

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**  
**Inquiry into greenfields mineral exploration and project development in Victoria**

Melbourne — 30 January 2012

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Mr P. Hillyer, Regional Manager, Boral Quarries, Victoria.

**The CHAIR** — Welcome. It is good having you here, Paul. This committee is an all-party parliamentary committee and is hearing evidence today on the Inquiry into greenfields mineral exploration and project development in Victoria. Welcome to this meeting on project development in Victoria. All evidence taken at this hearing is protected by parliamentary privilege, but comments you make outside this hearing may not have the same protection. Could you please state your full name and business address?

**Mr HILLYER** — Paul Thomas Hillyer, 351 Salmon Street, Port Melbourne.

**The CHAIR** — And your role in the company?

**Mr HILLYER** — I am the Regional Manager for Boral Quarries, Victoria.

**The CHAIR** — And you are appearing on behalf of Boral today?

**Mr HILLYER** — I am.

**The CHAIR** — Anything you say today will be taken down and will appear as evidence in the transcript of this inquiry. I invite you to make an oral submission.

**Mr HILLYER** — Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk today. I have only about half a dozen slides I will talk to, so it will not be death by PowerPoint, I promise you! I am happy to take questions at the end or as we go through, whichever; I am quite comfortable with either.

Before I get into the issues of concern to Boral and to the industry I might just talk a little bit about Boral in Victoria; I think it will put it in context. Boral is an Australian owned, publicly listed company with extensive operations in Australia, North America and South-East Asia. The business includes construction materials — which is where the quarry industry or quarry business sits — building products, construction-related businesses and a cement division. The Victorian operation is extremely important to Boral as a company as a whole. Twenty per cent of the revenue of the entire company is sourced in Victoria, so that is a significant contribution to Boral. We employ about 1800 people here in Victoria, and on any given day a similar number of contractors work for us as well — so we are a reasonably significant employer — and we have over 100 business sites here in Victoria.

In terms of the quarries, we have 16 operating quarries in Victoria — 7 of those are around the metropolitan area and we have 9 across the regional areas; we have two joint venture quarry operations; and we have a handful of non-operating quarries at the moment. We supply over 8 million tonnes of materials each year to a customer base which exceeds 1500 customers ranging from very small backyard-type operators through to major civil contractors and construction companies. Because Victoria is so important to Boral and is part of our revenue stream, we have had significant investment in the State in recent years. We have just recently commissioned a new processing plant at our Dunnstown quarry, just outside of Ballarat; that was just over \$30 million. We built a new asphalt plant about 12 months ago, up in Ballarat as well; that was just over \$6 million. And we are currently completing an upgrade to the plasterboard facility at Port Melbourne; that investment is just over \$80 million.

In terms of investment in quarries, I guess that is my personal interest, being the manager of the quarries for the state. Boral has spent \$250 million in quarry investments in Queensland in the last 12 months. That is obviously on the back of market demand and market forecasts. I am certainly advocating for similar types of investment here in Victoria — not with the same level of success just yet. But again, that is on the basis of market demand and market forecast but also on the back of the ease of doing business in the State and the cost of regulation.

On that point if I can talk a little bit about the cost of regulation and doing business in Victoria. Our experience here in recent years has been that regulation, particularly when it comes to planning decisions, completion of work authorities, work authority applications, planning permits, EES documentation and works approval applications, is lengthy, expensive and time consuming, and often in cases very repetitious. Probably the best example I can give is our Montrose quarry in Melbourne's eastern suburbs. We commenced an extension process for the quarry in 2004 on the back of an unsuccessful extension application in the late 1990s. It was determined that an EES was appropriate for this application. The scope of the EES studies was extremely broad, and it included things which were largely irrelevant to the process. In one particular example we had to do a

health study on the basis of claims from some local residents that there were increased asthma rates in children around the quarry. That study in itself cost us about \$150 000 and proved inconclusive.

**Mr SHAW** — How did that come up? Did someone just come to you and say, ‘Hey, listen, there seems to be an outbreak of asthma around here; we need you to pay for a study’?

**Mr HILLYER** — Yes. The issue was brought up directly with Boral but more so through the technical reference group, which the community representatives sat on. They raised that with the EPA and DHS in particular. As a consequence of that we were requested to do an additional study, which proved inconclusive, and the residents who raised it did not believe the outcomes of the study anyway. So it was, I guess, money not well spent.

