Register of Heritage Places or at the contentious issue of demolition by neglect to realise that we need action. The first key initiative to be rolled out under that heritage policy was the review of the Heritage of Western Australia Act. The primary objective of the policy is to ensure that the heritage legislation is open, transparent, simple to operate and able to reflect best practice in the recognition and protection of places.

In addition to looking at the roles and functions of the Heritage Council itself, a range of strategic issues have been identified for consideration, for instance, the criteria for entering a place on the state register; how state significance should be defined and whether there should be time limits on heritage assessment processes; whether works on heritage-listed places should be referred to the Heritage Council, together with financial and non-financial incentives for owners; whether there should be a provision for repair orders in the act and under what circumstances they should be made; and, the purpose of local municipal inventories and the Heritage Council role in local MIs. Those issues and others will be included in the consultation paper that I mentioned before, which was launched in April. It has been widely distributed to encourage stakeholder feedback and for the wider community to share its views and ideas on how we should be managing our state’s heritage assets. A detailed discussion paper will be published later in the year, about August, that sets out that possible framework. The feedback from that process will assist the development of draft legislation and a green bill, which I also mentioned previously, will also be open to public comment. The public comment we receive about the green bill will inform the development of a new bill to be considered by state Parliament. The bill will reflect the objectives of the state cultural heritage policy. Hopefully, we will be to capture the expectations and the aspirations of all the people of Western Australia.

The appropriation was recommended.