

# CORRECTED VERSION

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

### REFERENCES COMMITTEE

#### Inquiry into environmental design and public health

Melbourne — 4 August

#### Members

Mr A. Elsbury  
Mrs J. Kronberg  
Mr C. Ondarchie  
Mr S. Pennicuik

Mrs I. Peulich  
Mr J. Scheffer  
Mr B. Tee  
Ms G. Tierney

Chair: Ms G. Tierney  
Deputy Chair: Mrs I. Peulich

#### Staff

Secretary: Mr K. Delaney

#### Witnesses

Mr S. Graham, president,  
Ms P. Smith, chair, environment committee,  
Mr R. Cooper, national councillor,  
Ms D. Kuh, environment committee, and  
Mr J. Shinkfield, advocacy and urban design committee, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects.

**The CHAIR** — I declare open the public hearing of the Legislative Council’s Standing Committee on Environment and Planning References Committee. Today’s hearing is in relation to the inquiry into environmental design and public health in Victoria. On behalf of the committee I wish to welcome you, and in particular I welcome Mr Scott Graham, president; Ms Pru Smith, chair of the environment committee; Mr Robert Cooper, national councillor; Ms Deborah Kuh from the environment committee; and Mr Jon Shinkfield from the advocacy and urban design committee of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects.

I am obliged to inform you that all evidence taken at this hearing is protected by parliamentary privilege as provided by the Constitution Act 1975 and further subject to the provisions of the Legislative Council’s standing orders. Therefore you are protected against any action arising from what you say here today, but if you go outside and repeat the same things, those comments may not be protected by this privilege. All evidence is being recorded by Hansard, and you will be provided with proof versions of the transcript in the next couple of days.

We have allowed between 5 and 10 minutes for you to make a presentation. We would really like to dedicate the rest of the time to asking you questions and really teasing out some of the issues that we are looking at in this inquiry. For the sake of Hansard I ask you to begin by introducing yourselves and providing us with your mailing address so we can send you a copy of the transcript. I will hand it over to you.

**Mr GRAHAM** — I am Scott Graham. I am the president of AILA Victoria. I also lead landscape architecture and urban design at GHD. My mailing address is 180 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000. The company name is GHD.

**Ms KUH** — My name is Deborah Kuh. I represent the Victorian AILA chapter of the environment group. I am also associate director of design at AECOM. The mailing address is Level 45, 80 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000.

**Mr COOPER** — I am Robert Cooper. I am national councillor — in other words, a director of AILA, representing, obviously, the national body. We are constituted as a company nationally. My mailing address is Level 3, 469 Latrobe Street, Melbourne. My company name is CPG.

**Ms SMITH** — I am Pru Smith. I am the chair of the AILA chapter of the environment group. I am also team leader of landscape and design at the City of Boroondara. However, I am representing the environment group today.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — I am Jon Shinkfield. I represent the advocacy committee for the Victorian chapter of AILA. I am a director of design and planning for AECOM at Level 45, 80 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000.

**The CHAIR** — Thank you. I will hand it over to you, Scott.

**Mr GRAHAM** — We look forward to the questions. We have a short 5 or 6-minute presentation, which Jon will lead and Deborah will steer.

#### **Overheads shown.**

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — Basically, we have three slides, which I will be talking around but not specifically to. Health and the provision for health services is a compounding cost phenomenon of the 21st century. Both as an ageing population and as a society that is completely reliant of fossil-fuelled movement systems we are becoming trapped in an unprepared state, falling victim to a city model of urban virus — of compounding unhealthiness and cost associated with the ageing process. We cannot and must not consider this in the limited terms of the public health system. This is far too narrow and misses the point of healthy environments and healthy people.

Landscape architecture and the peak body of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects lies at the intersection of the city’s health system. It is at once concerned with transport and physical activity, green relief and urban heat island mitigation, social engagement and safety by design, productive and therapeutic places, play and recreation not in isolation but as an integrated response. Too often our urban environments are bereft of water management, reclaimed biodiversity, social engagement and exchange, learning, production, activation

and climate mitigation. We somehow think of these spaces as green space, but very often these places are a cultural and ecological desert.

