

**PLAN FIRST MONIES****QUESTION NO: 94**

- a) How much is collected each year through Plan First levies?
- b) Where are these funds spent?
- c) How much remains uncollected?
- d) Why do councils still have Plan First Levies when the scheme has been superseded?

**ANSWER**

a) The Planning Reform fee, of 65 cents for every \$1,000, is collected by Councils and other consent authorities for developments estimated to cost over \$50,000. The amount collected varies each year depending on the amount and value of proposed developments. In 2005/06 the total amount collected was \$13.6m.

b) The Planning Reform Fund provides financial support to local government to improve strategic planning in local plans and applications have recently been called for another round of funding.

The Fund also supports key strategic projects as part of the planning reforms, such as implementation of the Metropolitan Strategy, development of coastal regional strategies, BASIX and more recently the Cities and Centres taskforce. Projects which directly or indirectly involve local government.

c) Fees are collected from consent authorities on a monthly basis.

d) From its inception, the Fund has been used to support the development and implementation of reforms to the planning system, to streamline the planning process, make it more strategic, efficient and transparent while enhancing community involvement.

**WARRAGAMBA REZONING****QUESTION NO: 95**

- a) Is the Minister aware of a proposal before Wollondilly Shire Council to allow the rezoning of land zoned 5 (C1) special uses (water catchment) to residential, in order to develop a subdivision for 450 residences?
- b) Is the Minister concerned that the water quality of the Warragamba Dam could be affected by this development?
- c) Is the Minister aware some residents objected to this seemingly arbitrary rezoning?
- d) Will the Minister provide details of the initiator of this rezoning and the likely impact of the rezoning on the Warragamba Dam?
- e) In Victoria, the major dams are surrounded by pristine bushland and no residential developments are allowed near them. Why is this approach not adopted in New South Wales to protect the State's (and, specifically, Sydney's) water catchment and water supply?

**ANSWER**

- a) The draft plan is yet to be submitted for my consideration.
- b) Water quality is one of the key criteria for the determination of this rezoning.
- c) At this stage, I am unaware of the outcomes of the exhibition process.
- d) The proponent is ALSP Pty Ltd. I am advised that the proposed development will largely drain away from Warragamba Dam and it will not adversely impact on the dam waters.
- e) A similar approach of protection is in place in NSW. It is embodied in a number of State planning controls and Government policies including:
  - o State Environmental Planning Policy No. 58 – Protecting Sydney's Water Supply,
  - o Section 117 Direction 28 entitled 'Water Catchment Area – Sydney Catchment Authority', and
  - o the Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management.

**AIR SERVICES SITE AT CRANEBROOK****QUESTION NO: 96**

- a) Given that NSW Department of Environment and Conservation has written to Penrith Council saying it considers the Cranebrook Air Services site has 'Outstanding Conservation Value', what measures is the Department of Planning instigating to ensure these values are protected?
- b) Has there been any correspondence between the Department of Planning and DEC on this site? If so, will it be tabled?
- c) The developers IFC Capital Limited have lodged an application with Penrith Council to rezone land from Special Uses to Residential. Would approval of the rezoning threaten the environmental values of the site? If the approval is approved, would conditions would be attached to the approval?

**ANSWER**

- a) Any proposal to rezone land for residential purposes will need to address the Sustainability Criteria contained in the Metropolitan Strategy. In relation to the North Cranebrook site, the 'Maintain and Improve' component of Part 7 Environmental Protection is designed to ensure that any new development protects and enhances biodiversity, air quality, heritage and waterway health. The Department of Planning has advised IFC that DEC will need to be involved in both the biodiversity assessment and Aboriginal heritage assessment of the site.
- b) No formal correspondence has been exchanged between the Department of Planning and DEC.
- c) To date the Department of Planning has not received from Council any notification of a rezoning proposal for the IFC Cranebrook site under Section 54 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

**LIGHT RAIL****QUESTION NO: 97**

- a) Has the Department undertaken any assessment of the cost implications associated with light rail along the Parramatta Road corridor? If so, when was this done? Will the details of those costs be provided to the committee?
- b) Has the Department done any assessment of the cost implications associated with expanded light rail along the Anzac Road corridor? If so, when was this done? Will the details be released to the committee?
- c) What land acquisition, if any, would be required to expand light rail along the Anzac Road corridor to the University of NSW, and to Maroubra Beach?

**ANSWER**

- a) I am advised that various internal studies into mass transit alternatives were commissioned by the former Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) in 2003 and 2004. Consultancy costs associated with these studies would appear in DIPNR annual reports for the relevant years.
- b) & c) I assume the question relates to Anzac Parade. I am advised that neither DIPNR nor the Department of Planning has conducted a detailed examination of light rail options along the Anzac Parade corridor.

**PLANNING RULES CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE****QUESTION NO: 98**

- a) Why is there no provision for development that is partially self-sufficient for food, water, sewerage or energy, especially in new land release areas?
- b) Why are people banned from drinking rainwater from a tank attached to their house or office in the Sydney metropolitan area?
- c) What role does the Department of Planning play in educating councils about sustainable planning and urban design?

**Answers:**

- a) One of the key objectives of the Government's Metropolitan Strategy is to encourage sustainable development. The Government's Building Sustainability Index (BASIX) scheme requires new residential buildings across the State, including land release areas, to reduce greenhouse emissions by up to 40%, and water consumption by up to 40%.
- b) This is a matter for the Department of Health.
- c) The Department of Planning has published a number of urban design guidelines that are publicly available in the Department's Information Centre. The Department is also commencing work on new urban design guidelines as an action under the Metropolitan Strategy, due for release in 2007, to assist local councils and others to plan for sustainable communities.

