

# CORRECTED VERSION

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

### REFERENCES COMMITTEE

#### **Inquiry into environmental design and public health**

Melbourne — 4 August

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#### Witnesses

Ms K. Jolly, director cardiovascular health programs, and

Ms R. Carlisle, active living manager, Heart Foundation.

**The CHAIR** — Welcome. There are a couple of formalities I need to go through. You are probably fairly familiar with this. I am sure if it is the first time you have appeared before a parliamentary committee.

**Ms JOLLY** — It is for Rachel but not for me.

**The CHAIR** — There is a thing called parliamentary privilege, and you are covered by that during the course of this hearing. I need to say for the record that if you repeat outside comments you have made in here, then you are not necessarily covered by parliamentary privilege. The other thing is that all of the contributions are recorded by Hansard. You will get a copy of the transcript in a couple of days to a week. That will be sent to the address that you specify in a minute, and you will be able to verify the accuracy of the evidence that you present.

Today we have asked for a 5 to 10-minute presentation. We would like to spend a fair bit of the time having the opportunity to ask you questions and further investigate some of the propositions that you have put. Can we begin by your introducing yourselves, giving your name and that of the organisation you are representing as well as its address. I will hand it over to you.

**Ms JOLLY** — I am Kellie-Ann Jolly. I am the director of cardiovascular health at the Heart Foundation of Victoria. The address is level 12, 500 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000.

**Ms CARLISLE** — I am Rachel Carlisle. I am acting living manager at the Heart Foundation of Victoria. Again it is level 12, 500 Collins Street, Melbourne.

**The CHAIR** — Thank you. Over to you, Kellie-Ann.

**Ms JOLLY** — On behalf of the Heart Foundation, it is a privilege to be here and to also have the opportunity not only to lodge a written submission but to be here for this public hearing. We really applaud the fact that this inquiry is actually taking place. The Heart Foundation has been in this space for about 15 years. We have recognised this link between planning and health and have been working with local government to build the evidence, tools and a range of resources to try to help build that better link between design, built environment, planning and health, so that is terrific.

We have provided some resources for you, which will hopefully give a little bit more information about the kind of work and the things we have been doing in this space. Just to start, when I talk about environmental design I am talking about it from the built environment and natural environmental perspective, so it is looking at it more broadly in terms of how that promotes health and wellbeing. We know that individuals need to take responsibility for their health and welfare. It is partly an individual responsibility, but unless they can do that within a supportive environment that enables them to actually take that responsibility, it is meaningless. We believe that you have to look at the environment within the context of people making those decisions for themselves — we actually do.

There is more and more evidence coming out — and you would have heard from others, I guess, around this — that suggest that the design of our towns and cities does influence both physical and mental health. I will not go through all of this in detail, because I am sure you are aware of this, but these are the kinds of areas that we feel can influence physical health as well as mental health. For us at the Heart Foundation there are two particular areas that we are going to hone in on and which we have in our submission. They are primarily physical activity, healthy eating and obesity, because for heart disease they are the three modifiable risk factors — actually not only for heart disease but for chronic diseases in general. They are the two that we are probably going to focus on.

We have also, over the course of 15 years, been looking at the evidence and trying to see what is coming out, and there is more and more coming out around the links, as I said earlier. The built environment is directly associated with physical activity, and the Heart Foundation has a particular interest in walking. The reason for that is that we know it is the most popular form of physical activity. It is also free and easily accessible to most people, and it is something you can do across the life span. We are really trying to engage people who are quite sedentary to start by walking. Going from nothing to going to the gym is quite a big leap, so we wanted to try to look at walking. We know that just over half of the population does not do enough physical activity for health, and we also know that about half the population is now overweight or obese, so this is the area that we have been focusing on.

Just quickly — and again this is in our submission in more detail — we know that countries with a high proportion of walking, cycling and high public transport trips have lower levels of obesity. The US has done a really interesting study which looks at sprawl and the fact that the further out you go, especially if you live in sprawling places, the more likely you are to spend less time walking for leisure and for transport and the more likely you are to be overweight or obese. That is starting to show. If you have access to large, high-quality public open space, it increases your recreational walking. We have also been very interested in the whole issue of food and food access, and this notion of easy access to healthy food choices is important to help maintain and promote health.