As landscape architects we operate at a high level of city making and design and then we draw right down to the macro scale of therapeutic design associated with hospital and wellness environments. We look to an appropriate system of green infrastructure and spatial distribution across a community and at the same time for a materiality and program mix which is both stimulating and engaging at an individual level.

Our policy in engagement is immediately concerned with physical and social, psychological and emotional and the intellectual and cultural consideration of both our special and everyday places. For example, by its very nature a street can be a place of extreme exposure, victimisation and danger or, by contrast, can be a place of shelter, refuge and safe passage. Too often we settle for space rather than place, for the benign in preference to the productive and for an aesthetic rather than a core agenda of community engagement and healthy, multivalent environments capable of mitigating the effects of environment and environmental degradation of unstable local economies, of poorly developed social structure and unmanageable costs associated with high-energy-based, non-productive realms.

Our purpose and position as landscape architects is both multilayered and multigenerational. It is inclusive and in consideration of children, young people, families and the elderly. We seek to bring a fresh perspective to a multigenerational living environment. I am immediately inspired by the idea of a locally accessible, productive place where produce can be grown, purchased and exchanged and where the community can choose an alternative to the tasteless, coloured-down food from the supermarket.

I think it is important that we paint these pictures so we are actually starting to understand the context that we are in: where I can take a short walk to peruse what is in season or catch a train for one or two stops to arrive and emerge into a productive, cool and therapeutic landscape of organic value; or where, as an alternative, I can ride my bicycle only a short distance to a place of production, trading and selling; where power for pumping and production is produced through local photovoltaic arrays; or where water is harvested and stormwater treated; where overland flow from production areas is cleansed by wetlands prior to capture and reused for stormwater discharge; and where native frogs, fish, dragonflies and tortoises are unthreatened and part of a wetlands system.

It would seem that we misunderstand and misappropriate the true meaning and opportunity of our public realm — of our spaces, of our green places — as a contributor to and critical part of our health and healthy living systems. Environmental design and the activity of landscape architects needs to be considered across all development stages and processes associated with city making and community planning.

We, as landscape architects, as AILA, are directly concerned with governance and policy to assist government in developing policy and delivering governance actions; planning and guidelines to be included at the inception phase of land management and land development and establishing guidelines for rollout and program; design and green infrastructure development plans to assist government in developing performance-rating tools to ensure measurable and monitored outcomes; the management and life-cycle-costing cost benefit, to assist government in the development of asset management guidelines.

We as AILA cross a broad spectrum of activity. We would like to congratulate the Victorian state government for establishing this reference committee around what is a very worthy and needy topic in the challenge of our cities and city expansion. We thank you for the opportunity of presenting this morning and look forward to the opportunity of further assisting the committee with its inquiry.

**The CHAIR** — Thanks, Jon, and can I congratulate you on your submission too. It was very detailed and comprehensive and also quite enjoyable to read. Given the key principles that you have outlined and the opportunities and actions, can I just drill down in terms of some pragmatics and ask whether you can give examples of urban developments or projects which demonstrate what you consider to be best practice in implementing health and wellbeing principles?

**Mr COOPER** — I can start off by saying that perhaps there are elements of projects that demonstrate best practice but, as our submission has outlined and as Jon has stressed, it is the joining up of all the elements that make up the environments that seems to be the weakness. Certainly we have made great inroads into handling stormwater run-off and improving the health of water, if you like, and the spin-offs of that have been more

greenery in urban areas. We as a state have certainly introduced legislation to try to control clearance of vegetation and control the environment that way and used that environment to improve spaces enjoyed by people.

In terms of a project that best demonstrated an approach to a healthy urban environment, I am hard-pressed to come up with an example. We have yet to join the dots successfully. As designers we strive to. I believe the legislation and guidelines are not there to fully realise that. My colleagues may have different views or there may be further examples that nearly get there that they may like to comment on.

