

Chairman; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Jan Norberger; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mrs Glenys Godfrey;
Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Paul Miles

Division 71: Planning, \$139 401 000 —

Mr M.J. Cowper, Chairman.

Mr J. Norberger, Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Planning.

Ms G. McGowan, Director General.

Mr J. Deery, Chief Finance Officer.

Mr E. Lumsden, Chairman, Western Australian Planning Commission.

Mr T. Hillyard, Chief Property Officer, Western Australian Planning Commission.

Mrs E. Thunder, Principal Policy Adviser, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

The CHAIRMAN: This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day.

It is the intention of the Chair to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must be clearly related to a page number, item program or amount in the current division. It will greatly assist Hansard if members can give these details in preface to their question.

The parliamentary secretary may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask the parliamentary secretary to clearly indicate what supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number.

If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek the parliamentary secretary's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 3 June 2016. I caution members that if the parliamentary secretary asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice with the Clerk's office.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: I give the call to the member for West Swan.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: My question relates to "Strategic Assessment of the Perth and Peel Regions", or the green growth plan, on page 812. I understand public submissions closed on 16 May. What is the time frame for the consideration of those submissions and when does the department expect to finalise the green growth plan?

Mr J. NORBERGER: We believe that that information is going to be provided. Cabinet consideration should be by the end of this year and then obviously, given that the strategic assessment is done for environmental approvals specifically to streamline the approvals between the state and the commonwealth, it will also need to be passed on to the commonwealth for consideration. That would foreseeably happen early next year.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What is the expected cost to implement the green growth plan and what are the funding mechanisms to do so?

Mr J. NORBERGER: I will ask Gail to address that.

Ms G. McGowan: The preliminary cost-benefit analysis is in the order of \$1.2 billion. The funding arrangements have not yet been finalised. It will be a combination, or likely to be a combination, and there will be consultation on the funding, including looking at who benefits and how that might be recouped, in the same way we currently work with the metropolitan region improvement fund to fund some of the approvals. At this stage the funding options will be presented to government once we have a clearer idea of all of the impacts following public consultation.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: In relation to the lack of certainty about transport planning, did the department attempt to get some sort of —

The CHAIRMAN: Member, what is the line item? Is this the same question or another one?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, it is the same question.

The CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: My question relates to the green growth plan. Did the Department of Planning attempt to get from the Department of Transport some sort of idea about its plan so that the Department of Planning can actually create a land use planning document consistent with the transport planning document?

Mr J. NORBERGER: Obviously, the strategic assessment for the Perth and Peel has had input from across government. It is a significant piece of planning. Even though its focus is on environmental assessments, we do

take into account feedback from other departments, and that would have included feedback from the Department of Transport. Gail may well want to expand on that. Remember that the key focus of this project is on the environmental assessment for the future of Perth, but it takes into account feedback from other government departments in doing so.

Ms G. McGowan: Probably a significant benefit from this process has been the extent of alignment across government. The strategic assessment footprint is actually predicated on the footprint identified in the subregional planning framework for Perth and Peel@3.5 million, which obviously identifies key infrastructure corridors, transport corridors, environmental considerations et cetera, as the parliamentary secretary said. In a sense there are three pieces of work involved in the finalisation of the subregional planning frameworks, finalisation of the green growth plan, and also the transport planning that both the chairman and I have been involved in as well. There has been close liaison there.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Through the parliamentary secretary: given that the transport plan is not yet finalised and has not been taken to cabinet, would it not have been advantageous to have a transport plan that had some certainty to identify land use planning for the entire metropolitan area?

[8.10 pm]

Mr J. NORBERGER: Member, I think it is important to remember that we have to look at it from a planning perspective. The planning portfolio is predominantly focused on long-term strategic planning. It may well look at transport corridors, but generally the department does not get involved in operational decisions on how those corridors may or may not be used. The moment the operational detail of road, rail or whatever it might be is gone into, that would be done by the relevant department—in this case the Department of Transport. The planning portfolio is very much focused on a long-term strategic evaluation of where we believe land may need to be acquired or corridors may need to be set aside to accommodate the future growth of our city, not forgetting that in this particular instance—the strategic assessment model—we are looking at what will be required for a population of 3.5 million. I do not know whether Ms McGowan or the chairman want to add more to that.

Ms G. McGowan: Certainly the advantage of the process has been that the director general of the Department of Transport also sits on the Western Australian Planning Commission. We had very close interaction with the transport portfolio when we did the subregional planning framework. In fact, land use planning, at its very heart, involves integrated land use and transport planning, as the member said, as well as the environmental and other considerations. We have also, in the whole process, looked very closely at basic raw materials and a whole raft of measures. There has been that close integration, and I think the pieces of work that have been done will knit closely together.

Ms S.F. McGURK: Could the parliamentary secretary outline the involvement of the department in the Perth Freight Link project, for instance? One of the concerns around the freight link was that it was not mentioned in some of the strategic documents that we have already referred to this evening. I would like to know the involvement the department had.