## **QUESTION ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

### **REDFERN WATERLOO AUTHORITY – EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE PLAN**

#### **QUESTION NO: 99**

- a) Is the Minister aware that, under recent changes to the NSW Department of Housing's rent rebate scheme, public housing tenants who, for example, obtain employment and earn more than \$410 per week (for a single person), will then lose their eligibility for public housing?
- b) Has the Redfern Waterloo Authority analysed or assessed the potential impacts of this policy on the Redfern Waterloo area and on the DOH tenants at whom the Employment Plan is directed? If so, what are the potential impacts? If not, why not?
- c) Is the Minister aware that a public housing tenants who gains a job through the proposed Employment Plan would lose their eligibility for public housing once their income increases to median wage levels? Would not the forcing of such a resident out of their DOH tenancy and out of the area defeat the purpose of providing local residents with jobs?
- d) Given that many residents who do lose DOH housing will not be able to afford private rents in the area, what is the RWA doing to significantly increase the quantity and proportion of affordable housing in the area?
- e) What discussion has the Authority had with the Minister for Housing about resolving the predicament that may face residents of the Redfern Waterloo Area?
- f) One of the goals of the Employment and Enterprise Plan is to work "with the local community to ensure that the opportunities for young Aboriginal people in the area are maximised through university based cadetship". Does this statement refer solely to the scholarship programs currently available (for example the Access Scholarship and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholarship programs at the University of Sydney) or are new programs envisaged? If so, when will they be introduced?
- g) What impact will the federal changes to industrial relations laws have on the RWA in relation to the creation of local employment opportunities? For example, the Employment and Enterprise Plan states that: "The RWA has begun negotiations to develop partnerships with major cleaning companies, which will lead to employment for trainees who have successfully completed their training".
- h) Will the Authority deal only with those employers willing to offer award wages and provide adequate sick, recreational and parental leave, leave loadings and penalty rates, or will the Authority enter into agreements with companies offering AWAs?

#### **ANSWER**

- a) The Minister for Redfern-Waterloo is not responsible for public housing policy and practice. Questions of this nature should appropriately be directed to the Minister for Housing.
- b) See answer to (a) above.

- c) See answer to (a) above.
- d) Upon the release of Stage One of the Built Environment Plan, the RWA has announced the expenditure of \$16 million over the next ten years for affordable housing for Aboriginal residents of Redfern-Waterloo. Further initiatives in regard to affordable housing, to be conducted in conjunction with the Department of Housing, are also outlined in the proposed Stage Two of the Built Environment Plan.
- e) See answers to (a) and (d) above.
- f) The statement does not refer to the existing University of Sydney scholarship programs.

The RWA has already created Aboriginal cadetships.

Cadetships offer Aboriginal people career advantages through gaining university qualifications at the same time as gaining professional work experience.

The RWA is introducing new initiatives to improve school retention of Aboriginal people to ensure the cadetship opportunities emerging in Redfern Waterloo area can be taken up by Aboriginal people.

- g) The RWA does not anticipate any significant beneficial impacts from the new federal industrial legislation in terms of local employment creation.
- h) The RWA will expect employers working with it on job creation programs to pay their employees all their lawful entitlements.

## **QUESTION ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

### **REDFERN WATERLOO AUTHORITY – AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN**

#### **QUESTION NO: 100**

- a) What progress has been made on the 10-year affordable housing plan the Authority is currently formulating? When will this plan be released?
- b) During the estimates hearing the Minister stated that \$1m has been allocated for this financial year for affordable housing in the Redfern Waterloo area. How many units of housing will this money provide?
- c) How many units will be for rent and how many for sale? What caveats, if any, will be placed on units that are available for sale, to ensure that these units remain affordable in the future?

#### **ANSWER**

- a) The RWA is currently in the process of developing an affordable housing contributions plan and an affordable housing program, which will be released in due course.
- b) The \$1million referred to is seed funding this financial year towards the \$16 million to be committed to Aboriginal affordable housing over the next ten years. Any decisions about future management of these funds will be subject to consultation with the local Aboriginal community in the first instance.
- c) See answer to (b) above



## **QUESTION ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

### **REDFERN WATERLOO AUTHORITY – BUILT ENVIRONMENT PLAN**

#### **QUESTION NO: 101**

- a) When will phase 2 of the Built Environment Plan be released?
- b) Will later stages of the Built Environment Plan involve redeveloping the high-rise Department of Housing towers at Cope Street and/or Moorehead Street? Will this result in public housing tenants being relocated outside Redfern-Waterloo?
- c) Given that 40 per cent of the Redfern-Waterloo population lives in public housing, what has the Department of Planning or the RWA done to ensure that public housing tenants will not be evicted from public housing in numbers that significantly alter the character and demographics of Redfern/Waterloo?
- d) What steps is the Department or the Authority proposing to take to prevent the gentrification of the area?

#### **ANSWER**

- a) The RWA estimates that the draft Stage Two of the Built Environment Plan will be released for community consultation in 2007.
- b) Stage Two of the Built Environment Plan is yet to be developed, but Stage One of the Plan reaffirms the NSW Government's commitments to public housing tenants that:
  - there will be no cuts to the amount of public housing
  - current residents will not be disadvantaged
  - all public tenancies are secure
- c) See answer to (b) above
- d) The RWA's Built Environment, Employment and Enterprise and Human Services Plans outline the major steps the RWA is taking to generate social and economic revitalisation of the area.

So far the RWA's Plans have seen the Government directly facilitate the investment of nearly \$300 million towards infrastructure development in Redfern-Waterloo.

Of this amount, more than \$76 million has been directly committed by the RWA itself.

New investment in infrastructure includes:

- \$120 million to be invested by Sydney Broadcast Property in constructing a new 43,500m<sup>2</sup> state-of-the-art media centre at the Australian Technology Park (ATP) – in a deal negotiated by the RWA which will create 600 construction and 2000 permanent jobs.

- \$35 million being invested by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) in purchasing and transforming the former Redfern Public School into a new National Indigenous Development Centre – in a deal brokered by the RWA with the ILC and the NSW Department of Education and Training.

NSW Government infrastructure investment includes:

- \$47.5 million being invested by the RWA in a new building currently under construction at the ATP to house National ICT Australia and the Defence, Science and Technology Organisation, with 600 permanent jobs being created.
- \$40 million being invested by Arts NSW to construct a new contemporary performing arts space through adaptive reuse of heritage buildings at North Eveleigh – in conjunction with the RWA and RailCorp.
- \$16 million to be invested by the RWA on the provision of affordable housing for Aboriginal residents of Redfern-Waterloo.
- \$10 million to be invested by NSW Health and RWA to transform the former Redfern Courthouse and Police Station into a major new community health facility – in an arrangement facilitated and supported by the RWA.
- \$6 million to be invested by the RWA and its subsidiary company ATP in constructing a new pedestrian/cycle link between North Eveleigh and the ATP.
- \$6 million being invested by RWA and ATP in new roads and infrastructure to facilitate the Technology Park's future development.
- \$4.2 million invested by the NSW Police Service in March 2005 in establishing a new police station at the former TNT Tower opposite Redfern Railway Station – with a workforce of 219.

I further advise that 124 jobs have been created for Indigenous people since May 2005.