**Ms KUH** — If you are looking for exemplar projects that you can research further, I have to concur that it is difficult. There is a website called [sustainablesites.org](http://sustainablesites.org). It is a US-based site. They are trying to compile best practice, exemplar projects that are multidisciplinary in nature and that try to join all the dots. They do have some key projects in there that you can further reference. My understanding is that the guy who runs [sustainablesites.org](http://sustainablesites.org) is quite contactable, so if you do have questions with regard to those projects, it is worth putting them in. It is worth noting that this is an international corporate project, so you get the exemplars on a global level. I think there are only two projects in there that are from Australia.

**Ms TIERNEY** — Can you recall what they are?

**Ms KUH** — I only know one of them. One is the Point Fraser project in Perth, Western Australia.

**Ms SMITH** — I might just add something to that. In terms of green infrastructure, which is obviously not the complete picture, there are some exemplar projects and research being done around Clarke Quay in Singapore; the Brisbane mall, which analyses urban geometry and landscape elements; and the Adelaide mall and Green Alley, George Street, which the University of South Australia is doing some work around. That is specifically around green infrastructure, reducing heat island and the impact of temperature on health and wellbeing. Those specific projects relate to that specific issue; they are not projects that holistically encompass all the health and wellbeing issues.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — One of the problems — the reference to a kind of a fossil fuel energy base in our cities — is not a moot point, because we have grown our cities around that and so we are only at the stage now of really looking at new exemplars coming forward as a result of some fairly serious systemic systems thinking. So there are projects that are currently on the drawing board as such that are ready to be birthed but are not quite there yet.

**Ms KUH** — What about the Brisbane WaterSmart strategy?

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — But again it is drilling down into one aspect, which is water, rather than looking at the whole series of systems that actually contribute to health and wellbeing.

**Mr COOPER** — Let us look at the various livability indices that are around. These are not frivolous; they are indices that are used by international companies wanting to place people overseas and work out what sort of hardships people encounter. We have all seen in the press reports of Melbourne and Sydney being high up on those indices. The federal government made a comment early last year in its report *State of Australian Cities* that we are slipping on the livability index. In amongst that are all sorts of things — public transport et cetera — but a lot of it is the style and health of living in its broadest terms. There is a concern that we are not achieving those exemplars and that we are asking ourselves, ‘Where are they?’. We have individual sites but not in a joined up sense.

That report led to the federal government’s report in May this year about the future of our cities. In that report there are recommendations that include working towards a national urban design protocol. ‘Urban design’ — or ‘urban’ — does not necessarily mean we are not talking about small regional cities; it means settlement generally. It is simply because we have not really thought it all through or got our various agencies and laws to cooperate.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — From your perspective how interested do you think developers, local governments and town planners generally are in creating these green healthy spaces? Perhaps developers are on one side and town planners and local governments are on the other. Could you comment on that? Are they engaged with it? Are they thinking about it? Are they doing it?

**Mr GRAHAM** — They are engaged, but often it relates to and relies on it being powerfully referred to in planning schemes, and of course in many cases it is not. It comes down to the moment where perhaps in consultancy we are acting for developers and those developers are all about the premium and creating an image of a lifestyle for people in the new community. On the other hand ultimately the assets from a landscape and public realm point of view are then handed over to a municipality or asset managers, but there is this real misalignment and certainly a vision that really sees that the land and natural systems are not necessarily being handed over in a way that manages them to their best outcome. I would say that really drills down to not enough being understood by all those professionals who are in the mix for designing and delivering land assets.

**Ms KUH** — There is an economic value to environmental design that is currently undervalued, and as such it rarely appears in the economies of scale for developers, for example. When looking at other countries — and I particularly reference Asian countries — they place it at a high value. They understand the economic value and the asset of environmental design as part of their development. They actually sell it as part of their marketing strategy. It is all about the landscape; it is all about being outdoors, exercise and health and wellbeing. It would be excellent if we had that economic understanding. It would make the process, I think, a whole lot more manageable, a whole lot smoother for developers to understand that. That way it would be a smoother conversation with local government agencies, planners and the like. I think Pru would like to say something on that.

