



The Hon. Pru Goward MP
Minister for Planning
Minister for Women

The Hon Fred Nile MLC
Chair GPSC1
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Chair,

Please find attached responses to the questions on notice asked during the Budget Estimates Hearing on Thursday 21 August 2014 for the portfolios of Planning and Women.

Yours sincerely,

Pru Goward MP
Minister for Planning
Minister for Women

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-2015

TRANSCRIPT QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

PLANNING, WOMEN

21 August 2014

BAYS PRECINCT

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, will you give a commitment that there will be no alienation of the Bays Precinct foreshores from public ownership either by way of sale or long-term lease?

Ms PRU GOWARD: That will depend on the plans.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: You cannot rule it out?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

Much of the waterfront included in the Bays Precinct is inaccessible to the public and has been for years. It is this Government's intention to change that.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, will you give a commitment that all unsolicited development proposals relating to Bays Precinct public lands or waters will be subject to an open competitive tender and proper public scrutiny?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

The Unsolicited Proposal process is managed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), in accordance with the *Guide for Submission and Assessment of Unsolicited Proposals*. The guide outlines a transparent and streamlined approach to assessing such proposals.

For any Unsolicited Proposals in the Bays, UrbanGrowth NSW will work closely with DPC and other State agencies to consider proposals in accordance with the Guide.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Minister, in relation to the Bays Precinct, will you ensure that adequate measures are taken to preserve any items of heritage in that precinct as part of the redevelopment process?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

The Bays has a rich history and comprises many significant items of heritage. The historical significance is partly what makes the Bays such a unique place, and it will be important that this is reflected in the future plans for the area.

The strategic plan, which is being prepared by UrbanGrowth NSW with input from a range of experts as well as the community, will consider the heritage significance of the Bays and identify appropriate ways to ensure it is managed in any future urban renewal.

Future detailed plans for specific sites (such as the White Bay Power Station) will be informed by heritage experts to ensure proposals reflect the heritage significance of these sites. The community will also have a say in what happens to these sites.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Will you ensure that a high priority is given to the inclusion of public and affordable housing as a significant element of any residential use or development that takes place in the Bays Precinct?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

One of the challenges of The Bays Precinct Urban Renewal Program will be to identify what types of land uses should be provided within the Bays Precinct, and to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure and services are delivered to support the future uses.

Ensuring housing diversity in NSW is a critical issue and the NSW Government is committed to increasing housing choice in Sydney.

PARRAMATTA ROAD

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: You mentioned the memoranda of understanding. When will you sign the MOUs and issue them to the councils so they can sign them?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

This Government is committed to a collaborative working relationship with the local Councils on this important project and MOUs will be signed shortly.

PRE-GATEWAY

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Obviously this process will require very close collaboration between your agency and councils but at present State laws provide that proponents to change local planning instruments, if they are not supported by local councils, can come to your agency and seek to have those planning instruments changed.

Ms PRU GOWARD: That is speculative; it is way down the track.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: This can happen now and disrupt orderly planning along the corridor.

Will you seek to suspend those pre-gateway reviews if any of them come to you?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I have given you my answer.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: You are not going to answer that question?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think I have said enough. It is for further development. We are not at that stage yet. I will take it on notice.

I am advised:

There is an existing process which applies to pre-Gateway reviews.

BLUE MOUNTAINS URBAN AREA

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, under your predecessor there was some controversy about the metropolitan plan. There was a proposal to move essentially what is regarded as the boundary of Sydney from Lapstone to Faulconbridge in the Blue Mountains. Can you advise the Committee the stage those deliberations have reached and whether it is still being contemplated?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Are you referring to the inclusion of the Blue Mountains in Sydney's urban area?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Yes.