This is a direct result of the **Jobs Compact** between the Redfern-Waterloo Authority and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, which encourages employers to improve job skills and opportunities for the local community.

Under the Jobs Compact, all contracts for construction work on State-owned land in Redfern-Waterloo must include tougher provisions to boost on-site work and training opportunities for locals, particularly Indigenous residents.

Then through an Indigenous Employment Model, we are finding the right people with the right qualifications to fill those jobs.

Through this employment model, the Redfern-Waterloo Authority has already formed partnerships with groups such as TAFE NSW and Macarthur Group Employment.

The 124 new jobs created include:

- **21 jobs** through a \$40 million project to transform the former North Eveleigh Carriageworks building into a Contemporary Performing Arts Centre;

- **26 jobs** as part of the Authority's construction of the new building at Australian Technology Park to house National ICT Australia and the Defence and Science Technology Organisation of Australia;
- **60 jobs** as part of the construction of a new media hub at Australian Technology Park, to house the Seven Network, Pacific Magazines and others.
- **four jobs** under the Authority's new roads contract at the Australian Technology Park;
- **eight jobs** through the City of Sydney's Redfern St and Regent St upgrade, and
- **five jobs** as part of RailCorp and TIDC's Macdonaldtown Station stabling project. Also, the Redfern-Waterloo Authority has employed an Aboriginal builder/project manager to help as a mentor for other job-seekers

**QUESTION ON NOTICE      BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**REDFERN WATERLOO PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

**QUESTION NO: 102**

What funding remains from the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Program? How will it be spent?

**ANSWER**

The Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Program ceased operation on 30 June 2005.

On 1 July 2005, The Redfern-Waterloo Authority (RWA) assumed responsibility for the coordination of human services policy for the Redfern-Waterloo area.

**QUESTION ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**REDFERN PCYC**

**QUESTION NO: 103**

What are the leasing arrangements for the Redfern PCYC?

**ANSWER**

This is a question that should appropriately be addressed to the Minister for Housing as landlord or the PCYC as tenant.

**QUESTION ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**CARLTON UNITED BREWERY SITE REDEVELOPMENT**

**QUESTION NO: 104**

- a) How many car parking spaces will be provided on the CUB site when fully developed?
- b) What proportion of affordable housing will be mandated for the CUB site?
- c) Will any affordable housing at the CUB site be managed by an organisation such as City West Housing Company? If not, why not?
- d) Given that the CUB site is close to Central Railway, UTS, Sydney University and the city, will a mix of affordable housing be provided for students and city workers?
- e) Will an affordable housing levy be imposed on the CUB site developers? Have any discussions on such a levy taken place with the developers? If so, what has been their response?
- f) Have any undertakings been given to CUB site developers that affordable housing would be provided off-site, ie elsewhere in Redfern-Waterloo? If so, where would such housing be located?
- g) How much will the levy be for affordable housing purposes from the CUB site?
- h) Will this be used to purchase private land/housing in Redfern Waterloo? Or will it be used to redevelop government-owned land?

**ANSWER**

- a) to d) The Department of Planning has not to date received a Concept Plan
- e) The RWA is currently negotiating an affordable housing agreement with the owners of the CUB site.
- f) Affordable housing levies derived from development of the CUB site will be applied to the Redfern-Waterloo operational area.
- g) See answer to (e) above.
- h) See answer to (f) above.

**QUESTION ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**THE 'BLOCK' AND PEMULWUY PROJECT**

**QUESTION NO: 105**

- a) The Aboriginal Housing Company has access to social and planning experts who believe that the Block will not concentrate high needs housing. Will the Minister please provide any advice he or the Authority has received that a reduction of Aboriginal housing on the Block is necessary to prevent the concentration of high needs housing?
- b) How does the Block differ from the DOH areas of Redfern-Waterloo, in which many Indigenous people live and which are also areas with high levels of disadvantage and need?
- c) Does the statement contained in cabinet papers in 2004 - "if the Block is not redeveloped [to reduce Aboriginal housing], the commercial benefits flowing ... would face a substantial reduction ... probably in the order of 25-30 per cent" - still reflect government policy?

**ANSWER**

- a) On 11 September 2006 the Department of Planning received a Major Projects application from the Aboriginal Housing Company in respect to proposed development on the Block and its surrounds. The application is currently being assessed in accordance with relevant statutory requirements and planning instruments.
- b) See answer to (a) above.
- c) No comment can be made on the purported contents of confidential Cabinet documents.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PLANNING MECHANISMS - GENERAL****QUESTION NO: 106**

- a) The Mayor of New York's initiative on affordable housing promises to provide 165,000 units over 10 years. Does the Department of Planning have any target number of units over a similar period? If not, why does the department not establish and announce itself such goals?
- b) Is the Minister aware that projects such as the Atlantic yards redevelopment in New York, and the Imperial Wharf project in London, require 50 per cent of new housing units in those projects to be affordable? Will the government impose similar requirements on major redevelopments in Sydney, or elsewhere in NSW, by amending the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act to provide for an affordable housing levy, as the government has been requested to do by a number of councils and housing peak bodies for more than 10 years?

**ANSWER**

- a) Dwelling targets for existing schemes with definable development potential such as Green Square and Ultimo – Pyrmont were published in the Metropolitan Strategy released in December 2005.
- b) NSW is the only State in Australia with land use planning mechanisms (State Environmental Planning Policy 10 Boarding Houses & 70 Affordable Housing) for the creation and retention of affordable housing, enabled through the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The *Redfern – Waterloo Authority Act 2004* also enables affordable housing contributions to be levied in the Redfern – Waterloo area and from the former Carlton United Brewery site.

Sydney has a number of large development sites such as Sydney Olympic Park, Penrith Lakes and ADI sites where affordable housing is likely to be negotiated through planning agreements.



**OLYMPIC PARK SITE****QUESTION NO: 107**

- a) Why will only 3 per cent of units at the Olympic Park site be set aside for affordable housing?
- b) Will new housing at the site be built to a high environmental standard? Will features such as grey water plumbing, rainwater tanks, photovoltaic panels be encouraged, or mandated, in the development?

**ANSWER**

- a) The Sydney Olympic Park Authority Act 2001 confers upon the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) the role of plan making. The SOPA Master Plan 2002 is the document that provides the framework for future development on the Olympic Park Site.

Section 7.3 of the Master Plan 2002 has the aim to achieve accommodation for key workers and a mix of households in the “very low”, “low” and “moderate” income ranges.