You might be interested to know that there have been some studies done around fast food outlets, for instance, and that we are finding that there are about two and a half times more fast food outlets in low socioeconomic or disadvantaged areas, so it is about getting that balance between the accessible healthy fresh food options as well as the not-so-healthy options.

The other thing we are interested in looking at is walking, and an important part of design and planning is that people walk for transport or to get from A to B and also for recreation, and there are different needs. What we are finding is that people actually do this: they are requiring different design elements, whether they are walking for transport or whether they are walking for recreation. These are some of the things that we have been finding and others have been finding that have an impact: mixed-use planning, for instance; good access to local destinations, because it is really important for people to be able to walk from A to B and have somewhere to walk to within a reasonable distance; and higher residential densities. We are not saying high residential densities; we are saying higher. I believe you heard from Professor Billie Giles-Corti today, and she has been doing some work with us around looking at the impact of density and public health, and what should be the optimum level. We feel that this is an important point.

Connectivity is another thing. You have to have street connectivity. We always love this top slide where you have the cyclist who is on his bike path and there is a big fence right in the middle of the bike path, so I do not know if he is somehow going to jump over that on his bike. But we are looking at that whole level of connectivity and reducing and minimising obstacles and avoiding the crossing of major roads and the impact.

Walking for recreation is a little bit different. People are looking more for attractiveness and aesthetics. They are looking more for the experience rather than necessarily walking from A to B, so it has slightly different design elements, I suppose, that we should be looking at. We feel that the built environment can either be an enabler or a barrier.

I am sorry this slide is a bit small, but it is to illustrate what I have been talking about. In Germany they actually did the ‘How fast must a granny run across the road, and what speed should they be going at?’ exercise. You might have experienced this yourself when you have been trying to cross a road and you have had to do the sprint and be an Olympic runner to get there. This is basically showing that if you are in Hamburg you need a 2.3 kilometres-per-hour speed to get across the road before the lights change, and in Kassel it is a 9.3-kilometre-per-hour speed. There is a whole issue of trying to break down the barriers for people walking, and some of our local councils are doing this already. You might have heard of the City of Port Phillip’s green light project. They have started to look at this issue of giving people more time to cross the road. This is something that people are looking at, but again it is a barrier. It seems simple.

It is the same with this kind of slide. Kids are walking across the road. What are they walking to? There is no pavement there. If you have got mums with prams, it is very difficult to walk on that terrain; if you have a mobility problem, it is difficult. If you have a nice entrance into the school, as you can see there in the slide on the right, you can see that the children are cycling in, and there are mums with prams and so forth, so this has obviously been a really supportive environment to get them to school. If you look at the one below on the left, it is not a very attractive place to get from A to B, there is not very good surveillance with those fences and it looks pretty unsafe to walk through. On the right you have all the features I have been talking about. You have bench space for people to stop and have a rest; you have some level of A to B; you have surveillance; and it is an aesthetically nice place to walk.

As I said, we are very interested in looking at the whole issue of food. In the built environment this is something that we know that local councils have not perhaps been thinking about, and there is a link here, and they are now starting to think about it with the work we have been doing with them. Again we feel we need to be

creating places that facilitate people's access to healthy fresh food, such as local strip shopping, and providing places for people to sell and celebrate foods. We are seeing farmers markets and community gardens, but only in some areas. It is not something that is across the board. We also feel that we need to be providing a variety of food retail and food service within easy access, both community and commercial; providing incentives for fresh food enterprises; even looking at how we can limit takeaway outlets; and allowing for varying shop frontages, so that we can have different sizes of shops to enable smaller businesses to have fresh food outlets but not with the major overheads so it makes it more viable for them — things that do not have to be huge changes but that will make a difference.

The last point is really around protecting high-quality agricultural land. We know that about 25 per cent of food in Victoria is produced within the urban growth boundary, and it would be such a shame to lose it — once that is gone, it has gone — and we feel we would like to be protecting that, because again it is about fresh food, and the further that food has to travel, the less nutritious it is.