Ms PRU GOWARD: When the draft metropolitan strategy was released for community consultation in 2013, Blue Mountains City Council and several other interested groups were opposed to including part of the Blue Mountains local government area within mapping of Sydney's urban area. There was concern that it would compromise the World Heritage status of the Blue Mountains National Park by linking it to areas identified for future growth. The Blue Mountains is located within Sydney's metropolitan rural area, which contains rural towns and villages, farmland and tourist and recreation facilities as well as major environmental resource and infrastructure assets. The Blue Mountains has a series of specialist tourist, recreation, leisure, residential and service centres located within a World Heritage environment positioned along major transport routes linking the East Coast to regional western New South Wales. These centres provide the essential infrastructure necessary to support the World Heritage status of the surrounding national park and avoid potential impacts by managing surrounding activity and providing a focus for local growth. Hence, the Blue Mountains derives its identity, role and function from its unique position within the metropolitan rural area, connected to but not within urban Sydney. We have heard the views of local councils and others and we will consider and review our response to those concerns in light of the special role that the Blue Mountains has in Greater Sydney.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Can you estimate when that deliberation will be completed and when you may be in a position to make an announcement?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that question on notice.

I am advised:

The Department has taken into account the views of Blue Mountains City Council and the Blue Mountains community as part of its consideration of responses to the draft Metropolitan Strategy exhibited last year. Following this extensive work, I anticipate the revised Metropolitan Strategy will be released later this year.

PAC PROCESS

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Do you think it is acceptable for a Planning Assessment Commission member who adjudicates on coal projects to have paid positions with coal companies? I refer in particular to Commissioner Garry West, who has positions with Glencore, BHP Billiton and Yancoal?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will ask Mr Ray to answer that question.

Mr RAY: We have a range of procedures in place. The Planning Assessment Commission [PAC] has a code of conduct and provisions relating to the disclosure of any potential conflict of interest. I am not aware of the particular circumstances to which you refer. However, I am sure that the processes that are in place that require disclosure of those conflicts are honoured by the members of the PAC as they arise in each individual case.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Can you advise the Committee under what circumstances a PAC member would be considered inappropriate to adjudicate on a particular assessment?

Mr RAY: That would depend on the facts and circumstances of any individual case. However, there are clear guidelines about that. If there were a particular case about which you have concerns I would be happy to take the details on notice.

I am advised:

Members of the Planning Assessment Commission are required to abide by the Commission's code of conduct and the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to disclose and avoid any conflicts of interest.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr Ray, Mr Searle asked you some questions about Commissioner Garry West. I will be very interested to hear your response. Do you think it is acceptable to have a PAC commissioner who is a principal of Evans and Peck, which consults to PAC, chairing a hearing, as occurred with Commissioner Paul Forward with regard to the Cobbora coal project? Have you considered that conflict of interest?

Mr RAY: As I said in answer to Mr Searle's questions, there are detailed requirements designed to avoid both conflicts of interest and perceptions of conflicts of interest. Those procedures are in place and have been in place for a long time. I do not have any personal knowledge of the instance to which you refer so I cannot comment on it.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Will you undertake to address on notice that very specific and concerning allegation about the appointment of a company of whom a commissioner is a principal to undertake consultation work with the PAC?

Mr RAY: I will take that question on notice.

I am advised:

Members of the Planning Assessment Commission are required to abide by the Commission's code of conduct and the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to disclose and avoid any conflicts of interest.

PRE-GATEWAY

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Do you think it is acceptable for the chair of Coal Innovation NSW, a body that works closely with coal industry representatives, to chair PAC hearings on

controversial coal projects, as occurred with Commissioner Neil Shepherd in respect of the Wallarah 2 coal project?

Mr RAY: Again, there are very detailed procedures and requirements with regard to any disclosure of conflict to ensure it is avoided in individual cases. I know that those procedures are followed. However, I will have to take the question on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If the procedures allowed someone who is the chair of Coal Innovation NSW to sit as a commissioner on a PAC hearing about a very controversial coalmine project, they are grossly flawed and inadequate?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Point of order: I think Mr Ray has answered the question. It might not be the answer the member wants, but he has adequately dealt with it.

CHAIR: The member asked for additional information.