**The CHAIR** — How do you think it should have been treated?

**Mr HILLYER** — I really think in that case there needed to be some basis of fact, at least some evidence or some examples — ‘Here are some people who live around the quarry; they live at these addresses’.

**The CHAIR** — There was not anything like that?

**Mr HILLYER** — There was nothing, no. It was purely a claim from the locals. I am not having a shot at the local residents here; I understand where they were coming from and what they were trying to achieve, and they were very successful in doing it. I am probably critical of the process, not the people involved.

**Mr SHAW** — What were they trying to achieve?

**Mr HILLYER** — The closure of the quarry.

**The CHAIR** — That was one of the ways they went about it?

**Mr HILLYER** — Yes.

**The CHAIR** — By frustrating you?

**Mr HILLYER** — Yes, absolutely. All the regulatory bodies that were party to the EES process — the DPI, EPA, DSE, the local council, DHS and community representatives — were party to the technical reference group. They sat on the group that was designed to look at the 13 or so technical papers that were put together and signed off on those. Despite that, all the regulatory bodies still wanted to sign off outside the TRG. That raised more questions, increased the time frame, involved document changes and increased the cost of the process. There was significant overlap in the documentation. The EES document itself contained everything that had been put together on the study. The EPA works approval required that information be put into a different format. It was exactly the same information. Again that came at a considerable cost and delay. The total cost of the process was just over \$5 million. Despite that considerable expenditure, the extension application was never fully reviewed by an independent panel. The local council refused to support a public exhibition of it, and the planning minister refused to intervene. From Boral’s perspective, it is not a good result when local councils can influence state-significant planning decisions to that extent.

The Government had requested that the EES occur for Montrose. Boral entered into that process in good faith and incurred considerable costs. The process was not allowed to run its course. Boral was not given a chance to obtain a return on that investment. The lack of process certainty could impact on future investment decisions in the State. Certainly smaller operators would find it difficult to front up with \$5 million up-front with no return on that investment and possibly no likelihood of return on that investment. That could lead to a reduction in the number of small and medium players in the industry and have an impact on competition and potentially pricing.

Our experience in other states has not been quite as difficult. Certainly in New South Wales and Queensland — and I am not an expert on their planning processes up there — I know when we have had significant quarry applications up there they have been considered state-significant projects and they have followed a planning process which provided some certainty of an outcome.

**Mr SHAW** — So you would like to see a Queensland model here in Victoria, would you? Do you think that is the most efficient one that you have seen?

**Mr HILLYER** — Probably it is. Again I am not over absolutely the detail of the Queensland process, but I know the concept of — —

**Mr SHAW** — But it would be cheaper for you?

**Mr HILLYER** — It would be cheaper for us, yes.

**Mr SHAW** — And it is quicker for you?

**Mr HILLYER** — It would be quicker, yes. Just having that guarantee of a set process without intervention halting the process — not necessarily giving a green light to the project but giving the opportunity to at least have the process run to completion — is something that would give us a lot more faith in the planning process.

Competing land uses is something which is certainly of concern to our business. It is particularly relevant to the metropolitan operations. This is a picture of our Wollert quarry, where you can see housing has been encroaching pretty much from all sides over recent years. I suspect this urban encroachment will be happening in the larger regional areas, particularly in Ballarat and Geelong, in the not-too-distant future. Poor planning decisions are resulting in our existing operations coming under threat from urban encroachment, and new operations are becoming much harder to establish. We have numerous examples within Boral, across our metropolitan operations — certainly the Montrose quarry, Wollert quarry and our Lysterfield quarry in the south-east — and I am aware of our competitors having similar examples.

It is a fact that industries have little choice as to where they are located; the stone is where nature put it. Companies such as Boral acquire land after careful consideration of the geological conditions and the market demand in order to secure that source of supply close to the market so that they can be competitive and can supply low-cost, high-quality products for housing and infrastructure projects.

The planning decisions really need to consider the potential impact on quarry operations and ensure that there is only compatible development in the proximity of the quarry sites. Heavy industry, manufacturing facilities, concrete plants, transport depots and some warehousing facilities are certainly compatible. Housing, schooling, aged-care facilities and hospitals are definitely not compatible. The Montrose quarry is a prime example of incompatible land uses around our site. It is depriving us of \$25 million tonnes or \$500 million worth of resource, which will be staying there in the ground. The area was largely orchards and used for farming in 1956 when the quarry was established, but local planning provisions and decisions have allowed housing to get to within 200 metres of our operating faces in some cases. The recent expansion of the urban growth boundary has also placed Boral's greenfield site at Donnybrook under threat. This site was purchased as a long-term replacement for the Wollert quarry, which is coming to the end of its natural life.