This is a quote from Michelle Obama that highlights what I have been talking about: that if you only give people information and advice about healthy eating and exercise but parents cannot buy the food they need to prepare those meals because their only options for groceries are the gas station or the local mini-mart, then all that is just talk.

Just to finish off, as I said, a lot of the councils are doing some wonderful and terrific things in both the physical activity and the food space, but we feel that there is no mandate or legislative requirement to give them the permission to do this. So we really feel that, yes, there are certain things that can be done at the local level, but really we are strongly wanting to see some greater link between three key pieces of legislation — the Public Health and Wellbeing Act, the Transport Integration Act and the Planning and Environment Act. The Public Health and Wellbeing Act and the Transport Integration Act have got links. In transport you see health is integrated in there, and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act has now got planning entrenched in there, and we feel that the Planning and Environment Act has not got that yet. It does not have an objective around the fact that there should be a consideration of health. We feel it is a critical piece, and if we could see that intersect between those three pieces of legislation, that would be great. The inclusion of an explicit reference to health and wellbeing in the objectives of the planning act will then cascade down to the Victorian planning provisions and then provide better links to the local planning provisions at the local government level. We feel we need that legislative framework, I suppose, to enable and give permission for that at the local level.

What I have been saying is that high-quality, evidence-based, people-focused design is essential, so it should be about people, and environmental design is critical to ensuring that. If you were looking at a hypothesis, we are agreeing that there is a link.

**The CHAIR** — That was very good, so thank you very much. It also touched on a number of points that were made at the seminar at the planning institute eight weeks ago.

**Ms JOLLY** — Yes.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — One of the things you talked about in the submission was public open space for sporting activities, public open space for other structured activities and how many people are involved in walking for recreation, which is about 10 times the number of people who are involved in sporting, structured or team sports et cetera. We know there are a lot of ovals around, and one of our previous witnesses — I think it was the landscape architects — was talking about this issue as well, including how to better use those facilities. Could you give us your perspective and make some comments about that?

**Ms JOLLY** — We were just talking about that. I might get Rachel to tell you about this one. You have heard enough from me, and she can have a go now.

**Ms CARLISLE** — If you are looking at new subdivisions, where you have an opportunity to plan where your open space is, then having a variety of types of open space is really important. There is a big interest, particularly from football clubs, hockey clubs and what have you, in having ovals, and you can see there is a need for that. But I think the smaller spaces — places for people to just be tranquil, for people to take children and for through traffic, which might be a linear park — are all really important spaces for communities. There are some areas which have a variety of types of open space, but there is a dominance of talk about the need for

ovals and possibly not as much importance given to the need for these other smaller, but really critical, bits of open space to fulfil community needs.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — As well as having the two different types of space, I am interested in exploring how we can make better use of the ovals and pavilions.

**Ms CARLISLE** — There are some open space planners that have looked at corners of ovals to make sure the corners are multifunctional, and they have put in a play area or a barbecue area. Part of that is also dealing with the audience of the sport. There are possibilities there. The other thing is ensuring that there are pathways that will collect people who might want to go around the ovals. At times some might want to go through the ovals, so pathways are another option.

**Ms JOLLY** — The other thing we could do sometimes is to actually ask the community there what they would like from their park. We forget to find out what the community wants, and there are demographic changes over time in suburbs, as we all know.

I live in the city of Boroondara, where we have lots of open green space, but sometimes when you go to our local oval nobody is there. It is a wonderful open green space, but nobody is there. I went to a place in Carlton, a small park, but it was packed with people. I was trying to work out what it was that was different about the park we have at the end of our street and the park in Carlton. I think it is a number of things. Some are things that Rachel was talking about, such as access, but it is about providing for the community. Who is the community? There is a bocce rink at the Carlton park, and there was a group of Italian people playing bocce. There were children, a barbecue area, kicking a football and a variety of activities and recreational opportunities in that park. The ovals are much the same. You can do things around the edge of the park, and you can provide a variety of different playgrounds and equipment. For older people there are opportunities for them to do things like that, such as croquet, bocce or any of those sorts of things.