Mr RAY: Will you repeat the question?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If a PAC commissioner who is the chair of Coal Innovation NSW, a coal industry lobby group, plays a decision-making role in relation to one of the most controversial coal projects in New South Wales and that somehow gets through the conflict of interest procedures, those procedures are woefully inadequate?

Mr RAY: I have no knowledge of what Coal Innovation NSW does. Again, I will have to take those particular circumstances on notice.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think it should be noted that Neil Shepherd is a longstanding former public servant and he has been on the PAC for a number of years.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Indeed, but if he then holds positions that put him in direct and deep conflict when he is meant to be making an unbiased decision as a PAC member in relation to a coal project, he should step aside and not be sitting on those projects. Surely you would agree with that, would you not, Minister?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Mr Ray has taken your question on notice.

I am advised:

Members of the Planning Assessment Commission are required to abide by the Commission's code of conduct and the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to disclose and avoid any conflicts of interest.

PRE-GATEWAY

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Whilst that is happening, who is undertaking the review? Will there be public input? When will it be reporting?

Ms McNALLY: That review is being undertaken by staff within the department. I have a number of people looking at the process. The process commenced in 2012, and it is typically good practice to look at a process 12 months or two years beyond its commencement. We are looking at the sorts of applications that have been received, those that have not got through the Gateway process. We are looking at it from a number of angles. We are also looking at what are some of the areas for improvement and some of the options for going forward.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Can you provide the terms of reference to the Committee on notice?

Ms McNALLY: The work we are doing at the moment is internal. It is wide ranging, and we are looking at a number of activities. We are doing that to be looking at how we undertake our relationships with local councils. We are doing that in relation to the requirements of the

assessment process. We will be providing advice to the Government in due course, as soon as we have completed that work.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What is the timetable for the review?

Ms McNALLY: As you pointed out, I have not been in the job for a huge amount of time.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am happy for you to take it on notice.

Ms McNALLY: I am happy to take it on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: And please take the balance of those matters on notice.

I am advised:

In relation to the review of the pre-Gateway review process, refer to answers to supplementary questions 06 - 11.

INFRASTRUCTURE SEPP

CHAIR: Order! Mr Shoebridge's time for questions has expired. Minister, are you aware of the planning barriers for independent schools? There is currently a clause in the infrastructure State environmental planning policy [SEPP] which allows certain works without consent and gives up to a 10 per cent variance in existing student-to-staff numbers but only for public schools.

Independent schools do not have this provision. Would you agree that this red tape burden should be removed to provide better equity, efficiency and flexibility for independent schools? Minister, would you therefore seek to rectify this by a simple amendment to clause 29 of the infrastructure SEPP by removing the words "by or on behalf of a public authority"? Will you seek to correct this anomaly?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I thank Reverend Nile for that very detailed question. I will ask Richard Pearson if he could outline how that SEPP works currently.

Mr PEARSON: The infrastructure SEPP does allow public authorities, as you have correctly pointed out, to take advantage of some of the flexibility that is inherent in the SEPP. In relation to private schools the exempt and complying SEPP does provide some ability for private schools to take advantage of some similar flexibility provisions—in other words, so they do not have to put in a full development application; they can be dealt with as complying development. I think we are happy to look at whether there can be any additional flexibility introduced to the infrastructure SEPP, but it is important to look across the package of streamlining initiatives that we have introduced. One of those is the exempt and complying SEPP. The total answer would be that we should look at the exempt and complying SEPP as well to ensure that what the independent schools are seeking is not already available to them through the other State policy mechanisms.

CHAIR: I understand they do not feel that the provision is adequate for them. Will the Minister look into this matter further and see what action can be taken?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

I am not proposing to amend clause 29 of the Infrastructure SEPP at this time.

LANDFILL NEEDS

CHAIR: What is the Government doing to assist councils to address future landfill needs by way of land permits?

Ms McNALLY: I think we have to take that question on notice.

I am advised:

This matter should be referred to the Environment Protection Authority.

LOBBYISTS

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Perhaps I could assist in terms of your earlier answer. I note that on the Lobbyist Contact Register that records contact between registered lobbyists and department representatives there are numerous references to telephone calls. So the register is comprehensive in covering all aspects of communication, not simply face-to-face meetings. Is that a fair analysis that I have just made?