The 3% target was established by SOPA in consultation with other Government Departments at the time of the preparation of the Master Plan 2002.

The Authority, through the ongoing review of the Master Plan will review the quantum of affordable housing with the continuing redevelopment of Sydney Olympic Park.

- b) The current Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2002 contains a range of provisions which ensure that new housing in the precinct will be developed to a high environmental standard.

**ADI SITE****QUESTION NO: 108**

- a) Given that job creation was a factor in development consent being granted for the ADI site, how many jobs, other than construction jobs, have been created as a result of the development since January 2005?
- b) In what sectors have jobs been created?
- c) Of these, how many are construction jobs that will disappear when the construction phase of the development is completed?
- d) How does the government monitor job creation associated with the ADI site?
- e) Is home-based employment being counted in new jobs figures associated with the ADI site? If so, how are these figures ascertained?
- f) Why is Landcom's target for affordable housing on the ADI site only 3 per cent? Please provide details of how was this target figure determined? Was it derived from current demand or future demand for affordable housing, or from demographic and housing and income-related statistics from any western Sydney statistical areas?

**Answer**

- a) and (b) A progress report on the Employment Development Strategy for the site, submitted by the developer in March 2006, advised that:
  - 418 construction and development phase jobs have been created;
  - 142 on-going jobs have been created; and
  - 303 people have been assisted to find jobs through the Ropes Crossing Skilling and Employment Centre at St Marys.
- c) To March of this year, 418 construction and development jobs have been created. Over the next five years, it is estimated that just over 4000 construction and development jobs will be either directly or indirectly created by the ongoing development.
- d) The Employment Development Strategy aims to facilitate the achievement of the employment targets for the site. Clause 18.9 of the Developer Agreement requires that a review of progress on the Employment Development Strategy be presented every three years.

e)

The development is at an early stage. Of the six precincts, construction has only begun in the Eastern Precinct and the first residents are yet to move in.

f)

Under Clause 17 of the St Marys Development Agreement, which addresses the delivery of infrastructure and services to support the development of the former ADI site at St Marys, the Joint Venture is required to provide 3% of residential allotments for affordable housing.

This figure was determined when the Regional Environmental Plan was made for the site in 2000.

## **QUESTION ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

### **SOUTH WEST LAND RELEASE**

#### **QUESTION NO: 109**

- a) Why has the estimated cost for infrastructure development now been almost halved, being only \$33,000 per lot instead of the formerly estimated \$60 000 - \$65 000? What guarantees are there that the number and quality of infrastructure services will not be compromised by this reduction in the cost estimate?
- b) In a table published by the Growth Centres Commission called Four Year Infrastructure Program - South West, it appears there is no provision for funding for health services in the Growth Centres. Why is this, given the population in the growth centres will increase?
- c) In light of informed estimates that it would take only three years to build the rail extensions to both the new Western Sydney Growth sectors, why is the government not providing these lines until 2012 for the Leppington Link, and 2017 for the Rouse Hill link? What are the reasons for the delay?
- d) When will construction of the Rouse Hill line commence?

#### **ANSWER**

- a) The reduction follows more detailed work on the cost and sequencing of infrastructure and is not a reduction in the level of services.
- b) Health facilities in the South West will be expanded to meet the growing population of the Growth Centres over the next 40 years. This includes improvements to existing hospitals, new community and primary health centres and associated community based services providing dental, mental health, nursing clinics and family counselling.

Current capital works programming from the NSW Department of Health indicates that these additional services will not be required in the first four years.

- c) This question should be referred to the Minister for Transport.
- d) This question should be referred to the Minister for Transport.

**REGIONAL STRATEGIES****QUESTION NO: 110**

- a) What is the timetable for review and update of the draft regional strategies? Will any of the strategies be finalised prior to the state election?
- b) How have the public been informed of community consultations about the draft regional strategies?
- c) What has been the attendance at each of the community consultations? Have attendances varied widely? If so, to what are the variations attributed?
- d) Has the Department reviewed population estimates for any area of the Metropolitan Strategy, or the any of the regional strategies? If yes, what have the changes been?

**ANSWER**

- a) Regional strategies are currently at the draft stage.
- b) The public has been informed of the draft regional strategies through exhibition and advertisements in local media, exhibition at local councils and Department of Planning regional offices and updates on the Department of Planning's website.
- c) Community consultation regarding the draft regional strategies has included briefing sessions and workshops with key stakeholder groups and attendances varied across the regions and between meetings.
- d) The Department frequently reviews population projections based on the latest available data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other sources, feedback received on previous projections and current planning strategies and policies. A complete review of all projections will be undertaken after 2006 Census results become available, commencing in mid 2007.

**BECTON DEVELOPMENT – BYRON BAY****QUESTION NO: 111**

- a) The Department of Planning Circular on State Significant Developments, May 2005, reads in part that:

*A Memorandum of Understanding is being developed with input from councils to facilitate good working partnerships between councils and the NSW Government in implementing this policy. The Memorandum of Understanding aims to give councils the opportunity to participate in the assessment process on a fee-for-service basis. It will ensure through consultation that local issues are fully taken into account during the assessment and decision-making processes.*

Has the Minister progressed the Memorandum of Understanding with the LGA to provide a fee for service for councils' assessing Development Applications that are subject to ministerial 'call-in'?

- b) How long did it take to assess the Becton DA? What did the assessment process cost?
- c) Is the Minister aware that Byron Shire Council has not had an application submitted to it, despite ongoing comments by yourself and planning staff re delays by Byron Shire Council?
- d) Is it true that the previous application by Becton was a Masterplan that was submitted to the Government on 2nd July 2003 and determined on 23rd June 2004 and that, after the refusal by the then Minister, it was the Mayor of Byron Shire Council who made contact with Becton to initiate discussions to try and find some common ground?
- e) Is it true that the recently approved DA was lodged in July 2005 and determined on the 30th August 2006?

**ANSWER**

- a) While a formal Memorandum of Understanding has not been implemented at this time, the principles underpinning that approach are still applied and local government is encouraged to become involved in the assessment process, where appropriate. The nature of local government involvement is currently considered on a case by case basis, depending on the nature of the particular project, the skills and interest of the particular council, and magnitude of the State and regional environmental impacts associated with the project. Where local government is directly involved in the assessment process, a fee for service approach is adopted.

- b) The Department's actual assessment of the application took approximately 3.5 months.