You can be quite creative, and perhaps we need to engage our community a bit better to determine what they might want from their park so that it becomes about ownership of their local park, rather than just — I am not saying this necessarily happens all the time — a recreational plan or someone in council determining what is the best thing for that park. I suppose it is about trying to build that sense of community so that people have a sense that it is their park and not the council's park.

**Mr ELSBURY** — I am following on from that question about parks and open space. In your submission you pointed out that participation on sports fields is about 3.5 per cent, meanwhile participation in unstructured activities like walking is about 35.8 per cent. Everyone wants a park; not many people are going after the footpaths.

Do you think there is also a correlation between the lack of people using sports facilities in a structured sporting way due to elements like public liability insurance? Only a few years ago public liability insurance became a huge issue. I know for a club I was with we once had sports going from Thursday night through to Saturday afternoon, and it was fantastic. We are now down to Saturday afternoon. We just cannot get the kids in because the costs went up so much.

Then if you try to have an informal sports activity, there have been instances when councils have actually come down on community groups who have formed around the kick of a football because it has become too regular, in their eyes, even though the oval is not being used at the times they are doing this. Do you think there is a need for some flexibility or some sort of legislative change that loosens up the public liability aspect of things? Sometimes people have to take responsibility for themselves in that, 'I have agreed to undertake this football game. I am going to wear protective gear where I can, but ultimately if I fall over and break my leg, I am just going to have to cop it, because I played the game'.

**Ms JOLLY** — It is interesting, although public liability is probably not my forte or Rachel's forte. I think the whole issue of risk is an interesting point. We have the same challenge with children. We see, for instance with children, that the level of organised sport has probably never been higher, but we still have overweight and obesity issues. What we are more concerned about is incidental activity, and what is coming out for such young children is that issue of not being able to have active play.

We have been working with landscape architects to look at the issue of play — that is, play spaces for children and how they are meeting the needs of all ages of children. There is that whole notion of active play. We are just so much more sedentary now. Organised sport is one component, and that is still there, but what we are losing is the incidental play. What you are saying is happening in schools as well. There is that risk of not being able to play ball in case the ball goes on the roof.

**Mr ELSBURY** — We could play full-contact football, but as soon as you tried to play full-contact rugby it was ‘no’. If you wanted to play full-contact gridiron, it was ‘no’. They only allowed football for some strange reason, and that was it.

**Ms CARLISLE** — In terms of what you are saying about a pitch and it being available for people to just kick around, which really it should be, I think is important to think about the fact that it is a public facility. It should be completely open in terms of a play space for people to kick around on, run around on or do whatever they are doing. A play space that attracts older children has to have an element of risk, as that is what older children need. We have a situation where — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — Is it risk or adventure, and are they necessarily consistent?

**Ms CARLISLE** — A major part of adventure is risk, I think. But the interesting thing is that in denying them the risks they need to grow and develop, we are actually risking them getting chronic diseases. Which risk is more prevalent?

**Mrs PEULICH** — Social media has a lot to answer for.

**Ms CARLISLE** — Yes.

**Ms JOLLY** — There are the ‘bubble wrap children’, as we are calling them now.

**Mrs PEULICH** — They are glued to Facebook.

**Mr ELSBURY** — I was about to say I have nieces and nephews. They go off and play their netball, football and all the other games they play, then they get home and go straight in front of the TV and play Xbox.

**Ms JOLLY** — The other issue that is rising now as a key is this issue of sedentary behaviour and this notion that you might go to the gym or go to sport and do it for an hour, half an hour or whatever it is and then you come home and you sit. That is actually shown to have great impact on chronic diseases. It is almost cancelling out what you have done.

**Mrs PEULICH** — The benefits.

**Ms JOLLY** — The benefits, exactly. We are not saying, ‘Do not do it’, but it is almost cancelling out the benefits. I know there has been quite a lot of work done by researchers who are looking at the diabetes issue, particularly because most of our work now is sedentary. We have a remote controls and things for everything.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — Look at us!