Ms McNALLY: I do not have that record in front of me, but if that is on there. It is my understanding that that is the process. I am happy to take that question on notice and provide you with some more detail.

I am advised:

Meetings with lobbyists are in accordance with the NSW Lobbyist Code of Conduct – methods of contact are outlined under Section 4.2.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: We have covered the Registered Lobbyist Contact Protocol and the Lobbyist Contact Register. Are there any other documents that are relevant when it comes to the department's regulation of lobbyists?

Ms McNALLY: I would have to take that on notice.

I am advised:

The Department's regulation of lobbyists is in accordance with the NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: The departmental code of conduct says, "We comply with the NSW Government's code of conduct as well as our internal protocol". Is it fair for me to take from that that your protocol is not to be read separately to the entire Government's code of conduct; it is to be read in addition, as it were?

Ms McNALLY: I would have to take that on notice. Is there some issue of difference there?

I am advised:

The Department's code of conduct is supplementary to the NSW Government's code of conduct.

INTERNAL AUDITS

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: How are requirements imposed on your staff under the protocol

monitored? Are any resources devoted by your department to monitoring compliance by departmental officials?

Ms McNALLY: Certainly, as I said, this has been a matter that we have discussed at the executive meetings that I have been holding that those processes are followed with managers through their meetings and that if any issues are identified they are brought to my attention.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Are internal audits carried out on an occasional or spot-check basis?

Ms McNALLY: We do have an internal audit process. I would have to take on notice what topics they have covered.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Will you come back to the Committee with that?

Ms McNALLY: Yes, I will come back to you.

I am advised:

Senior Executives monitor compliance of staff with the Registered Lobbyist Contact Protocol and review all records prior to publishing a summary on the department's website.

All new employees are required to complete the eLearning module 'NSW Government's Lobbyist Register and Code of Conduct' available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website.

The Department has a robust internal audit program that provides independent, objective assurance to the Department.

Some topics covered by internal audit checks in 2013-14 included work health and safety, procurement process, banking process and Cab-charge e-ticket process.

MATTHEW DANIEL

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Are you aware of media reports dealing with contact between the former senior manager in your department Matthew Daniel and certain figures of the Liberal Party?

Ms McNALLY: I would have to take that on notice. That name is not specific to me.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Ms McNally, will you investigate whether there has been a breach of the protocol of the department that registers contact with lobbyists and, in particular, investigate whether PremierState, the registered lobbyist for Balmain Leagues Club, has had contact with the former Director of the Project Delivery Unit, Matt Daniel, which was not declared on the lobbyist contact register? Will you undertake to investigate that matter, Ms McNally?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Why do you not make a complaint? You have spent several minutes going through the process; do it the proper way.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I am raising it now.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: That is an assertion.

Ms McNALLY: I can certainly look into the matter, Mr Foley.

Ms McNALLY: I would also like to note that the proposal you are talking about was refused by the Planning Assessment Commission on 11 April.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Indeed it was. Elias demanded his money back from Photios. I am not making an accusation. To be clear, I am raising a matter about a potential breach of a departmental official's obligations under your code of conduct and a registered lobbyist's obligations under the Government's code of conduct. I am asking whether you or your governance unit or your General Counsel will investigate that and get back to the Committee with a response on what you have found.

Ms McNALLY: As I said, I am happy to look into the matter, Mr Foley, but also I would like to note that after consideration by the department's assessment it found the project should not be supported.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Indeed.

Ms McNALLY: On that assessment it looked at a whole range of issues and then the Planning Assessment Commission refused the application following its examination of the matter. But I am happy to look into the matter you have raised.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I would ask you to investigate and advise on whether Mr Daniel breached his obligations by not recording all communications with the lobbyist PremierState on your department's lobbyist contact register, as all of your officials are obliged to do?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: In 2012.

Ms McNALLY: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

The Department has examined the question of whether a particular former employee had contact with a particular registered lobbyist which was not entered on the Department's lobbyist contact register.