The Donnybrook site has been included in the urban growth boundary and zoned urban growth zone, so it is now unlikely that we are going to be able to get the planning approvals and permits necessary to open a quarry, and that is going to sterilise about 90 million tonnes of good quality rock in the ground or about \$1.8 billion worth of stone. It is going to force us to look for a site further away from the market, and again, that is going to increase the cost of the product to the market, increase infrastructure and housing costs and have an adverse environmental impact with the additional carbon emissions from greater transport distances.

I guess the solution to this that we are really looking for is some sort of surety of appropriate planning protection with identified strategic resources so that extractive industry's values are considered during the land use and planning decisions. It appears that certainly the greenfield sites were not necessarily considered of high value during the urban growth boundary expansion process.

Environmental considerations are of concern certainly to Boral and to the industry at the moment. They are definitely important, but it appears that in a lot of cases the environment is given the total consideration and the value of the resource and the importance to the community of the resource for development and economic growth is given little consideration. I guess Boral is really seeking a true triple-bottom-line approach. We are not saying that we do not need to be environmentally responsible, but we need to balance that with the need for resources close to the market.

The native vegetation framework requires offsets for land to be quarried. These offsets often become small parcels of land which require ongoing maintenance. I guess it is more efficient to have larger tracts of land

which can be accessed for offsets. I know this approach is being taken with the expansion of the urban growth area with land set aside in Werribee. As an industry we have spoken with the DSE on a couple of occasions about trying to access that land as offsets for quarry development, but we have had no success to date. I think it is worth noting at this stage that the footprint of the quarry industries is pretty small; I think 0.24 per cent of Victoria is taken up with current work authorities and the number of new applications and extensions is just a fraction of that, so it is a very small footprint.

Quarries are generally progressively rehabilitated as we work through them, and at the end of the extraction period the land can be developed into useful community assets. We have some great examples of this in Sydney, where what was Boral's largest quarry in Australia has since been developed into a housing and industrial development area and some parklands. We have some good examples at our Lysterfield quarry in Victoria, where we have rehabilitated parts of the site to match in with the natural land form. We have a great example of a site at Heatherton, which was an old joint venture sand quarry between Boral and Readymix, which has been turned into Karkarook Park and which is now available for public use. But the native vegetation framework does not recognise the value of the rehabilitated quarries, in most cases only allowing about a 1 in 10 offset.

The environmental legislation, and particularly the vegetation offset, is certainly increasing the cost of doing business in Victoria, and this could act as a deterrent to new players and certainly for smaller operators, and again, it could result in increased pricing and reduced competition in the industry.

For Boral at Deer Park one of the costs of getting our extension to that quarry a number of years ago was having to set up a 90 hectare grassland reserve. That delayed the extension process by two years. We were fortunate that we still had access to other stone reserves at the time so there was no opportunity cost, but I am certainly aware of some of our competitors at the moment who are being frustrated by environmental issues which are preventing them from getting access to their reserves, and they would be incurring several millions of dollars in hardship per year as a consequence. The cost of maintaining our grassland at Deer Park is about \$150 000 a year. Again, I am not saying we should not be spending the money but I question the fact of whether it is appropriate to be preserving a small parcel of land which is still in private ownership and which has no public access. I think we would be much better looking for larger tracts of land which can be agglomerated.

I suggest the following solutions: additional biodiversity offset reserves should be established for developers to access, including quarries; potentially look for the greater offsets on public land; increase the value of on-site rehabilitation of quarries; and something which I am pleased to see that the DSE is looking at currently is allowing for reasonable payment for approved environmental projects as an alternative to offsets if we cannot find sufficient vegetation offsets. I believe DSE has included this in its biodiversity conservation strategy for the urban growth areas, and I would suggest that it should be part of the native vegetation framework as a whole.

I think Melbourne has a very significant competitive advantage at the moment. We are blessed with a lot of reserves close to the market, and that certainly has been aiding housing and infrastructure affordability over the recent years, but that is continually being eroded by the things that I have spoken about in the previous slides — the increase in cost of regulation, the environmental considerations and incompatible land development uses.