**Mr ELSBURY** — How long have we been sitting here?

**Ms JOLLY** — I do have a stand-up desk.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Is the vitamin D research that was published only two or three days ago in relation to diabetes — I have not looked at the details — something that has been accepted?

**Ms JOLLY** — Yes, it is all related because, again, we are indoors a lot more. That sedentariness is an emerging issue, not just being active.

**The CHAIR** — Is there some serious work being done in terms of children, particularly teenagers, who spend way too much time in front of computers and playing computer games?

**Mrs PEULICH** — And adults.

**The CHAIR** — And adults, but particularly I think there is a brand-new generation. If we think we have got issues — that is, that our generation has issues — the next generation is just going to be a living nightmare.

**Ms JOLLY** — They are saying what is being predicted now is that this next generation coming up will be the first generation that does not outlive their parents' ages. We are going to go backwards, because chronic disease problems are going to become greater and greater with some of these risks. If we do not start being more active and if we do not start having a healthy weight and all these things, then we are going to have major problems. We are starting to see that. With an ageing population, it is just going to get worse.

**The CHAIR** — Where is the research to back that up?

**Ms JOLLY** — We can give you that. We do not have it right here, but we can show you that.

**Ms CARLISLE** — We actually have a group at Deakin University doing some really groundbreaking research on exactly these issues. From an environmental design perspective, it is about where the invitation for people to be outside and active is. I mean that also in terms of active transport. Where is the invitation that would make them want to walk to school or allow them to walk to school? We need to have an environmental design that is inviting, alluring and a lovely place to be so that people feel safe and happy to be outside.

**Mr TEE** — I thank you for your submission, which has done the job for us by setting out a number of recommendations. I just want to — —

**Ms JOLLY** — There are a few there.

**Mr TEE** — There has been a consistency in terms of the evidence we have heard today about things like density and so on. I wanted to just have a look at how that firstly reflects stuff we are seeing from MAV, which provided us with a similar prescriptive outcome in terms of the sorts of things it wants to see. I suppose my question assumes that you support the sorts of things that it put forward in terms of making sure we locate things within 400 metres of each other, between which you can walk and that sort of thing. It is not in your submission, but I am assuming that you are supporting those sorts of walking environments or mandating the fact that you can walk to shops, schools and that sort of thing. That is very much at the heart of where you are at — —

**Ms JOLLY** — Absolutely.

**Mr TEE** — I suppose in terms of our recommendations and our capacity to get governments to act, it is about trying to implement and enforce those sorts of outcomes.

**Ms JOLLY** — We would support that. We did not necessarily put those facts and figures in, but there is now evidence from which we can get a bit of an idea of how far people are willing to walk — and the same with children — and what parents think is an optimum distance for children to walk. It is usually around 800 metres to 1 kilometre that parents are willing for their children to walk or that they think is about what they can cope with. It is interesting, because I think in terms of rural parents they actually walk further. They might be a bit soft in the city. We would agree, Rachel, would we not?

**Mrs PEULICH** — There goes all the theory about proximity!

**Ms JOLLY** — Yes.

**Mr TEE** — I am trying to drill down in terms of amendments, as it is an opportune time with the planning and environment act likely to be amended soon. Clearly you want to have that objective. I see that there. I would not mind just unpacking the other point, which was the alignment with the other legislation. What does that look like? I understand you want to align it, but — —

**Ms JOLLY** — It is kind of a reference.

**Mr TEE** — What is missing? Is it just a reference?

**Ms JOLLY** — I think it is the reference. It is more the reference. I am just trying to remember, Rachel — —

**Mr TEE** — It is not a rewrite; it is much simpler. It is a very broad recommendation. Is there a sharper way or a more focused point that you want to see through that?

**Ms CARLISLE** — Having shared objectives would be good. The integrated transport act obviously has health and wellbeing as one of its main objectives, which we were just so stunned to see — we thought it was fantastic — at an objective level. I also think the health and wellbeing act obviously has a focus on municipal health and wellbeing plans as being something that councils have an obligation to develop.