Mr J. NORBERGER: For my clarification, which documents is the member referring to in which the Perth Freight Link has not been mentioned?

Ms S.F. McGURK: In Perth and Peel@3.5 million.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: In the whole 3 000 pages.

Ms S.F. McGURK: Yes, that is right. There is no mention of it in there, for instance.

Mr J. NORBERGER: Again for my clarification, there is the strategic assessment of the Perth and Peel regions, and then Perth and Peel@3.5 million. Is the member referring to Perth and Peel@3.5 million?

Ms S.F. McGURK: Yes.

Ms G. McGowan: The chairman may wish to add something to this. Certainly to my understanding things such as the Roe Highway extension have been identified in strategic planning documents dating back to the metropolitan region scheme since 1963. The subregional planning frameworks identify a proximal location or an approximate location for port installation for an outer harbour. All our broad planning documents identify the major transport routes—the likes of Rowley Road and going through Latitude 32 et cetera. In broad scale they are there. In, I think, November last year there was a gazettal of a planning control area for some small areas of land for the Roe 8 extension that had not previously been captured by the metropolitan region scheme amendments that had been in place. I can provide the details in a second if needed. But of course that further work on that planning control area is on hold pending the Supreme Court appeal.

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Ms S.F. McGURK: I have a further question.

Mr J. NORBERGER: I think the chairman was hoping to add some further information.

Mr E. Lumsden: “Perth Freight Link” is a name given by government to the utilisation of a number of transport corridors and infrastructure corridors, which, as Ms McGowan said, are in the metropolitan region scheme and reflected in Perth and Peel@3.5 million. The Perth Freight Link includes an area to the north of Gnangara, known as NorthLink WA—it used to be called the Perth–Darwin highway. That links down to Tonkin Highway and into Roe Highway. That is simply where the Perth Freight Link has been allocated. In terms of transport planning and the corridors, they have been allocated for some period of time, as the member would be aware, to suit the transportation network, whether it be rail or freight traffic or normal domestic vehicle traffic. So, it is a name given to the existing corridors.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have a question in relation to that. Can I just seek clarification, because it is always quite confusing with the Department of Planning and WAPC? We seem to jump between the two, even though they are separate divisions. Chair, can I seek clarification that we are able to ask Mr Lumsden questions, given he is from WAPC?

The CHAIRMAN: You can ask any questions in this division. If the advisers are here they can answer any question, as long as it relates to this division.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have a further question about the claim that the reservations exist. I understand that the current reservation for NorthLink, or the Perth–Darwin highway, is along Lord Street, but the government will need to bring in an amendment to create a new reservation between Tonkin Highway–Reid Highway and Gnangara Road because the PDH has a different alignment that was agreed to in, I think, 2013, but there has been no new MRS reservation.

Mr E. Lumsden: The honourable member is strictly correct in that sense, but from a concept point of view the extension of the Tonkin Highway north of its current termination with the Reid has always been planned, notwithstanding that the Perth–Darwin link also used Lord Street. In fact, if one goes back in history, the original alignment of the North Link, if I could use that term, goes back to the Stephenson plan for the then Shire of Swan; that was the extension of Tonkin Highway north of Gnangara Road, to link up with the Brand Highway.

Ms S.F. McGURK: I was just interested in what Ms McGowan and Mr Lumsden said about the freight link. Mr Lumsden was saying that the freight link refers to elements that we have not really been talking about when we have talked about the current iteration of the freight link—that is, those areas that include Roe Highway stage 8, and then an extension of Roe 8, if you like, the road from Roe 8 at Stock Road, through to Stirling Bridge and then through to the port. Were those elements of what is now known as the Perth Freight Link discussed with the Planning Commission? Was the Planning Commission involved in any of the conception and design of the freight link as we understand it today?

Mr E. Lumsden: The only discussion the commission has been involved in is the use of the current reservations in the metropolitan region scheme, which I mentioned in my earlier answer. In terms of future iterations going from Stock Road through to Fremantle Rail Bridge et cetera, that is still a matter to come back before the commission in terms of reservation considerations.

Mr J. NORBERGER: I suppose that comes back to what we said earlier; that is, the Department of Planning or the WAPC has a long-term outlook, and we will probably see that some of these corridors date back. I think the Perth Freight Link, even if it was called something else, has been discussed as far back as 1964. But if changes are going to be made to that, it obviously creates new conversations that need to be had.

Ms S.F. McGURK: It is a little rich for the parliamentary secretary to say that the Perth Freight Link goes back to 1964. Roe 8, or parts of the Stephenson and Hepburn plan, might go back that far; of course, it has been amended since then. But as to the Perth Freight Link, as I understand the answer just given, any of the areas from Stock Road through to the port have not been discussed with the Western Australian Planning Commission still, even though it was announced two years ago in the 2014 federal budget and the state government subsequently adopted that plan.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the question?