Transport costs are about 30 to 40 per cent of the delivery cost of a quarry product. In some cases they reach up to about 50 per cent. Reducing the availability of resources close to the market will significantly increase that delivery cost, and we are seeing that certainly in Sydney at the moment. Boral is establishing a new quarry 180 kilometres from the CBD down in the southern highlands of New South Wales as a consequence of resource depletion and urban encroachment. In Melbourne the average lead from our quarry to our customers is about 25 kilometres at the moment. That 25 kilometres costs about \$6 per tonne to deliver. If that was to increase to 100 kilometres, the cartage cost would go from about \$6 a tonne up to about \$19 per tonne, so effectively tripling the cost of cartage. The average delivered cost of material in Sydney is now about 70 per cent greater than the cost of delivered material in Melbourne. The concept of maintaining the material close to the market and close to the customer is, I think, vitally important for Victoria.

If we use the largest infrastructure project for this state seen in recent years — that is, the EastLink freeway — the bulk of the aggregate, or pretty much all the aggregate, for that project came out of our Montrose quarry. If Montrose was not there — and it will not be in five or six years time — for the cost of supplying that project from other sources we would have had to have gone about 30 kilometres away to find viable alternatives. In

terms of the cartage cost, that would have increased the cartage by about \$30 million. In terms of social cost and traffic and road trauma, it was about a \$3.5 million cost and an increase in carbon emissions of about 6000 tonnes. I do not think they are the sorts of outcomes that we should be looking for when there is a reserve in the ground closer to the project.

On that note, I thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I realise I have raised a number of issues; I do not have the answers to all of them, but certainly I and the industry are very happy to be involved and work with government to find the solutions. I am happy to make myself available for questions now or any further discussions in the future.

**The CHAIR** — Paul, thank you very much for that. As I interpret what you are saying, there are problems in all states — particularly in New South Wales by the sounds of things — and you are foreseeing increasing problems in Victoria, and this is a red flag warning.

**Mr HILLYER** — I think Victoria will be heading down the New South Wales path if we are not careful. The quarries are going to be pushed further and further away from the market, and that comes at a considerable cost.

**The CHAIR** — I noticed that you have said that there are a few impediments — environmental, urban encroachment. What would you say was the major problem at this stage, if you ignore the need for offset?

**Mr HILLYER** — I think from Boral's perspective the urban encroachment and the incompatible land use is probably the biggest threat to existing quarries and to establishing new quarries.

**The CHAIR** — Okay. That leads me to the question that I was trying to get to. How would you manage that in an ideal world? Considering all stakeholders feelings about it, how would you manage the process of competing use with, say, urban development?

**Mr HILLYER** — It is interesting, having had the opportunity to sit here for the previous presentation. A lot of work has gone into understanding where the resources — the minerals and the quarry products — are in Victoria. I think what we need to do is set up some sounder protection of those resources. The extractive industry's interest areas are identified on maps which are publicly available, but that does not provide any protection for the resources that are there in the ground. It still does not stop anyone from coming along and putting a housing development in the middle of what could be the best rock source in Victoria close to the Melbourne market. I think what is important is that the Government needs to look at those areas, set up planning protection for them and then look for compatible land uses around them. We are not saying that a square kilometre or a kilometre either side of a quarry has to be a barren wasteland; there are compatible uses, and we need to develop those around quarries and then have the housing and incompatible uses a little bit further away. If we look at 10, 15 or 20 years into the future where the growth areas are and where the reserves are to supply that growth area and then set up the planning protections around them early, I think that is the solution.

**The CHAIR** — Thank you.

**Mr FOLEY** — Paul, just following on from that, the three main points you have touched on in your written submission are the cost of regulation, the competing land use and — you did not touch on this so much but underneath that — inconsistency between DPI's objectives and regulation plan objectives, which I took to be code for the native veg offsets. You have the encouragement of the quarries on one hand, and then you have the competing land uses from other parts of government on the other. At least two of those, I am taking from your answer to the Chair, are being driven by the expansion of the urban growth corridor or the urban growth boundaries, amongst other things, but that would be a key issue.

With the processes foreshadowed about the periodic review of where that urban growth boundary will be, are you confident that the industry's concerns will be picked up in the planning processes so far or, as the Chair said, is there the red flag of potentially going down the path of the Sydney experience? At the heart, do you feel the industry's concerns about extractive industries are being picked up in those urban growth boundary concerns?

