

Transcript - 5 August 2025 hearing

Ryan BATCHELOR: Thanks so much, Chair. Thanks, both of you, for coming in. Just following on from Ms Gray-Barberio's question, the Elgin Street towers – they are not fundamentally different to the other 42, though, are they? They are still made from the same type of construction methodology, the concrete slabs. The bricks on the outside are just cladding. I do not see how you can say that they are fundamentally different.

Simon ROBINSON: I mean, they were the first ones to be built. I guess they are a similar construction technique, yes.

Ryan BATCHELOR: So they are not different. I am just confused by your answer.

Simon ROBINSON: They are a different design. They are a similar construction technique.

Ryan BATCHELOR: Right. And given the issues we are facing here are possibly ones of construction technique, it is more relevant to suggest that they are more similar to the other towers than not – would that be fair?

Simon ROBINSON: Yes.

This is incorrect. They are of a fundamentally different construction system to that of the large panel system at Flemington Estate and the other towers. The two towers at Elgin St are reinforced concrete frame with infill panels.

“In February 1967, the tender of Clements Langford for a concrete frame option was accepted. It had engaged McIntyre, McIntyre and Associates architects, and director Peter McIntyre had developed this option, which promised to be cost effective. By then the Housing Commission had determined the tower would be 16-storeys and there would be a second tower on the site. An atypical exterior The construction of the Nicholson Street Tower marked a break from the CHP pre-cast wall panel construction method.” Page 13 Heritage Victoria - Nicholson and Elgin Street Public Housing Towers, 20 Elgin Street and 141 Nicholson Street, Carlton, Melbourne City Wurundjeri Country - Document attached

“When compared with these, Nicholson and Elgin Street Public Housing Towers are atypical of the class.

- They were built of reinforced concrete rather than CHP pre-cast wall panels, the latter being an important technical, stylistic and visual hallmark of this program.*

- This project was unusual because an architectural practice (McIntyre, McIntyre and Associates) was involved in the design, albeit in a restricted manner. This approach was not influential or replicated.*

- The use of red brick infill panels, while attractive, is anomalous within the high-rise group, and not replicated. “ Page 17 Heritage Victoria - Nicholson and Elgin Street Public Housing Towers, 20 Elgin Street and 141 Nicholson Street, Carlton, Melbourne City Wurundjeri Country- Document attached*