Ms S.F. McGURK: I am just confirming that the Planning Commission still has not been involved in any of the elements of the Perth Freight Link from Stock Road through to Stirling Bridge.

Mr J. NORBERGER: I understand that there has been quite extensive consultation and talks. I am happy to clarify it with the chairman, if you like, but certainly I understand that in and around the Perth Freight Link the

Department of Planning has obviously had consultation. If you like, I can get Ms McGowan to provide some additional information.

[8.20 pm]

Ms G. McGowan: Certainly, there have been discussions, and we also had an officer work with the Office of Strategic Projects on some of the broad work. Mr Lumsden will probably be able to give more precise details, but my understanding is that there was previously a reservation going from Stock Road that was removed previously. At a high level, and a conceptual level, and also around the ongoing capacity of land use planning around Fremantle port, there have at least been discussions there. But the primary responsibility for that planning has been carried out through the transport portfolio and the Office of Strategic Projects.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I refer to the first dot point on page 812, under the heading “Strategic Assessment of the Perth and Peel Regions”. Can I confirm that the agency has been working on the SAPPR for five years? When did the agency begin liaising with local governments about the SAPPR?

Mr J. NORBERGER: I thank the member for the question. He is right that the Department of Planning has been involved for at least five years in the strategic assessment of the Perth and Peel regions. The consultation with local governments has been driven by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It has been that department’s responsibility, so that question would probably be best directed to that part of estimates.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: How many officers from the Department of Planning have been working on the strategic assessment?

Ms G. McGowan: It varies, but the core group would be about eight people. In the 2016–17 budget, we have had an additional allocation of \$1.2 million, which will enable that group to finalise the documents for submission to the commonwealth and to work with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on finalising mapping and the work. It is actually \$1.7 million: we estimate that \$1.2 million will cover about 10 FTEs for one year, and there is about \$500 000 for additional specialised consultancy work. Examples of that would be where we have crossover areas between the strategic assessment and the subregional planning frameworks, where there has been some level of contestation about whether something should be either in or out, et cetera. We have done some work in getting peer assessments or environmental assessments. Broadly speaking, the core group has ranged from eight to 10, but because of the impact across the agency—it is one of our key projects—a number of other staff have probably contributed over time in part as well.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Eight to 10 staff were involved, but they have not been involved in the liaison with local governments.

Ms G. McGowan: The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has led that liaison. For instance, I think there have been about 80 specific consultation sessions with various stakeholders, including local governments, during the public comment phase. Our staff would have been involved in quite a number of those, but they have been led by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The other crossover point is with the specific subregional planning frameworks. Our staff have had very direct consultation with most of the local governments, either on a one-on-one basis with a specific local government or with clusters of local governments around the subregional planning framework, which often involves conversations about how the two processes interact.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The public consultation phase began only quite recently. None of those 80 sessions were held prior to the public consultation phase. Over the five years preceding the release of the documents, was there no consultation with local government by officers working on this project for the Department of Planning?

Ms G. McGowan: The specifics would need to be dealt with through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Of course there would have been interaction from time to time with local governments, though not in the sense of formal consultations. The work that we have been doing for the last number of years has mainly been across government to identify the sorts of broad areas. In particular, our role has been primarily around the mapping of areas and doing the spatial representation to allow decisions to be made and conversations to be held with the commonwealth. The process has involved a working group of directors general, which also includes the chair of the commission, and also the Peel–Harvey Catchment Council. We do get interaction with local government, but until we actually had something that could be produced and put out for public consultation, the formal part of those consultations did not occur with us. If the member has more specific questions, they would need to be directed to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr J. NORBERGER: We have spoken about the public consultation that has occurred recently, with the 80 meetings, but prior to this round of public consultations, it is my understanding that the Department of the Premier and Cabinet had a strategic reference group, which was an ongoing process representing quite a large number of stakeholders, including local governments. I am not aware of exact dates. I am just trying to give the member some information in case he wants to direct that question to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, but a strategic reference group was set up as an ongoing process.

Ms G. McGowan: It was chaired by Jim Limerick, as an independent chair, and to my knowledge the Western Australian Local Government Association was involved, and there were consultations with WALGA as the overarching peak body.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The public consultation phase closed on 13 May. How many submissions were received from local governments?

Ms G. McGowan: I do not have the breakdown; that would have to go to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, because it was coordinating those processes. My understanding is that in total there were 1 007 submissions. Some local governments have indicated that they have not been able to get their submissions approved by their councils in time. My understanding is that the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has indicated that it is comfortable to still receive those submissions in the coming weeks.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Is the parliamentary secretary aware that many of those submissions that have come from local governments have complained that the government did not consult them about the mapping issue that the parliamentary secretary mentioned earlier? They had detailed mapping about zonings and what have you, and the government did not actually go and consult them about it—until now.

Mr J. NORBERGER: I will get Ms McGowan to explore that further, but as the member just stated, the consultation period has only just closed, and we have had over 1 000 submissions. To have had the opportunity to go through every single one of those submissions in detail, as they deserve, and potentially action them, may be asking a bit much, but I will ask Ms McGowan to elaborate.