**Mr HILLYER** — Not sufficiently, I believe. I know that with the recently completed urban growth boundary review there was a review of registered work authorities. Some protection was put there for registered

work authorities, but there is a lot of land that companies such as Boral have purchased and that does not have registered work authorities at the moment. They were not considered. Industry was not spoken to about the review, so we did not have the opportunity to raise the fact that we had land at Donnybrook that was planned for quarry development. I think that in further reviews of the growth boundary, rather than just looking at registered maps or registered sites, industry and industry associations need to be consulted in detail.

**The CHAIR** — Was there no consultation whatsoever with you and your holdings on that?

**Mr HILLYER** — No. There were discussions after the event — after the proposed growth boundary expansion. We were made aware that the Donnybrook site had been included in the urban growth boundary, and then we had the opportunity to talk.

**The CHAIR** — So your suggestion would be that, as part of an urban growth boundary move which is obviously contemplating growth in urban development, how that growth in urban development is going to be sustained should be taken into account, and it would be part of the process of your industry as well?

**Mr HILLYER** — Absolutely, yes. Very much so.

**Mr NOONAN** — Paul, thanks for your submission. I was interested in the \$5 million that Boral put into the approval process for the expansion of Montrose. You touched on the health study, and I think you said it was about \$150 000. Can you outline for the Committee what the key areas are, in terms of that approval process and in terms of the overall \$5 million, that could be attributed to the overall cost? I do not expect you to go through it line by line, but talk about what you consider are the core costs which are reasonable and what you consider might have been the unreasonable costs in that \$5 million, and then by extension perhaps contrast that, given that you are a national business, with other jurisdictions where some of those additional costs might not even come into the equation.

**Mr HILLYER** — Okay. There were 13 technical studies for Montrose. The main ones were to do with air quality. The air quality study was incredibly detailed — more so than it needed to be — to the point where the only people who understood it were the professors who had written it and the professors who peer reviewed it. It was extremely difficult to even translate it into plain English for simple people like me to understand. That study in itself — all the time that was included in that — probably equated to about \$600 000 to \$700 000 for that study alone. There were similar studies for water. There were the environmental studies. There was a significant amount of money spent on research into the Powerful Owl, as one of the people opposed to the quarry claimed that she had seen the Powerful Owl roosting in the quarry. That probably sent us down about a \$200 000 study to research that.

**Mr SHAW** — Was there one?

**Mr HILLYER** — There was one that flew in and out. It did not actually roost in the quarry.

**The CHAIR** — An itinerant Powerful Owl!

**Mr HILLYER** — His behaviours are probably not fit for me to talk about here, but his habit was to come in when the resident males were out of the place and to look after the females while the other males were not around.

**Mr NOONAN** — Did you say a ‘Powerful Owl’?

**Mr HILLYER** — Powerful Owl.

**Mr NOONAN** — It certainly had a great deal of power over your scenario in the end, I would have thought.

**Mr HILLYER** — Absolutely. I do not mean to make light of the environmental issues; it is important that we do study those. Boral as a company does not want to be party to the extinction of any species. It is not what we are about. All we are seeking is reasonable common sense when it comes to evaluating some of these things. Montrose was probably a little bit extreme in that there was a very well organised group who were opposed to the quarry and they were able to exert significant political influence to delay the process and increase the cost.

**Mr NOONAN** — Without taking you too much further into this, can you contrast that with other jurisdictions in terms of the environmental costs and health? Obviously the owl is quite unique, but I think when you mentioned EastLink you were talking about creeks and frogs and those sorts of things. In relation to other jurisdictions, can you give us a bit of a sense about where you think some of these core costs and some of these other areas in your view might perhaps be more unreasonable in contrast with other jurisdictions?

**Mr HILLYER** — My experience here is limited. I can talk a little bit about our new quarry going up in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales where I do not believe they spent as much on their environmental studies. They certainly spent a lot more of their money on looking at developing infrastructure, rail facilities for the site and looking at the economic development implications, and also in the geology of the site as well. That said, they still did significant water studies and vegetation studies. I really could not put a dollar figure on it, but I know it was significantly less complicated than Montrose, for example.

**Mr NOONAN** — Thanks.

**Mr SHAW** — With any of those reports that were done, which cost you \$5 million, did you have to change anything in your original plans for the extension of the quarry?

**Mr HILLYER** — We had an application in 1999 that was rejected, which was for a 25 million tonne extension. The application that was lodged in 2008, which commenced in 2004, was reduced to 16 million tonnes. So we made some significant compromises based on the feedback from the original extension application to minimise the impact, minimise the footprint and to address most of the concerns that had been raised in the previous application. But we did not get the opportunity to have them fully considered the second time around.