The Department of Planning has estimated that the cost of assessment of the application was approximately \$95,000, including independent advice on ecology and urban design, and expenses associated with site inspections.

- c) A copy of the application was sent to Byron Shire Council under correspondence dated 2 March 2006.
- d) The Minister's approval for a masterplan was sought for the site on 2 July 2003. No determination was made, with the then Minister instead adopting a set of principles to guide future development of the site.
- e) The development application was lodged on 29 July 2005 and determined on 28 August 2006.

**SHORE SCHOOL****QUESTION NO: 112**

- a) Is the Minister aware that the Shore School has declared its intention to bid for the heritage Graythwaite Estate in North Sydney? Is the Minister also aware that the elected North Sydney Council is fighting to keep this property out of the hands of both developers and Shore School? Is the Minister also aware that the Shore School is currently undertaking \$16 million worth of works for its preparatory school and rugby union facilities? In the light of this and, given that Warringah Council is \$7.65 million in debt, is it not reasonable to expect that Shore School should pay for its private facilities at Long Reef?
- b) Is the Minister aware that Shore School, as a private school with the most expensive fees in Australia, is a 'boys only' school? Does the Minister condone the practice of 'boys only' patrols, meaning that on Saturday mornings during school terms, women are excluded from access to certain areas of Crown Land?

**ANSWER**

- a) I am aware of a number of competing interests for the Graythwaite Estate. However, the issues raised are outside of my jurisdiction.
- b) These matters are outside my jurisdiction.



**ARDMORE PARK, BUNGONIA**

**QUESTION NO: 113**

Will the Minister provide an update on Ardmore Park, Bungonia and the Multiquip quarry dispute?

**ANSWER**

On 30 March 2006, CEAL Limited, trading as Multiquip Quarries, lodged an appeal under section 97 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* with the Land and Environment Court against the Minister's decision on 2 August 2005 to refuse the Development Application (DA) for the proposed quarry at Ardmore Park.

The Land and Environment Court is now the consent authority for the proposed quarry.

On 6 September 2006, Multiquip Quarries lodged an amended DA and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with the Court, which modified the original quarry proposal by reducing the off-site truck movements and reducing the transport hours at the proposed development.

The amended DA and EIS are on public exhibition until 20 October 2006.

**RESIDENTIAL PARKS - ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT****QUESTION NO: 114**

- a) What is the Department of Planning doing to protect residential parks, as many are closing throughout NSW and displacing low-income people?
- b) Did anyone from your department attend the meeting of Liverpool Council's Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel (IHAP) on Friday, 8 September 2006, to decide on its recommendation on the redevelopment of Casa Paloma Caravan Park?
- c) Is the Minister aware that the redevelopment DA submitted by Casa Paloma's owner will result in the removal and demolition of all the caravans currently on site and their replacement with manufactured homes which will then be offered for sale for about \$100,000? Although no rezoning is required, about a hundred low-income residents renting caravans are being displaced. Are the existing SEPPs strong enough to prevent loss of low-cost housing such as that provided in some residential parks as a result of redevelopment?

**ANSWER**

- a) The Department of Planning administers State Environmental Planning Policy No 21 – Caravan Parks and State Environmental Planning Policy No 36 – Manufactured Home Estates. These SEPPs require development consent to be obtained for the purposes of a caravan park or a manufactured home estate and require certain matters to be considered when such applications are determined.

The Department also reviews draft local environmental plans (LEPs) submitted by councils, which may contain provisions regarding residential parks. This includes assessing the consistency of draft LEPs with Ministerial directions issued under section 117 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. Direction No.18 requires that draft LEPs retain existing land zonings that permit caravan parks, and include provisions requiring development consent to be obtained for the subdivision of manufactured home estates by long term lease up to 20 years or subdivision under the Community Land Development Act 1989.

The Department is also working with councils as they undertake local strategic planning. Consideration of the role of residential parks in the local housing mix and ensuring that there is suitably located land available for residential parks are issues to be taken into account.

- b) I am advised that no member of the Department of Planning attended the meeting of Liverpool Council's Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel (IHAP) on Friday, 8 September 2006.
  
- c) Where development consent is not required for redevelopment of a residential park, the park owner must obtain the consent of the Consumer Trading and Tenancy Tribunal before a notice of termination can be given to any of the residents. This and other matters in relation to the rights and responsibilities of residential park owners and tenants, are the subject of provisions in the Residential Parks Act 1998. The Office of Fair Trading has day-to-day administrative responsibility for that Act.

State Environmental Planning Policies No 21 and 36 will continue to be reviewed by the Department of Planning as necessary.

**ERINA GARDENS RESIDENTIAL PARK****QUESTION NO: 115**

Subsequent to owner Eddie Baker losing his appeal to the Land & Environment Court to redevelop Erina Gardens residential park, is the Minister aware that he is now building brick houses on the site as a way of circumventing the zoning requirements, and terminating resident's leases?

**ANSWER**

I am not aware of an appeal to the Land and Environment Court involving Mr Eddie Baker and the Erina Gardens residential park in Erina. However, I am aware of an unsuccessful appeal to the Land and Environment Court regarding redevelopment of the Tingari Village Park in Terrigal, which it is understood is owned by Mr Baker (Baker v Gosford City Council (No 2) [2004] NSWLEC 467).

I am advised that Gosford City Council is currently considering a development application for the Erina Gardens Residential Park. I am also advised that on 2 May 2006, the Gosford City Council consented to a modification to an existing consent for Tingari Village to allow the realignment of some existing sites to facilitate the location of modern mobile homes.

**SEPP 10****QUESTION NO: 116**

There is a widespread belief that SEPP 10 is almost useless in preventing the loss of low cost housing stock, especially boarding houses, because many operators move long-term residents out and lease rooms to backpackers or overseas students, at higher rents – usually without council approval. What is the Minister doing to tighten up SEPP 10?

**Answer**

Both *State Environmental Planning Policy No.10 – Retention of Low-Cost Rental Accommodation* ('SEPP 10') and the Standard LEP which all councils will have to adopt in the next 5 years, clearly distinguishes boarding houses and backpackers accommodation as separate land uses.

Under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* the two land uses cannot be swapped without development consent. Under the provisions of SEPP 10 approval to change the use of a boarding house to another use must also receive concurrence from the Director General of the Department of Planning.