Ms G. McGowan: As I said, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet is coordinating that process, and all submissions have gone to the Department of Local Government and Communities. I am aware of some of the local governments making representations, as they did with the subregional planning frameworks, in terms of the level of consultation. The issues, as with many of these things in land-use planning—Mr Lumsden may care to add a little bit here—is the extent to which we can give detailed information in the early stages of gathering it. We know that one of the things that the development industry generally is very attuned to is speculative behaviours—so there has been a need to establish a firm foundation on which to go out, and that is the work that has been done. The chair may wish to add something to that.

Mr E. Lumsden: When the Perth and Peel@3.5 million frameworks were released, it was made very clear—I did that personally on a number of occasions—that we were taking environmental issues into account, and part of that included the strategic assessment process that was being undertaken. We had indicated that there were a number of environmental issues that we had to address, as previously mentioned, in terms of the issues between the commonwealth and the state, but I also indicated that many of the environmental issues as part of the strategic assessment would be examined in any event as part of the development of our frameworks, such as the Ramsar wetlands and all those types of issues that are common with the commonwealth, as well as Bush Forever sites, and they were examined as part of the input to our draft planning frameworks. The local governments were firstly aware of a number of those issues because they were in their own local government areas, as members would be aware. Secondly, a number of the environmental issues have been well documented through the EPA or other publications, such as Bush Forever. We made it very clear that we were trying to bring the environmental assessment processes of the state and the commonwealth into alignment, but at the same time from our strategic planning frameworks we were putting quite a considerable emphasis on avoiding significant environmental features. That was also to ensure that when the frameworks were finalised, the environmental issues had been evaluated and, where appropriate, protected to the greatest degree possible through our land-use planning as well as the strategic environmental assessment. On the one hand, although the local governments did not have the detailed mapping associated with the environmental strategic assessment until partway through the public consultation process, they were still very much aware of the issues the commission, through the department, was considering as part of the examination and proposals of our draft frameworks, which also included the relevant transport corridors, so that we did not develop a land-use plan that had major flaws from an environmental perspective. Although on the one hand they can argue that they had not been fully consulted until the public consultation plan with the strategic environmental assessment, on the other hand it was made very clear to them what process the commission, through the Department of Planning, was doing in terms of looking at the environmental attributes that would be of concern to the commonwealth but also, equally, what would be of concern to the state or were already of concern and known.

[8.30 pm]

Mrs G.J. GODFREY: I understand that part of the state government's commitment is to construct the Bayswater to Forrestfield airport rail link, which I am very proud of. The Department of Planning is working on the framework for the development around the new stations, including the one at Belmont. Can the parliamentary secretary tell me more about how the state government is ensuring that this development is appropriate and will provide the best possible outcome for existing residents and workers in that area?

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Mr J. NORBERGER: I thank the member for Belmont; I know that it is a project that is very important to her and her community. It is a significant investment in public transport infrastructure and an important opportunity, I believe, for more intensive transit-oriented development around the planned new stations, being Belmont, which was formerly known as Airport West, and Forrestfield. In relation to the question, the Department of Planning is leading the land-use planning of these new station precincts in collaboration with the Public Transport Authority, the City of Belmont, the Shire of Kalamunda, Perth Airport Pty Ltd and LandCorp, in consultation with affected local governments and stakeholders, which is obviously important. The aim of the state government is to achieve best practice transit-oriented development around the new stations. The planning work that is being undertaken includes a strategic planning framework for the Forrestfield–Airport Link project; the introduction of planning control areas to enable the Western Australian Planning Commission to determine development applications on land surrounding the two stations; strategic structure plans for Belmont and Forrestfield station precincts, again in collaboration with the City of Belmont and Shire of Kalamunda; local structure planning to set more detailed parameters for land use, density, neighbourhood structure and infrastructure requirements; and preparation of a project business case, which will address planning mechanisms, land assembly and responsibility for project delivery. We believe that draft business case will shortly be presented to government for consideration in the coming months.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Does the department or the WAPC believe that 2 500 car bays is the required amount at the Forrestfield station?

Mr J. NORBERGER: I believe that the car bays the member is referring to will continue to be under review. I am happy for Ms McGowan to add some more detail.

Ms G. McGowan: Certainly at the Forrestfield end, the provision is for 2 500 car bays. That is certainly the current thinking. I am aware that a structure plan is being put forward by the local government in that area, or it is doing some other work, but at this point in time, for the purpose of our detailed structure planning for the area, we will be working on 2 500. The areas of land that have been acquired by the Public Transport Authority for car bays, will in the shorter term, be required for lay-down areas for construction activity as well. For the catchments coming in from the hills area, the commitment is for 2 500 bays.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: As I understand it, the Shire of Kalamunda has sent its independent parking strategy to the WAPC. As I understand the process, the WAPC is going to decide exactly what is going to be acceptable in relation to car bays. Am I correct that that is the process? What is the time frame?