**Mr TEE** — Yes.

**Ms CARLISLE** — There could be some interaction with the municipal strategic statement, which comes under the planning portfolio. This could be linked, and in terms of the VPP there could be similar provisions that could be linked to good health outcomes. I think there is a body of work that needs to be done to look at how the planning act can also be a really supportive legislative instrument to help the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

**Mr TEE** — So the planning act would have the objective in it, while the plan, the VPP, would have the — —

**Ms JOLLY** — The detail.

**Mr TEE** — Density is another one.

**Ms CARLISLE** — Yes.

**Mr TEE** — But it would also have things like trying to ensure that everything is within walking distance, such as parks, schools and shops in terms of new suburbs. The municipal strategic statements are under the planning act, and then there are health and wellbeing plans and council plans.

**Ms JOLLY** — It is under health.

**Mr TEE** — And there is no connection between them. Does it matter, though, as long as one of them incorporates it?

**Ms CARLISLE** — No. I think they actually do need to link. At the moment the health and wellbeing plan — the municipal public health and wellbeing plan — can link to the community plan. That is enabled through the health and wellbeing act. But there is not a link with the municipal strategic statement, and we think those three should work in tandem together or the three of them together should consolidate what the council wants to do for public health and wellbeing.

**Mr TEE** — Just on the other suite of recommendations around fast food, we have all seen the graph and we have seen the density. It is difficult, I suspect, for government to define what is fast food and what is not fast food, and it is difficult to regulate when you should and should not have a fast-food restaurant. I am just wondering if there are any mechanisms out there that have been successful in making sure that fresh food is available. What role can government play in driving that change, and how can we reflect that in our recommendations?

**Ms JOLLY** — We were wondering whether there was a potential to explore this in terms of how liquor licensing laws work with liquor outlets. We have not explored it, but we thought that could be a possibility — that is, actually looking at whether we could do the same thing.

**Mrs PEULICH** — What do you mean?

**Ms JOLLY** — There are some definitions around takeaway or what I think are called ‘quick service’ restaurants. There is some form of definition that I think you could work with to define what they are.

**Mr TEE** — What you are saying is that that is something the government needs to have a further look at, rather than trying to deal with it now.

**Ms CARLISLE** — Yes. There is the instrument in the UK called Saturation Point, which is an attempt to do that from a planning perspective. It would be interesting to look at how that might work in Victoria, while

similarly looking at how you can stimulate more fresh fruit and vegetable outlets. In the fresh fruit financing initiative, which is an initiative that has been undertaken in Pennsylvania — I do not think it is mentioned in our submission — the state government actually stimulated the amount of retail floor space dedicated to fresh food and vegetable outlets or fresh fruit and vegetable supply. It has recently gone US wide. The fresh food financing initiative — FFFI — is the name of that program. So there are mechanisms that government can use to stimulate interest in health and wellbeing and really contribute to health and wellbeing things happening. That might be something that can be done from a state government perspective.

**Ms JOLLY** — We can provide that information if you are interested in that particular initiative.

**Mr TEE** — Yes. It is more about — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — Does anyone else get a chance to ask a question, Chair?

**The CHAIR** — He is just following through on the recommendations question.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Come on! I know he is writing his alternate policy, but this is ridiculous.

**Mr TEE** — I am just thinking about it from the perspective of us being required to come up with recommendations, and in terms of that I suspect it is probably outside our scope at this stage. It is something that maybe we can ask the government to consider and keep working on, but let us have a look at anything you have that would support that.

**Mrs PEULICH** — I represent an area that is very multicultural. It has a high refugee population, and there are those who have lived in refugee camps for most of their lives and have no idea how to prepare food, how to shop or how to deal with money. Do you have a view about what we can do to get a healthy message out to them, before we ask governments to start stimulating the availability of local produce?

That is no. 1. No. 2, I am particularly sympathetic towards time-deprived families, or time-short families, especially working families and those who travel long distances because they are in the outer suburbs, where they are obviously less affluent. There is a high proliferation of fast-food outlets out there, probably in most instances because they have less time to prepare food. So is it the chicken or the egg? You are going to regulate that, or you are proposing that the number of fast-food outlets be regulated for a population that is particularly time short because they are travelling further.