**Mr SHAW** — When Mr Noonan was talking about those costs that were coming through, you said you could tick off the \$150 000 asthma one. You sort of said, ‘No, that was a waste of money. Everything would have gone as per normal’. With the owl one, would everything have gone as normal as well? That cost you \$200 000. I am just looking at the surveys you have had to do because of pressure put on you by departments or by the public where you could say, ‘Waste of money. Waste of money. Waste of money’.

**Mr HILLYER** — Yes. If I look at probably what was a reasonable cost and what the process should have cost us had we been able to not have the process delayed and not have to continually update reports, it would probably have been closer to about \$3 million.

**Mr SHAW** — So you think \$3 million would have been a reasonable cost for Boral to wear, not \$5 million?

**Mr HILLYER** — I still think it is excessive, and I think if we did not have a lot of the repetition of documentation, it could be significantly less. Three million dollars would be a show stopper for a lot of small quarry operators; they just would not be able to fund that up-front.

**The CHAIR** — You may have already done so, but for my understanding could I ask you to clarify what you mean by the repetition of documents — of paperwork?

**Mr HILLYER** — Yes. The EES document is six inches thick. It contains all the environmental studies, the water gush noise, vegetation, everything. Everything in that document is required for the EPA, so it is all the information that the EPA requires, including that EES document. But we have to complete a works approval application for the EPA as well, so that is almost a repetition of everything that is in the EES document in a different format, to meet the works approval application. Really one document should have sufficed for all. Again, putting that document together is time, it is cost, it is project management, it is internal time. Just the printing of the documents alone was in excess of \$20 000.

**Mrs PEULICH** — My apologies for missing out on your submission; I look forward to reading the transcript. I am always surprised that our inquiry still has a life, because in many instances landowners would prefer to see other uses, such as perhaps the hope of a residential subdivision, which will remunerate them better. There are environmental groups, obviously, that can make life much more challenging and lead to lots of additional costs. And of course in instances where there are residents, they will oppose it because of what they anticipate will be the remediation that is landfill in many instances and its impact on amenity. So there is the confluence of interests that leads to that strong opposition.

Can you point to some creative uses of land post-quarrying that we can actually look at as well, so that it is not always landfill? I am thinking of my area, for example. I live in Dingley Village, where there are still quite a few quarrying licences, with quite a bit of quarrying happening, and a lot of opposition from residents and landowners because of the poor management of tips and landfill. Compare that with, say, Karkarook Park, where there was sand extraction and a lake was established in what is now a beautiful park. Are there any other examples of post-quarrying work?

**Mr HILLYER** — Absolutely. Karkarook Park was one of our sites, a joint venture, and I used that in the submission as an example. The Botanic Gardens are on an old quarry. If we look at Greystanes in New South Wales, an old quarry was turned into parkland, residential development and industrial development. The Doncaster shopping centre was created on an old quarry site as well. So it does not have to be just landfill. Certainly our Deer Park quarry is being rehabilitated with landfill, but there is certainly no intention that a site such as Wollert, which I showed a photo of previously, would be a landfill again. We would be looking for parklands and residential development on a site like Wollert. So there are a number of examples around Australia but probably the best ones are the Botanic Gardens and Karkarook Park itself, which is a fantastic outcome with an asset which is useful to the community.

On our Lysterfield quarry in the south-east we have recently completed some modifications to the design, which has been changed through the Act of Parliament. That will be rehabilitated as a community asset, with parkland, flat land and a lakes precinct, when it is completed in about 30 or 40 years time as well.

**Mr NOONAN** — Your letter to the Committee says that you would welcome the opportunity for continued dialogue with government about some of the issues that you have raised here. Given we have a new government and obviously they will take an opportunity to review some of the issues that you would probably like them to review, have you had the opportunity to put the concerns that your company has, and if so, what if any have been the responses you have had in return?

**Mr HILLYER** — I personally have not. I know that there have been other people in the company who have been talking with the Growth Areas Authority and I know that our regional general manager for Victoria has been talking with the Minister for Energy and Resources.

**The CHAIR** — Thank you very much. In a couple of weeks you will receive a transcript of today's proceedings. Feel free to look through it to find any typographical errors and change those. However, nothing of substance can be changed. I would like on behalf of the Committee to thank you very much for being here. We do value your presence and hearing what you have to say about this important topic.

**Mr HILLYER** — I appreciate that, and thanks for the time to speak with you today; it is really important to us.

**Witness withdrew.**