Mr J. NORBERGER: The member is right in that the Shire of Kalamunda has provided some information to be considered. Obviously, the results of the study it has undertaken will be taken on board and considered. We are not at a detailed local structure planning phase just yet. As we progress to a detailed local structure planning phase, that feedback will be taken on board as well.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The parliamentary secretary spoke a lot about transport-oriented development precinct planning in his response to the member for Belmont. Does he think it is appropriate to have 2 500 car bays surrounding that station, and what likely impact is that going to have on precinct development around that station?

Mr J. NORBERGER: As Ms McGowan indicated, even the land that is allocated at the moment will be used during the construction phase. That is one important aspect. It is important that there is sufficient car parking available. That is going to serve a large area. As the member knows, at the moment there is very limited public transport.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have seen the catchment numbers.

Mr J. NORBERGER: They are quite substantial. It will be a 20-minute journey from Forrestfield into the city—I have heard that often enough from the member for Forrestfield; he reminds us all the time. It is a great outcome. It is a significant improvement for those people. It would be terrible if we had a fantastic train station and no-one could get to it with a car. It is important that in the planning we look at how to develop the surrounding areas. The member is right: we obviously want a variety of uses developed in that area, be it residential, commercial or whatever, but, equally, we need to cater for people to actually use the train station. At this stage, the recommendation by the PTA was 2 500 bays.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Who did?

Mr J. NORBERGER: Sorry, I will correct myself. The 2 500 bays was the recommendation that has been made.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: From who?

Mr J. NORBERGER: Ms McGowan?

Ms G. McGowan: I think the original commitment was from government for 2 500 bays. The PTA has worked around that figure. I think its work has substantially supported that figure. In relation to the question on transport-oriented development in that area, that is obviously an end-of-line station. Forrestfield will focus on a business park, but also at getting the commuter base from the hills. Airport West will be a transport-oriented development that is focused primarily on residential. At the Forrestfield end, obviously we will have to be very cognisant in the structure planning of the area of operation of the marshalling yards. In a notional sense in the land-use planning, any residential development would most likely be about 400 metres from the actual station and the rest would be the business park. At the Airport West end, the number of bays is substantially less and we would be looking at really optimising that area. It is basically an area that is ripe for refurbishment within about nine kilometres of the CBD.

[8.40 pm]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: When will the issue of the number of car bays be sorted by the Western Australian Planning Commission?

Ms G. McGowan: It will get sorted at the detailed structure planning stage. Certainly, the WAPC will consider the structure plan put forward by the Shire of Kalamunda, but the detail of finalising the number of car bays would normally be dealt with at the detailed structure planning stage when a little more land use planning work has been done.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What dates are we talking about? How many months?

Mr J. NORBERGER: We do not have an indicative date at this stage. My advice is that it certainly would not be this year.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I refer to the northern planning program line item on page 811 of the *Budget Statements*. Often we talk about planning in the cities, but forget about planning in the north west. Can the parliamentary secretary please elaborate on how that line item on page 811 will impact on the north west?

Mr J. NORBERGER: I thank the member. Obviously, he is referring to the northern planning program. He is quite right. This stems back to 2008 when the Liberal–National government followed a pre-election commitment to provide \$40 million to establish a northern towns development fund. The fund was established in recognition that effective planning at a local level was needed to identify priorities for local and regional infrastructure to underpin sustainable growth and develop liveable towns. Between 2010 and 2016, \$27.24 million from the northern towns development fund was subsequently allocated to the northern planning program, which was established to facilitate disbursements of royalties for regions funding to priority projects that address key planning constraints limiting the state’s ability to bring land to a development-ready state in the short term. Of course, the areas we are talking about are predominantly the Kimberley, Pilbara, midwest and Gascoyne regions—the areas that the member represents. That \$27.24 million for the northern planning program has enabled a once-in-a-generation regional and local planning update to support the growth in the north. It has funded more than 100 priority projects and many more sub-projects to deliver 18 new local planning strategies, including technical investigation and reports to support the strategies, and 30 new local planning schemes. As a result of the planning delivered through the northern planning program, the local governments in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne and midwest now have sufficient land available and ready for development when it is needed.

Ms S.F. MCGURK: I refer to the transport route planning item outlined on page 812 of the *Budget Statements*. Again, the Perth Freight Link has been a big issue in my electorate and in the areas around my electorate. Can the parliamentary secretary tell me what involvement the Department of Planning or the WAPC has had in the tunnel proposal for the freight link? I think there are a couple of different alternatives; one would come out at the public golf course or perhaps near the corner of Stirling Highway and High Street. What involvement has Planning had in that proposal and what changes to the metropolitan region scheme would be required? What is the process and how long will it take? Any detail around that would be useful.