**Ms SMITH** — Yes. I might just add to that from a local government perspective. Health and wellbeing is definitely a priority for councils, but there are planning scheme limitations and barriers around that where we are quite constrained in terms of developers. You are almost relying on the developers. You want to initiate best practice, and there is a lack of measurables. Just in terms of my department specifically there is a lack of evidence-based research to help decision-makers. I know there is some quantifiable dollar value on the value of green infrastructure, but a lot of it is very intangible. For example, you know that psychologically a beautiful landscape will increase property values — people would like to live in a city like Boroondara because of that — but it is not a tangible thing, which means it drops off from consideration when there is other more pressing capital works funding.

The other thing we find is an inconsistent policy approach to health and wellbeing; a misalignment. I could give some examples. I think the electricity powerline regulation was a classic example for bushfire prevention. This was a regulation that meant severe pruning and the decimation of a lot of the street trees which had a huge impact on shade, on cooling the environment, on property values and on the psychological state. This was not in consideration when that regulation came in. So that inconsistent policy is an issue for government. They are just my initial thoughts.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — Just referring back to the exemplar sites, probably the Sydney Olympic Village is a very good exemplar site of urban development that embodies a number of different systems wrapped into it. Without wanting to name developers, there are a couple who are very interested in continuing to propagate the idea of integrated green infrastructure and open space. We are currently doing some work that is about, in a park environment, integrated water management systems, productive gardens and community gardens, integrated play space, places where you can actually barbecue and cook and use the produce you have grown, and it is part of the make-up of the community. This is not kind of greenie, hippie stuff; this is properly integrated urban green environments, and it is successful insofar as interconnectivity, as mentioned before, in terms of the multigenerational activity and just society wellbeing goes. Sites that would now start to demonstrate that and which will be coming out shortly will be E-Gate and the Maribyrnong defence site in Melbourne. They are two projects that are highly charged with these ideals of multiple systems connecting.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — Jon, you just mentioned that there are a couple of developments. Do I infer from that that there is a great mass of other developers who are not really — —

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — Absolutely, because the majority of developers would understand a green space as being the provision of parks. It is something that works for them as far as marketing but not necessarily as far as establishing — —

**Mr COOPER** — Especially voluntarily. If you look at the provisions of the planning scheme, there are a lot of useful phrases about what should be done, but they are very motherhood. To get truly to the exemplar, that is purely voluntary — that is exactly one of the issues that we all face.

**Mr TEE** — I suspect that there is probably broad agreement around the issues we face in terms of obesity and the issues in terms of all wanting to have an environment that you have described so eloquently. The issue that I would not mind getting your views on is what role there is for the state government to drive that change. Your submission talks about initially a more centralised resource, and that might mean getting health and planning to work together and to do the sort of research that you talked about. I suppose I just want to particularly focus on — and we talked about some of the examples, and you said there are not many examples — the role of the state. What should the state government be telling the Urban Renewal Authority in terms of those inner urban developments? Can it tell it something in a way that is measurable so that you can check whether it has succeeded or failed? What should the state government be doing in terms of planning policy?

I see you have recommended in terms of legislation having an objective, but again that is a very high-level solution. Is there anything, I suppose, more prescriptive, any examples of that sort of position, particularly focusing on the issues that you raise around footpaths? Again, everybody thinks footpaths are great, and every government will tell you they invest in them, but are there any benchmarks, are there any hindrances, is it a planning policy, is it legislation, and how would you amend those so that you can in a year's time say, 'No, you have not met that benchmark' or, 'Yes, you have reached that benchmark'? Most governments will tell you they are investing in those sorts of things. They do agree with what you are saying, yet we keep hitting this brick wall.