A search of Departmental records did not establish that there was contact between that former employee and that registered lobbyist.

The former employee ceased employment with the Department on 6 June 2013.

The Department notes that its assessment of the relevant proposal recommended that the proposal be refused. The Planning Assessment Commission independently endorsed the Department's recommendation and refused the proposal.

LOBBYISTS

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Given the role of the Property Council, the UDIA and the Urban Taskforce to actively push for changes in policy or approval of pro-property industry approvals, do you not believe the disclosure regime should be rolled out to include those peak pro-industry bodies?

Ms McNALLY: I could certainly look at that issue but we meet with a wide range of people, including community councils, industry and stakeholder representative groups and we try to take a balanced approach to that. We try to look at a wide range of issues but I can certainly look into whether there is any merit in it.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If you would and then report on notice that would be appreciated.

I am advised:

That is a matter for the Department of Premier and Cabinet which has responsibility for the lobbyist code of conduct.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: The Minister has just advised that the population projections contained in the draft metropolitan strategy will be updated for the final metropolitan strategy. Would I be correct in believing that the document that appeared on your website this month, "New South Wales State and Local Government Area Population Projections: 2014 Final", contains the most up-to-date population projections that the department is working from?

Ms McNALLY: I would have to take that on notice. We are updating our population projections.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Mr Ray was nodding. Can anybody at the table assist with telling me if I am correct in assuming that the figures on the department's website, entitled "2014 Final", are the most up-to-date figures that the department is working from?

Ms McNALLY: I would like to take that on notice to make sure I give the correct answer.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: But you are not aware today of any figures that are more current than the ones I have referred to that appear on your website?

Ms McNALLY: I have people working on the metropolitan strategy as we speak. I am yet to see the final figures, so I need to take that on notice.

I am advised:

The "2014 NSW Population, Household and Dwelling Projections" are the current projections on the Department of Planning and Environment's website.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: I take you to the most up-to-date figures I have to work from—the 2014 final figures on your website. The three subregions that cover greater Western Sydney—the three of the six subregions covering the west of our city—project an additional population of more than 900,000 to 2031, do they not?

Ms McNALLY: I would have to take those figures on notice. I have not committed those figures to memory.

I am advised:

The population for Greater Western Sydney is projected to increase by an additional 916,350 people by 2031.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: My effort with a calculator last night tells me that the population of greater Western Sydney, in your most recent figures, goes from just over two million in 2011—that is, 2,012,000—to 2,919,000 in 2031. Is that your understanding?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think we should take those questions on notice.

I am advised:

The population of Greater Western Sydney is projected to increase from 2,003,150 people in 2011 to 2,919,500 by 2031.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: If I look at the North subregion, the population increases, on these updated figures, by 133,000 by 2031, does it not?

Ms McNALLY: I would have to take that on notice. If those figures are taken from our website, they would be accurate figures.

I am advised:

The population of the North subregion is projected to increase from 530,100 to 663,650 by 2013 – an increase of 133,550. This is based on the definition of the north subregion as published in the *Draft Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney to 2031* of March 2013.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: This month. Minister, your Government is targeting more than 900,000 more people in Western Sydney compared with 130,000 more people on the North Shore. That is unbalanced population growth for Sydney, is it not?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I have said repeatedly that all regions of Sydney will have to take their fair share of growth.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: But they are not taking their fair share according to the numbers I have just quoted, are they, Minister?

Ms PRU GOWARD: They will take their fair share of growth.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: Blacktown gets 161,000 more people, Liverpool gets 101,000 more people, Manly gets 10,000 more people, Mosman gets 6,000 more people. It is just unfair. The North Shore is being insulated, is it not, Minister?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Those projections are based on current arrangements. I will take questions on notice for any further population increases. You know the basis of demographic modelling. You know that the numbers you are referring to are based on current assumptions. I will take your questions on notice.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I have said all regions of Sydney will take their fair share of growth and I will take that question on notice.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: How can it be fair for the North Shore to carry an extra 130,000 people and Western Sydney to carry more than 900,000 additional people?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that question on notice. I have said repeatedly that they will take their fair share and that infrastructure will clearly be a determinant of where we encourage population growth.