Mr J. NORBERGER: In relation to the transport route planning, it is important to remember that the Department of Planning undertakes transport studies to assess the adequacy of planning transport corridors. It then prepares and reviews road alignment and reservation plans for regional roads within the metropolitan and Peel regions. The member is talking about the tunnel. Obviously, these functions are derived from the Planning and Development Act. In relation to what involvement there has been in the tunnel thus far, I will ask Ms McGowan to provide some insight into what the department has been doing.

Ms G. McGowan: I will ask Mr Hillyard to add comment if he needs to, but until there is a specific proposal, we have not been intimately involved in the tunnel planning. The \$500 000 budget estimate for 2016–17 for this particular item is primarily, as the parliamentary secretary said, related to the planning of corridors—specifically,

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in this instance, the Jandakot eastern link road study, the Neaves Road study in the northern suburbs, the Ranford Road study, the Rowley, Anketell and Thomas Roads study, and the Russell Road study in terms of road reserves, road reviews and the statutory planning advice for local authorities. It depends on the time frame and scope of particular projects, although obviously Rowley, Anketell and Thomas Roads in particular are the high-order frameworks, carry a fair bit of regional traffic and are also important in the subregional planning frameworks. That is the extent of our involvement there. I will ask Tim whether he has anything more to add on liaison with transport.

Mr T. Hillyard: I will answer a couple of those points. In terms of any decision for the tunnel from the Roe Highway extension, it is unlikely unless there was a particular additional requirement to amend the region scheme at the particular portals. There would be no amendment to the metropolitan region scheme for the tunnel itself. Similarly, Graham Farmer Freeway is not reserved; it is all zoned land. Similar arrangements have been put in place for the railway through the town centre in Yanchep. The other major roads that were mentioned by the director general, such as Rowley Road et cetera, have been defined jointly by Main Roads and the Department of Planning transport officers. A series of planning control areas have been put in place and land has been acquired for those transport routes based upon the planning control area. I think something in the order of 30 per cent has been acquired for Rowley Road. Even though it does not exist in the scheme formally, it does by way of a different planning instrument.

Mr J. NORBERGER: That is probably the key point. Given that we are looking at potential land acquisitions and whatnot, once it is subterranean, the influence from a planning perspective will obviously be limited. As Mr Hillyard said, at the exit and entry points, that would need some kind of review potentially. Whether that would require a change to the MRS would need to be looked at, but once it is underground, the impact from a planning perspective will probably be fairly limited.

Ms S.F. McGURK: So that we are clear, at the entry and exit points, it is likely to require some amendments if they have not already been identified within the current MRS.

Mr T. Hillyard: That would be correct. My understanding at the moment is that the tunnel would commence in the middle of the existing Stock Road interchange and it would come out, as we understand it, near Stirling Bridge—I cannot think of the main road there.

Ms S.F. McGURK: High Street and Stirling Highway.

Mr T. Hillyard: There is an existing widening to High Street in that area that is fairly substantial and those lands have been transferred to Main Roads this financial year. Until it does the detailed planning, exactly what the portal requirements might be are a bit unclear.

Ms S.F. McGURK: That is right. Those houses were part of the reserve that was envisaged with the original improvements to the corner of Stirling Highway and High Street and that has been discussed with the community for some time. I am aware of those houses. If the tunnel came up, for instance, at the public golf course, which has been flagged by the minister today and previously, that is in a class A reserve, so presumably that would require amendments to the scheme.

Mr E. Lumsden: The short answer is yes.

[8.50 pm]

Ms S.F. McGURK: I am not sure whether the parliamentary secretary is aware of any land sales that have occurred around the —

Mr J. NORBERGER: Are we still on the same issue?

Ms S.F. McGURK: Yes, the issue of the interaction between planning issues and those transport corridors and whether there have been any land sales around the corner of Canning Highway and Stirling Highway, which is an area I would have thought would be quite significantly impacted by the freight link proposals.

Mr T. Hillyard: Some years ago, a reservation in the scheme was removed; namely, the deviation of Canning Highway that went through to near the old Fremantle Traffic Bridge. That was removed and most of those properties were disposed of jointly by the Western Australian Planning Commission and Main Roads. An amendment has been proposed for Canning Highway. There has been a series of reviews of Canning Highway going all the way from Canning Bridge to Stirling Bridge. It has been amended as far as Petra Street in East Fremantle. There is another amendment to finalise the review that has occurred, which would be west of Petra Street. Planning for that area has worked on the basis that there would be a five-metre widening either side. I would not have thought that there would be any additional requirement associated with a tunnel because the reservation is already in place to take a second bridge to duplicate.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I refer to page 816 and town planning scheme amendments. The budgeted target for approving those amendments was about 60 per cent. The department is coming in at 28 per cent. Can the parliamentary secretary provide an explanation about why the rate is so below the target?