**Ms KUH** — If I can start and jump in, could everyone turn to slide 3 of your handout? From an 'Opportunities and actions' perspective, from a governance perspective, we see there are certain opportunities and actions — I think we have targeted all these points at a state level. Starting with governance, there is a potential to establish some sort of a multidisciplinary integrated design commission. Just ideas off the top of my head — at the moment there is a state government architect. If we can establish some sort of a commission like they have in South Australia, which is an integrated design commission. It is not entirely multidisciplinary, but you really need other players; you really need a landscape architect, someone with urban design background on board. With that modest multidisciplinary aspect to the commission you start to have a broader, more holistic approach to how you can go about developing policy because it is not weighted or biased toward any particular discipline. 'Investment, development and delivery of an implementation document from a white paper to a blue paper' — an actual document that can establish and develop some sort of a performance criteria. This comes in later on in the planning and design component of what we do. It is this whole idea that what you establish at a state level has to be consistent and can drill down to local government, planning skills, design guidelines and performance assessment criteria as a ratings tool that both developers and designers can rate ourselves against, ensuring design excellence, not just fulfilment of a 10 per cent pocket park.

**Mr TEE** — I suppose the government would say the GAA does that already. I suppose the question is what more should it do, and what does it look like?

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — That is a beautiful point. It is a very beautiful point because the GAA is still with planners. There is nothing wrong with that, except that it does not have a balance of people who actually contribute to city-making. There is an absence of understanding of natural systems that go along with that. If I were to say to you that if we stripped out the idea of fossil fuel transport and we said that everybody needed to be able to access some piece of green space, green infrastructure within 100 metres — I am not talking about a major park, that would be ridiculous, but what has happened is we have been seduced by a kind of new urbanist ideal that has come out of the United States which says that everybody should have access to a train station or a point of transport within 500 or 400 metres. But that is not about living our lives. That is not about having a healthy environment. We need to have accessibility to places within a much closer distance to that, so one simple policy that says, 'accessibility to public space within 100 metres of any dwelling'. That is why Boroondara is a really sought-after place to be, because the opportunity of accessing green space is at the ready.

We have to reprogram our thinking. When you look at projects globally that are seeking to establish high models of carbon neutrality and energy efficiency, this is what they are doing. They are looking at a completely different distribution of public open space and green infrastructure that goes with that, and you have to have everything laid into it so it is productive in an economic sense for you and productive in a social sense.

**Ms KUH** — That is reflected in the multidisciplinary nature of executing the project, so it is not just left to one particular discipline to execute what is effectively across the board a whole range of other involvements.

**Mr TEE** — So if the government got the right people around the GAA decision-making table, you would get a different outcome?

**Ms KUH** — Absolutely.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — You would get that.

**Mr TEE** — Is that the recommendation that you would want the committee to consider or is there more in terms of drilling down in terms of the guidance you would want to give, whether it is the Urban Renewal Authority or the GAA?

**Mr GRAHAM** — There is probably a body of examples, as we were saying earlier, that do not exist or, if they do exist, they have not been drawn into a powerful reference point. We need to perhaps have a research and development approach to the performance-based tools or performance-based ways in which we can really understand the tenets of how public open space, public realm planning and design and management should be looked at. They are the sorts of things that, if done at a design commission level, can perhaps influence the GAA, the Urban Renewal Authority and councils.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — But it does come back to establishing what the heck it is we want to achieve in our cities in the first place and then putting a series of policies in place that the various groups are working to achieve. If you have got that and the GAA is trying to achieve a certain outcome — at the moment it has a mandate and is really working hard to achieve that, but if that was shifted slightly in terms of what it is required to do, it would force the engagement of a different group of people in that process. There is no policy at the moment that governs any of this.

**Ms KUH** — There is different thinking, because the thinking is established within this framework that everyone has to partake in.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — That is right.

**Ms KUH** — And at the moment it is not.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Could I just first of all clarify your status. A number of you are elected and a couple of you are paid; is that correct?

**Mr GRAHAM** — No, none of us is paid in the roles.

**Mrs PEULICH** — So all of you are elected to your various roles. I am trying to get a handle on what you are actually advocating. In broad terms I think I agree with Mr Tee — yes, take a gasp. There is general agreement about what may be desirable features or attributes of our built form. It is the applicability and deliverability that ends up being the hurdle. Obviously you are advocating developments on a larger scale, whether residential or commercial, in order to deliver the sort of integrated infrastructure and open space objectives of which you speak.