The Hon. LUKE FOLEY: The North Shore is doing pretty well for infrastructure; it has a North Shore railway line, it has plenty of schools and hospitals. How on earth is it fair that a subregion with that much in the way of infrastructure today is so light on, so insulated from carrying its fair share of Sydney's population growth?

Ms PRU GOWARD: You are challenging the assumptions of the demography. I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

The population projections are not targets for growth in specific areas of Sydney.

WARKWORTH

Mr WILSON: I am advised that the department convened two working groups for the Warkworth Continuation Project. These working groups were with the Environment Protection Authority [EPA] and the Office of Environment and Heritage [OEH] and included representatives from the Department of Planning and Environment, EPA, OEH, Rio Tinto, Cumberland Ecology and Minter Ellison.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Who was Minter Ellison representing?

Mr WILSON: Rio Tinto.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Who is Cumberland Ecology employed by?

Mr WILSON: I will take that on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: They were the consultants for Rio Tinto, were they not?

Mr WILSON: I would have to take that on notice.

I am advised:

Minter Ellison, EMGA Mitchel McLennan and Cumberland Ecology are providing advice to Rio Tinto on the Warkworth Continuation Project.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Who is EMGA?

Mr WILSON: It is an environment consultant group, I understand.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Who is paying for EMGA to be there?

Mr WILSON: I can take that on notice.

I do not know the details of any payment arrangements for EMGA.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: In relation to the Warkworth Continuation Project, when did those working groups first meet?

Mr WILSON: I do not have the dates on me. I can take that on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: They met in 2013, did they not? You know that.

Mr WILSON: I cannot answer that with accuracy. I will take it on notice.

I am advised:

The first inter-agency meeting was in 2014.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: These are your working groups I am asking about, working groups convened by a department, paid for by taxpayers. Where are the minutes of the working groups?

Mr WILSON: I will take that on notice.

I am advised:

Documents that are retained by the Department may be accessed under section 9 of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Are there minutes of the working groups?

Mr WILSON: I would hope so.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Will you provide them to this Committee?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will take that on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: And if they are available they will be provided to the Committee?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will take that on notice.

Refer to above answer.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Will you provide the minutes to the Committee, if they are available, of the working group with Mount Thorley?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I have already said we will take it on notice.

Refer to above answer.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

CHAIR: Mr Shoebridge, your time for questioning in this session has expired. Any further questions will have to be put on notice. Minister, do you see the need for social, public and affordable housing to be mandated in local environmental plans [LEPs], regional environmental plans [REPs] and State environmental planning policies [SEPPs] given that, according to the Auditor-General's report, there will be a need to house 86,000 people by 2016 and that by 2021 over 50 per cent of all social housing demand will be from older people and those with significant disability?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Thank you for that question. Mr Chair, as you and I were discussing earlier, affordable housing is a very important component of making Sydney a liveable city. We know that there are many qualities and characteristics that contribute to making housing affordable—one of which, a most important one, is supply. I think we should all be pleased that under this Government we have had 100,000 more homes approved, and 50,000 in the last year alone—which the Government has been able to announce as an improvement. That 50,000 is the highest figure in a decade.

CHAIR: Part of my question was about mandating. Minister, do you feel that is something you could do or could consider?

Ms PRU GOWARD: There are various development arrangements that allow for affordable housing—for example, we have one housing development where the developer will provide a certain number of units for affordable housing that will be administered by the local community housing authority. Mr Chair, your question anticipates very complex changes and I would like to take it on notice.

I am advised:

It is the role of planning to help facilitate the supply of housing to meet changing patterns of demand. The Government is aware of, and planning for, the predicted growth in the population of 1.6 million over the next 20 years. We are doing this by

encouraging the development of a range of dwelling types in the right locations to help meet demand from all members of local communities, including older people and those with disabilities.