Mr J. NORBERGER: That is a good question; thanks, member. We are aiming for a target of 60 per cent for town planning scheme amendments. Obviously, one does not have to go too far back in history to the point at which there were no key performance indicators. In 2015–16, we came in at 28 per cent, and obviously that is something we want to improve. The 28 per cent recognises that we are implementing planning reforms that we believe will assist in boosting that percentage, but there is also a continuation, if you like, of some high numbers of quite complex local planning scheme amendments that have been in the system for a while, which may take longer. What we are dealing with are some legacy scheme amendments that we are still working our way through, some of which are quite complex. What we have found as one of the main causes for delay is that some councils are quite stridently pursuing proposals either partly or wholly inconsistent with policy, the model scheme text or established practice or they are not giving proper justification or justification for them being inadequate, and that, of course, leads to an extended period of negotiation between council and the administration before we can come to a mutually agreeable position if, in fact, we are able to come to a mutually agreeable position. It may take a lot of time to understand what many of the proposals mean. I will ask Ms McGowan to comment on the stop-the-clock arrangements.

Ms G. McGowan: Certainly from my perspective, the 28 per cent is not acceptable. I have been working very hard to try to rectify that, as the parliamentary secretary said, from 19 October when we introduced changes as part of planning reform phase 2. We have progressed a significant number of scheme amendments and, in fact, I think while we had been running at about 154 in the system, we are generally down to 109. We did have a significant number of very complex amendments prior to the changes. The sorts of examples are things like the Town of Cambridge, which had something like 2 000 submissions. Various other ones have taken a considerable amount of time. There are two facets to what we are doing to progress and improve the time frames. The first is being much clearer to local government about what we require from them. If we do not get something of the required standard or quality, the stop-the-clock mechanisms will enable us to send it back to the local government, which is an option that we have not had in the past. One of the challenges we have had in the past is that even when there have been questions and follow-up, we probably have not been as good as we could have been in going back and getting local government to give us a response, so something can sit back, for seven months or so in some cases, waiting for a response. That is one part of the process. The other is really looking at a risk-based approach to what we are doing in processing amendments. The advantage of the changes that came in October last year is that we now have three classes of amendment. We have a basic amendment, which imposes a statutory time frame of 42 days; a standard amendment, which is 60 days; and a complex amendment, which is 90 days, and for that we have to seek ministerial approval if we cannot process within that time frame. Equally, if the local government requires further information, we can seek an extension, so it is a two-pronged approach. I have been reluctant to simply put resources into that area if, in fact, what we are doing is duplicating the work of competent local government and not being clear to local government about what we require. We have maintained the target of 60 per cent for the coming year. I am confident that there will be a significant improvement in the next 12 months.

Mr J. NORBERGER: Certainly I think planning reform phrase 2 will go a long way to assisting with that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Can the parliamentary secretary provide an itemised list of all the amendments that were finalised in 2015-16 and those that are outstanding?

Mr J. NORBERGER: No problem, member. Mr Chairman, I am happy to provide by way of supplementary information, all the amendments —

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: — that were processed in 2015-16 and those that are currently outstanding and the time that it has been with the WAPC.

Mr J. NORBERGER: What the member said!

[*Supplementary Information No A32.*]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I refer to page 812, the strategic assessment, and the comments made by various ministers that the full implementation of the strategic assessment will lead to a three per cent reduction in the remaining area of native vegetation, recognising that the full implementation will lead to a 70 per cent increase in the population of Perth going from two million to 3.5 million. Does the parliamentary secretary endorse that three per cent and does it include known and unknown approvals?

Mr J. NORBERGER: I am not aware of the three per cent figure. Is the member able to clarify where he got it from?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Ministers Jacob and Day have both referred to it. Minister Jacob said the following during debate on the motion on the Perth and Peel green growth plan for 3.5 million —

We believe we can go from here with a 70 per cent increase in population—two million to 3.5 million—with a further loss of only three per cent of our bushland ...

He stated that in Parliament on 23 March of this year.

Mr J. NORBERGER: I think the member has almost answered the question himself. Ultimately, the Minister for Environment is the appropriate person to answer that. From a Department of Planning point of view, we are here to provide our expertise in helping to plan for significant population growth. Indeed, 450 000 new people have come to Western Australia in the last eight or so years. We are now looking long term and preparing our city to cope with a population of up to 3.5 million. Absolutely, as part of that strategic assessment, there is quite a significant and comprehensive conservation package. Yes, we will look at what land may need to be acquired and conserved.

In relation to the ultimate net gains, this is not a finalised document; it is an ongoing process, but I do believe that the Minister for Environment has significant skin in the game. As I said earlier, the strategic assessment has input from across the government. I do not believe the opinion of the Department of Planning in this instance is the be-all and end-all. We provide a significant amount of expertise in providing a very strategic document that will ultimately be decided by government.

[9.00 pm]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I want to get information from the Department of Planning about the area of known approvals because this has been referred to without it being quantified. What area is generally described as being known approvals and what areas are described as being unknown approvals? Can we have some indication of those two areas please?

[Mr I.M. Britza took the chair.]

Mr J. NORBERGER: I might ask Ms McGowan to provide that additional detail that the member is seeking.