**SANDON POINT****QUESTION NO: 117**

- a) Was cost a factor in not implementing any of the COI recommendations? If yes, which recommendations were an obstacle, and what was the cost implication of each recommendation?
- b) Were social costs taken into account when considering whether to implement and/or not implement any COI recommendations? If so, what social costs were taken into account?
- c) Which department(s) would have been responsible for funding a coastal park? How would funding of such a park have been achieved?
- d) Did the Ministry of Planning consider relocation of Cookson Plibrico's factory as recommended by the COI? If so, what would the total cost of its relocation have been?
- e) What would the cost have been to excise Cooksons heritage turpentine forest for 7A protection, as recommended by the COI, for a coastal park?
- f) At what date was consideration first given to the Anglican Retirement Village rezoning application, to enable relocation of Cookson Plibrico at no cost to the Department of Planning?
- g) What is the total cost of:
  - i. the Sandon Point Commission of Inquiry, commissioned by previous Planning Minister Andrew Refshauge in 2002;
  - ii. the Charles Hill Consultant "Review" of the COI recommendations and report, commissioned by previous planning Minister Craig Knowles in 2005;
  - iii. the Aboriginal Heritage Study by AASC at Sandon Point, also commissioned by previous Planning Minister Knowles in 2005;
  - iv. changes to legislation applying to Sandon Point, following the COI report to Planning Minister Knowles in 2003;
  - v. implementing the COI recommendations for public open space and a regional coastal park.

**ANSWER**

- a) No.
- b) Social costs were taken into account. These included employment, cultural heritage, public amenity, recreation, environmental protection, traffic management, and access to infrastructure, including social services and facilities.

- c) A 'coastal park', as recommended in the COI, would have required significant State Government funding. The exact mechanism or funding program was not identified.
- d) The relocation of Cookson Plibrico was considered. The cost of relocation would be subject to many variables and the total cost is unknown.
- e) The cost of excising the Turpentine Forest for 7A protection is unknown. In any case, the Turpentine Forest will be protected.
- f) A request from Anglican Retirement Villages that the Cookson Plibrico land be rezoned was received by the Department in March 2006.
- g)
  - (i) I am not aware of a breakdown of the allocation of funds for individual Commissions of Inquiry.
  - (ii) The Charles Hill review cost \$97,050.
  - (iii) The Department of Planning contributed \$40,000 to the Stuart Huys Aboriginal Heritage review, as recommended by the COI. Wollongong Council also provided funding for this project.
  - (iv) The legislation has not been changed in relation to Sandon Point.
  - (v) The exact cost of implementing the COI recommendations for public open space and a regional coastal park are unknown. However, over 60% of the site will be protected from development.

**LAWSON SHOPS - HIGHWAY WIDENING**

**QUESTION NO: 118**

- a) What involvement has your department had, if any, with the plan to widen the great Western Highway at Lawson in the Blue Mountains?
- b) It has been demonstrated that it is possible to upgrade the highway to four lanes at a lower cost without demolishing historic highway shops, removing highway parking or losing passing trade. Furthermore, this would allow the highway widening project and the town redevelopment project to proceed separately at their own speed. Why has the Department of Planning not intervened to save the main street of this historic village from being destroyed by the RTA?

**Answer:**

- a) My Department has not been involved in the plan to widen the Great Western Highway at Lawson.
- b) The development of options for an RTA road is not the responsibility of any of my portfolios.



**NEW LEP TEMPLATE****QUESTION NO: 119**

- a) Please provide an update on the implementation of the new LEP template.
- b) Have any councils submitted LEPs based on the new template? If so, which councils?

**ANSWER**

- a) The Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006 (LEP template) was gazetted on 31 March 2006.

Amendment No. 1 of the LEP template was gazetted on 1 September 2006. The changes relate to the application of floor space ratios to development sites, updated requirements in relation to acquisition of land reserved for public purposes, and other minor and consequential matters.

An operational review is also currently underway.

All councils in NSW are preparing principal LEPs based on the template over the next five years.

- b) No councils have submitted LEPs for gazettal based on the template.

The following LEPs based on the template are either currently on, or have been on public exhibition:

- Ku-ring-gai LEP 2006 (Town Centre LEP) (St Ives)
- Ku-ring-gai Town Centre LEP Amendment No. 1 (Turramurra)
- Wollongong City Centre LEP

Wingecarribee Council has submitted a draft plan under section 64 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

**IMPACTS OF PORT BOTANY EXPANSION****QUESTION NO: 120**

- a) Given the increase in freight train movements associated with the expansion of Port Botany, would air pollution be significantly reduced if the rail link was electrified?
- b) Is the Minister aware that electrified freight trains are common in the USA?
- c) Has the Department compared air pollution produced by diesel freight trains and that by electrified freight trains? If, not why not?
- d) Will the department conduct such an assessment before proceeding with a significant increase of diesel train movements into Port Botany?

**ANSWER**

- a) Air emissions from freight trains associated with the expansion of Port Botany were assessed and determined to be within acceptable environmental and human health limits.
- b) I am advised that the Energy Information Administration (EIA) in the US Department of Energy has predicted a steady increase in diesel use for rail freight haulage in the US (1.6% per annum) over the next 25 years, in contrast to continued flat-lining of electric locomotive use.
- c) & d) Air quality impacts from electric freight locomotives would be considered if and when electrification of the particular rail line(s) was proposed.

**M5 EAST****QUESTION NO: 121**

- a) Will the Minister provide an update on the outcomes from the M5 East Audit? Has the RTA complied with all the recommendations? If not, what action has been taken?
- b) The Director General advised last year's Budget estimates that portal emissions are allowed only in emergencies. Is this still the case?
- c) Is the Minister aware that the RTA has just placed a pamphlet on its website claiming that some 90% of air passing through the tunnel is discharged through the stack? Given that the only other outlets are the portals, does this mean that 10% of tunnel exhaust is discharged at ground level, straight into people's homes in the electorates of Rockdale, Canterbury and Lakemba?
- d) Is 10% portal emission consistent with the approval conditions and Mr Haddad's assurances that portal emissions are allowed only in emergencies? Does this mean the M5 East is in emergency/crisis mode 24 hours of every day, or is it that the RTA is in continual breach of its conditions of approval?
- e) In either case, what does the regulator – the Department of Planning - plan to do about this situation, given that illegal portal emissions were one of the critical issues identified in the audit report?
- f) What measures is the Department of Planning undertaking to protect residents around the portals who have been complaining of headaches, asthma and sore eyes for more than two years?