The bottom line test, however, and the reason why perhaps we do not have many of these examples that you have been able to point to, will always be the impact on the economics for the developers and the economics for the purchasers, especially if, say, you are talking about individuals and families and the cost of residential property, and the impact on the maintenance of that sort of integrated infrastructure: who maintains it and what are the ongoing costs. It is not just the offsetting of climate change impact but the actual asset management into the future. Are you able to comment on how the objectives that you are aspiring to and that I think some of us obviously find very attractive, could be delivered in an economic way for those who are going to invest their money in developing it, those who are going to purchase it and those who have the responsibility for maintaining it.

**Mr GRAHAM** — Firstly, I would just like to say so much of the equation in terms of affordability, of course, in the media and amongst the developers is about a key to a door; it is not about the whole of community and the whole of community making that goes with that, and people who then find themselves not having access to public transport or to general social infrastructure at a support level that is appropriate is the real challenge. Jumping to the asset management side of things is — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — Let us take development, purchaser price and asset management in terms of maintenance?

**Mr GRAHAM** — I think some of it perhaps starts with asset management.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — I think what we can do is direct you to some current examples. The Nicholson in Coburg would be an example where VicUrban has just finished that project. It is about affordable housing. It is about very significantly affordable housing.

**Mrs PEULICH** — You are talking about a model where obviously there are a lot of public funds injected into that model?

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — That is a model that needs to return profit, and admittedly it is a one-site model, but it has all of the integrated systems that we are talking about in that one site at the micro level. When you blow that out to a broader site — the problem is the tradition of both our thinking and application. If you can integrate water management and green infrastructure, it actually brings the removal of hard kit infrastructure back up into the development. You do not need as much of it and you do not need to pay for the quantum. There are actually cost savings involved in it. The problem with it is — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — For whom and over what period of time?

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — No, there are cost savings immediately for the developer in that scenario. The problem with it is that then there is management that has to go with it, but the management, in any case, has to be taken up as part of green space. It is always a management cost, so then that often comes back to local government. It comes back to the tradition of local government saying, 'We only mow things, we don't do anything else, so you can only have areas of grass'.

What is happening is that there is change going on: community gardens; I do not know if any of you here are involved in a community garden. What has been happening is that they are positioned down in the back blocks of a piece of green open space. They are kind of hidden away or tucked away; and there are a few people who are interested in gardening who attend to these things. What is happening is that they are being brought right up to the forefront of open space now because they create community engagement and safety and observance of the open space. It creates a sense of ownership and management of the open space. But, hello; are we actually able to think about giving public open space over to private use? It is this whole issue about public and private, and there are some governance issues.

**Mrs PEULICH** — You are not answering my question, and that is, it is not going to happen unless the economics stack up. I am not talking about the longer lifespan and the nebulous, feelgood stuff. I come from a farming context; I was born on a farm, so I am with you. I struggle to maintain my own garden in my own backyard, let alone a community garden, but I think it is a great concept for people who do not have access to one. Unless it stacks up in terms of economics for the developers, in particular for the purchasers, as well as those who have the responsibility of maintaining them, it is just going to be an ideal. All I am asking is if you could apply your skills to thinking how we can deliver economically efficient objectives that can actually make these projects fly.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — That is what we are currently doing.

**Ms SMITH** — That is exactly the quandary because a lot of, I guess, the health costs will not be known until much later: the obesity and heart disease. That is the whole quandary, is it not. You are talking about long-term costs if you do not act now on the health and wellbeing benefits; hence we are here.

**Mr GRAHAM** — Two things: ultimately what we have a vision for, and we all should have a vision for it, happens when we have a bit more of a commitment and understanding of how to live at a greater density in our cities, and the economics will stack up much more profoundly when we are really establishing that.

On the other hand, I will just go over the maintenance and management side of things. We have a real lack of sophistication at council level in some of our land asset management where 'Yes, mow; trim a hedge' will tick all the boxes. There are places like Ocean Grove, in the city of Greater Geelong, where there are two species being rolled out in every street. It is treating green infrastructure as if it is a pipe, a pit or a hard element. It is not

looking for the real performance of the landscape; it is looking for, 'We can forget about it. It will do its own thing'. There is a real level of sophistication that we have to build into our approach to management of land systems.