Ms G. McGowan: In terms of the exact known and unknown areas, I cannot provide that detail. That would have to come from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The process that we have undertaken in a general sense has underscored how effectively our land use planning system has been to date in avoiding significant areas of high conservation value. The system has not been as good—this is right across the system, not just the land use planning system—at looking at it very holistically or at a strategic level. Yes, we have predicted the population growth of Perth and Peel@3.5million. Instead of having the current 150 kilometres north and south, we are trying to create a compact, connected city and better utilise existing infrastructure and spaces. Currently, the area of green space in Perth is around 39 per cent to 42 per cent of Perth and Peel.

The way we have approached the task with the strategic assessment is to identify those areas in which the conservation values, habitat values or basic raw materials are such that they are absolutely no-go zones and firm commitments, and that will be the approach taken with the commonwealth. In terms of further commitments, there will be a commitment to the commonwealth, for instance, with Carnaby's habitat, so a certain number of hectares will be set aside. If we look at the mapping that has been prepared for the strategic assessment, from memory, the areas that are absolute commitments are represented in a block colour. For the remaining areas, that will be the total, which, from memory, is 76 000 hectares of habitat, for instance.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: What Ms McGowan is saying is very interesting, but I really want to get to the issue of the planning approvals that have been given. At the beginning of her answer she suggested that that answer would have to come from the DPC. I am very curious to know why planning approvals would have to come from the DPC. Why can the Department of Planning not tell me about the planning approvals that are currently in the system prior to the advent and implementation of the so-called green growth plan?

Mr J. NORBERGER: To add that additional bit of detail and to get to the bottom of what the member is asking, I will ask Mr Lumsden to provide some additional information.

Mr E. Lumsden: I think the honourable member is asking about the rezoning approvals. He is not necessarily talking about development approvals but rezoning of land, which will convert rural land, which may have environmental attributes, to urban. Certainly we would have to take that specific question on notice to do that research.

I want to make a couple of points in addition to what Ms McGowan said. First of all, it is not a straight comparison of simply saying that Perth's population will increase by X thousand compared with an increase of only three per cent or whatever it is to environmental attributes. It needs to be understood that the commission

Chairman; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Jan Norberger; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mrs Glenys Godfrey;
Mr Vincent Catania; Mr Paul Miles

sees the strategic environmental assessment as a very good process and mechanism to better identify, as I said earlier, both at the national and state level, those environmental aspects that need to be considered not only in terms of a specific element or land area, but also looking at the total environmental system as well as the drainage system, which is often associated with that, and the flora and fauna system, not on an ad-hoc basis. Other than trying to develop a compact city, we are trying to minimise the impact on environmental attributes.

There has also been a perception that eventually all rural land within the Perth region, in particular, if not the Peel, can eventually be developed for urban use. That has never been a planning strategy of any government, regardless of its political persuasion. Rural land is used for a range of activities but also often protects environmental attributes as well as drainage issues to be considered from a systems point of view, such as the Peel–Harvey catchment. We are trying to not only develop a compact city, but also encourage consolidation, for instance, on brownfields and not just greenfields sites. We cannot simply do that equation and increase the population by 55 per cent if we are only increasing it by three per cent; therefore, there is something wrong because the comparison is in percentage terms. We are trying to ensure that we get the best environmental outcomes from not only a commonwealth perspective but also a state perspective to guide future growth and also where development can occur, including infrastructure corridors. I see this as an important phase in doing appropriate strategic planning, which the commission can do under the Planning and Development Act because schedule 7 of the act mentions conservation and environmental issues. We need to make sure that we get those all in balance in an integrated manner to get the best possible future development and conservation system for the future of Perth. I think we should look at this process as a very opportune one. Admittedly, we started off by trying to bring the commonwealth environmental legislation requirements into line with the state, but we need to look at very broad, integrated strategic land use planning, which includes not only infrastructure and housing development, but also all the other aspects that we have to look at from a land use planning perspective.

Mr P.T. MILES: I have a quick question relating to page 814 of the *Budget Statements*. The parliamentary secretary will probably need to ask his officers to answer this. The last line item under “Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators” is “Determination appeals that are unsuccessful”, which is 99.9 per cent. I was just trying to work out what that was. Does it mean that the department does not win any State Administrative Tribunal cases, and therefore why do we go to SAT if that is the case? It just does not look right.

Mr J. NORBERGER: My understanding is the opposite of what the member has just proposed. When we go to SAT, we are winning very well.

Mr P.T. MILES: It just does not read that well.

Mr J. NORBERGER: I will take that on board. We apologise profusely.

Ms G. McGowan: Basically, the indicator is the number of all subdivision, strata and development applications determined that are not successfully reviewed—that is, upheld—before the State Administrative Tribunal expressed as a percentage of the total number of applications determined. Basically, the calculation is the number of applications—it is almost a double negative; I am sorry—without successful reviews before the SAT divided by the total number of applications determined multiplied by 100. That is how we get the percentage.

Mr P.T. MILES: I believe the adviser. I will read it again tomorrow.

The appropriation was recommended.

[9.10 pm]