**ANSWER**

- a) I am advised that the Department of Planning is satisfied that the required actions from the audit have been completed. Additional material has been sought from the RTA regarding monitoring data and the RTA Air Quality Improvement Plan for the M5 East.
- b) The Department of Planning has advised that the tunnel approval permits portal emissions in emergency circumstances and during major maintenance periods.
- c) Questions regarding material posted on the RTA website should be directed to the RTA.

- d) The Department of Planning advises that daily operation of the tunnel is consistent with the approval, and data from ambient air quality monitors near the portals has consistently shown that air quality is within the required goals.
  
- e) & f) The Department of Planning will continue to monitor ambient air quality readings taken near the tunnel portals, for compliance with the conditions of approval for the tunnel.

**HUNTER COAL MINES****QUESTION NO: 122**

- a) Are plans to implement a large-scale coal mining industry in the Gunnedah Basin dependent on the approval of the proposed third Coal Export Terminal (CET) at the mouth of the Hunter River in Newcastle?
- b) Which currently proposed coal mines in NSW require the approval of the proposed CET if they are to be viable?
- c) Will the Anvil Hill proposal be possible without the approval of the CET?
- d) Since so many coal mines will be established to provide coal to the CET if it is approved, why isn't the expansion of coal-mining included in the assessment process for the proposed new CET at Newcastle?
- e) When will the NSW Government include the full impacts of coal mining in the assessment for new coal mines? Most importantly, when will the impacts of climate change resultant from the inevitable burning of the coal be included in the assessment for proposed coal mines?
- f) How much money has the NSW Government accepted from BHP Billiton in exchange for the exploration rights to the Carooona coal field? How much money will the NSW Government expect to receive from BHP Billiton if approval is granted to mine at Carooona? How can the NSW Government seriously claim that assessment of mining proposals at Carooona will be impartial when you have received such large amounts of money?
- g) Does the exploration licence agreement signed between the NSW Government and BHP Billiton for the Carooona coal field include a requirement for BHP to study the potential for a coal-fired power station in the Gunnedah region? Why was this included in the agreement?

**ANSWER**

- a) No.
- b) None.
- c) Yes.
- d) The Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group is not seeking approval for a coal mine so it is not required to assess the impacts of coal mining.

- e) The assessment process under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act requires a full and thorough assessment of all environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of coal mining proposals in NSW. This includes project related greenhouse gas emissions.
- f) & (g) I have no formal role in the issuing of exploration rights for coal mining in NSW.

**FERN BAY****QUESTION NO: 123**

- a) Why was approval recently granted to development the Winten project at the Fern Bay Estate, North of Newcastle, when it is contrary to the State Government's coastal protection & regional strategy guidelines?
- b) What guarantee is there that this approval will not lead to further ribbon development along Nelson Bay Road and other fragile coastal areas?
- c) Given advice from the Department of Environment and Conservation that the Winten development does not avoid impacts on threatened species and that offsets were inadequate, what is the justification for the loss of 70ha of endangered coastal forest?
- d) Can the Minister explain how payment to National Parks for actions including the removing rusty car bodies is an equal offset for the clearing of 70ha of endangered coastal forest?
- e) Can the Minister explain how the values of the so-called environmental protection areas will be preserved given the fragmentation of these areas, loss of habitat, major increase in pressure from the 900 plus households and the impacts of road kill from the adjacent 100km/h main road?
- f) Why the advice of the Department of Environment and Conservation was ignored in this matter?
- g) How many hectares of new release area have been added to the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy since it went on public exhibition? Has a commensurate area of reserve land also been included? Is there a mechanism in the LHRS to protect high conservation value areas of private land?

**ANSWER**

- a) The approved master plan (MP 20-4-2005) is consistent with relevant objectives of the NSW Coastal Policy and the draft Lower Hunter Regional Strategy.
- b) The approval is for land zoned for residential uses. There are no further undeveloped areas in this locality which are zoned for residential uses.
- c) Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) concluded the proposal could be supported based on consideration of the Species Impact Statement and associated mitigation measures and offsets.

- d) The offset measures are not payments. The offset measures provide for rehabilitation of approximately 31.7Ha of wet heath habitat on adjoining DEC land, closing the majority of informal paths and funding rehabilitation works for at least 20 years.
- e) In addition to the offsets, other conservation measures include: an ecological corridor; easement revegetation; and buffer zone around the swamp forest.
- f) The advice from DEC was fully considered.
- g) At this stage no additional hectares of new release areas have been added. The draft Lower Hunter Strategy is still being finalised.

Reserve land was not included in the draft LHRS and is not proposed to be included in the final strategy.

DEC's Lower Hunter Regional Conservation Plan is the document which will address mechanisms to protect high conservation value areas, including areas of private land.



**LANDCOM**

**QUESTION NO: 124**

- a) Is Landcom involved in any joint ventures or partnerships with any private companies corporations or individuals to develop land in the North and South release areas?
- b) Are Landcom directors required to disclose their involvement as owners directors or shareholders of private companies involved in land developments in the North and South release areas.
- c) Are any of the directors of Landcom owners or directors or shareholders of any private companies involved in land developments in the North West and South West release areas? If so, which directors and which companies?

**ANSWER**

- a) Landcom has entered into a Project Delivery Agreement with the Greenfields Development Corporation forming a consortium to commence development of 2000 lots in the Oran Park precinct. This work is being done on behalf of the landowner, the Leppington Pastoral Company, with Landcom in the role of development manager.
- b) Yes.
- c) Landcom is not aware of its directors being owners, directors or shareholders of any private companies involved in land developments in the North West and South West release areas.

**QUESTION ON NOTICE                      BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**SOUTH WEST GROWTH SECTOR**

**QUESTION NO: 125**

- a) On what date was the proposed south west growth centre boundary amended to include Boral Lot 2 DP 733115 Greendale Road, Bringelly and the adjoining property belonging to Medich-related interests on Greendale Road, Bringelly?
- b) Why was the decision taken to amend the boundary in this way?
- c) What discussions were held with or submissions received from the owners of these properties prior to the decisions to amend the boundary? When did these discussions take place?
- d) How many submissions were received in relation to the release area boundary?
- e) How many submissions sought amendments to the release area boundary?
- f) How many amendments to the boundary were made?
- g) Were reasons given to any person for a denial of a request to amend the boundary?
- h) How were requests to amend the land release boundaries assessed? Who assessed them? What criteria were used?
- i) Who developed the criteria? Were they published?
- j) What is to happen to Bonds Creek when the Leppington City Centre is developed?
- k) Is the department proposing to change the location of the proposed Leppington station to move it away from Bonds Creek?
- l) Will land subject to 1 in 100 year flooding in the Bonds Creek and Oran Park area be developed?
- m) Is the water from South Creek currently being diverted onto the adjacent Oran Park property of Mr Perich?
- n) When was this diversion approved? By which authority?
- o) Is it proposed that the water that is currently being diverted onto the Oran Park property will be diverted back into South Creek?
- p) If so, when will this re-diversion of water take place?