**Ms KUH** — In order to have the framework or the policy that people will buy into, perceptions and ways of thinking will need to change. I think you have heard a lot about certain set mentalities and a business-as-usual way of doing things. It will also need the research and data to back it up.

This goes back to a comment I made before about the economic value of environmental design. There just is not the data here for developers. They are starting to have an awareness of it, but they do not really have it yet. There are only a few — —

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — It is anecdotal.

**Ms KUH** — Yes, and there are only a few places that are only just starting to develop their economic model. A lot of it is still offshore. It is really about bringing that information in and shifting that perception and awareness so that the developer can actually understand that there is an immediate capital works savings to what they are doing. At a government level we can be a little bit more targeted in terms of our incentives, our bonus plot ratio for example, and try to embed that into sustainability.

Then there is the actual life cycle savings that then affect the purchaser price, so that by the time your mums and dads come to buy the place, there is an understanding. There is a project that VicUrban has undertaken where they surveyed the current residential population on what were the top three attractors. Open space was in the top three — I think it was actually no. 1 — and community proximity to transport was the second one. Conversely to that, there was a whole issue with the future of it, how it was to be maintained and all the rest of it.

There is a project in WA where a developer has taken on board the asset management and maintenance of the development of the open space for the next 40 years. They have realised, 'Oh my goodness, what have we been doing'. That has been quite significant, because for the first time they have actually taken it upon themselves and are now rethinking the way they are doing business, because they are now literally paying for it.

It is these kinds of conversations, but they are just so ad hoc. If there was a consistent policy, enforcement and framework across all levels, hopefully you would start to get that reflecting in all aspects of it as well.

**Mrs PEULICH** — In closing, in terms of my impressions, I point you to a similar agreement in relation to the development of the Patterson Lakes area where there has been a bunfight about the maintenance of infrastructure in that community for 25 years. The bigger the project the less likely that it will occur. If you could apply your principles to smaller projects — and getting financing for these larger things is very difficult — that are more viable, maybe we would take more steps towards achieving those objectives.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — I understand the government is making new appointments to the Urban Renewal Authority. What skill set do you think it should take into consideration?

**Mr GRAHAM** — In the Urban Renewal Authority's background as VicUrban, landscape architects have probably played quite powerful roles there for a long time. Where things move to reinvesting in an infill within the bounds of our city, there is a really strong outlook to make sure our professionals in that new body are really armed to look at bringing the national systems into performing for our urban environments. In terms of skills, I think the skills are there.

**Mr TEE** — Or planners or more planners?

**Mr SCHEFFER** — You might want to think about it and send something in.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — Landscape architects and urban designers are absolutely critical.

**Ms SMITH** — Potentially transport planners.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — Public health specialists.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — And economists.

**Ms SMITH** — Transport planners and economists.

**Ms KUH** — But it is also the structure of the URA. It could benefit from looking at the structure of the URA and how the teams are actually put together in terms of how the projects are procured, because you might have all of the people there, but if the teams are not put together well, then you are not going to get your product.

**The CHAIR** — I am sorry we kicked off a bit late, but as you know we had technical difficulties with our equipment. It was really informative. I think we got a lot of good work done on record this morning. Thank you again. We will make sure those transcripts are sent out to you. It will be a matter of just verifying accuracy, looking at potential typos and those sorts of things; it is not about changing the record.

**Mr SHINKFIELD** — Just a final question: is there any further role for AILA to play in this type of environment?

**The CHAIR** — In a general sense, I suppose just keep monitoring. As I said, the submissions will be up on the website in the next week or so. I would assume that that would take a bit of your time in terms of looking at what everyone else has got to say. Beyond that it is a public hearing. If you are wanting to sit in and listen to other contributions, you are more than welcome. You just need to talk to Keir about that and he will let you know when the hearing dates are, who we are listening to and those sorts of things. Just maintain a good link with Keir.

**Mrs PEULICH** — And keep us posted on what you are doing.

**Witnesses withdrew.**