- q) Has the Department of Planning undertaken any assessment of the remediation costs for South Creek?
- r) Who will pay these costs?

## **ANSWER**

- a) The maps detailing the boundary changes went on exhibition on 27 January 2006.
- b) The amendments to the growth centre boundary followed a submission which proposed the inclusion of this area into the South West growth centre. All submissions were assessed by a Land Release Advisory Committee which provided advice to the Minister.
- c) Submissions were received by the owners of this property during the first exhibition period of the draft Growth Centres plans from June 2005 to October 2005. No discussions were held in relation to submissions prior to assessment by the Land Release Advisory Committee.
- d) & e) As part of the June 2005 exhibition, 22 submissions were made regarding the release area boundary and 18 submissions during the January 2006 exhibition.
- f) 6 amendments to the boundary were made following the June 2005 exhibition. No changes were made to boundary following the January 2006 exhibition.
- g) Written correspondence was forwarded to all people who had unsuccessfully requested a boundary change. The letter explained that the Land Release Advisory Committee assessed boundary changes and reported their recommendations to government.
- h) Requests were assessed against established criteria. The boundary change submissions are assessed by a Land Release Advisory Committee against these criteria and reported to the NSW Government for consideration.
- i) The criteria were developed by the Land Release Advisory Committee and endorsed by the NSW Government. The criteria have not been published.
- j) This will be resolved in the Precinct Planning stage.
- k) This is currently the subject of an Environmental Assessment.
- l) This will be investigated during the Precinct Planning Stage.
- m) to p) These questions should be addressed to the Minister for Natural Resources.
- q) The structure planning work envisaged water sensitive urban design and protection of flood liable land. These requirements, along with management targets, will be included in the Development Code and will assist in protecting South Creek.

r) This will be resolved during the Precinct Planning stage.

**DENHAM COURT**

**QUESTION NO: 126**

- a) Was residential development approved on 1-in-100-year-flood-prone land in Springmead Road, Denham Court?
- b) If so, why was this land considered appropriate for residential development?

**ANSWER**

- a) These are matters for Liverpool Council.
- b) Not applicable.

**QUESTION ON NOTICE                      BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**MARSDEN PARK SCHEDULED LAND RELEASE AREA**

**QUESTION No. 127**

- a) Given that Marsden Park Scheduled Land owners have been advised by the Growth Centres Commission (GCC) that, due to the lack of infrastructure, their land cannot be released, why has land been released in other areas equally lacking in infrastructure such as Edmondson Park, Harrington Park, Hoxton Park and Glenmore Park?
- b) Why are small land owners outside the Marsden Park Land Release area with the same 'Rural 1a' zoning permitted to build on lots of 1 acre when those within the Marsden Park Land Release area are required to have a minimum of 25acres (10Ha) in order to be able to build?
- c) Given that DUAP released 'Planning Guideline' designed to protect threatened species on 75 per cent of Vineyard and Riverstone, why have these lands since been developed? How was this permitted to happen?
- d) What opportunity is there to provide a rate rebate to landholders whose land within the Marsden Park Scheduled Lands area is unable to be developed, while those adjacent have been permitted to develop?
- e) Why has an illegal tip been described as 'pristine land' and ear marked for conservation by Department of Planning, despite scientific reports stating that the land has been neglected by the local Council for 30 years and has been invaded by weed species?
- f) What is the estimated cost of rehabilitating this land?
- g) Have all lands earmarked for conservation within the MPSL area been assessed by the Department of Environment and Conservation to ascertain their ecological value?

**ANSWER**

- a) Edmondson Park was rezoned because it had adequate water and sewerage to service the entire precinct. Harrington Park, Hoxton Park and Glenmore Park are not in the Growth Centres.
- b) This question should be referred to the local Council
- c) This question should be referred to the local Council
- d) This question should be referred to the local Council

e) & f) Land was marked as Environment Conservation on advice from Department of Environment and Conservation. Land is included that has a high ecological value or has the potential to be incorporated into parcels of high value that protect threatened species

g) This question should be addressed to the Minister for the Environment.

**NORTH WEST POWER LINE****QUESTION NO: 128**

- a) Has the Government released the recommendation of the independent panel advising that undergrounding of the Rouse Hill to Vineyard power line is 'not practical at this stage' as cited in the Minister's press release of 8 September?
- b) Given that it is technically possible to put power lines underground, and it is easier to do so now, before the area is fully developed with residential amenities, can the Minister please explain exactly how is it 'not practical' ?
- c) Is it only 'not practical' from a financial perspective? If no, in what other way is it not practical?
- d) What agencies conducted a cost benefit analysis of the long term costs associated with undergrounding the power lines?
- e) Did the department of Planning do its own cost benefit analysis? If yes, will this be publicly released?
- f) Did the department rely solely on analysis done by Integral Energy? If not, what other analysis was conducted, and by whom?
- g) What is the full cost of undergrounding the cables from Vineyard to Rouse Hill?
- h) Can the Minister please provide the estimated cost implications of reduced maintenance costs associated with underground cabling compared to over head cable

**ANSWER**

- a) The Report of the Independent Panel of Experts is available on the Department of Planning's website, [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au)
- b) & c) Key reasons include:
  - (i) An existing overhead line and easement have been in place for 50 years
  - (ii) impacts associated with the new line are predominantly contained within the same easement
  - (iii) residual impacts can be adequately addressed through conditions of consent which include a precautionary approach to minimising exposure to electro magnetic fields;
  - (iv) there is a significant funding difference between above and underground options;



- (v) consistent with both IPART recommendations and contemporary practice, undergrounding usually occurs at the time of urban residential development; and
  - (iv) undergrounding of powerlines in rural areas while the details of urban form are yet to be determined may compromise future subdivision patterns.
- d) As part of the Environmental Assessment and Submissions Report for the project, the Proponent (Integral Energy) undertook a financial and economic analysis in accordance with National Electricity Rules.
- e) & f) & g) The report is available on the Department of Planning's website, [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au).
- h) This question should be referred to the Proponent, Integral Energy.