In the city of Casey 95 per cent of people travel outside the municipality to work. Children end up having to be driven outside the municipality to go to school, as they have not got the infrastructure. I think it is actually a bit tough to say or to infer that somehow fast food is the problem when in actual fact it is their conditions and the fact that they are so time poor that I see as a critical problem. Do you have a view as to how that can be overcome?

**Ms CARLISLE** — I suppose what we are saying is not that you cannot have locations to pick up food that is fresh and good. It is not saying there should be no food service or restaurants you can get takeaway from, but it is just about the quality of it. Takeaways, just generally, are supposed to be junk food. What we are trying to say is that we want the quality to be improved and for there to be more options to buy fresh food, that is not processed and fat laden.

**Mrs PEULICH** — If there is a deficiency in fresh food outlets, have you done a survey to find out where there are high numbers of fast-food outlets?

**Ms CARLISLE** — What tends to be the case is that there is two and a half times the number of fast-food outlets in lower SES areas, which means — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — I understand that, but is there a deficiency in fresh foods?

**Ms JOLLY** — Deakin has done some work in this area.

**Ms CARLISLE** — It does tend to happen that there is a deficiency in fresh food outlets.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Can you point to some examples?

**Ms CARLISLE** — I do not have an example, but the research that they were doing was looking at fresh fruit and vegetable outlets and supermarkets. It was not to do with food service but more to do with access to retail. What they found was that there were less fruit and vegetables outlets in lower SES areas. I cannot remember how many of the Victorian council areas that was, but it was a considerable number of them.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Are we able to get a copy of that research?

**Ms CARLISLE** — Yes, you can.

**Mrs PEULICH** — That would be good.

**Ms JOLLY** — I was just going to answer your question about — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — Multicultural families?

**Ms JOLLY** — Yes. I think the other thing we have not picked up is the issue of food insecurity. I know it is a bit of a technical term, but that is something that is becoming a growing problem in Victoria, and there is some data. The Victorian population health survey shows that a number of people now — 1 in 20, I think — are unable to afford food. The other thing we are really interested in is that whole notion of ensuring that we can actually provide culturally appropriate food for people who do not get access. Sometimes takeaway outlets, for instance, do not provide culturally appropriate, familiar food to the communities you are talking about. It is about getting that balance. As Rachel said, we are not saying, 'Down on food'. It does not relate to environmental design, but what the Heart Foundation does very strongly is work with the food industry to try to reformulate food so that there is equitable, better food in the food supply. We are working on that area as well.

**Mrs PEULICH** — I am always interested in educating first and then looking at legislation when there are no other options, rather than looking at it as the first option. I would appreciate your comments in relation to, say, families. I know local primary schools in my area have resorted to teaching adults how to prepare food. You did not make a comment in relation to those — —

**Ms JOLLY** — Education is an absolutely key point, and the whole issue of literacy is really key. I do not think it is either/or; I think it is a combination of all. I do not think we are saying you only do that — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — No, but you were looking at the harsher options first, rather than addressing some of the obvious gaping holes.

**Ms CARLISLE** — Yes. I suppose it is about having public health nutritionists and community nutritionists who are working away very diligently and supporting them in what they are doing.

**The CHAIR** — Would you consider the mandatory requirements — or going down that road, with the education aspects complementing it — a harsh way of going about improving the situation?

**Ms CARLISLE** — I think that the example from the UK, which was called Saturation Point, was mainly implemented because they had such an increase in childhood obesity, and they could see that if children were obese, they were going to be obese adults. There are going to be all sorts of chronic disease implications and they felt they needed to do something to curtail the number of takeaway outlets, so they decided on a planning mechanism. It was really through actual concern for public health that they did that.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — Just very quickly in relation what you talk about in appendix A — that is, reducing the speed limit on roads down to 30 kilometres per hour — you very usefully got that summary in the pack from the Safe Speed Interest Group research. I have been reading recently that young adults are owning and using motor vehicles less frequently than previous cohorts. I have heard some evidence from the United States; Richard Florida, in particular, talks about that in his most recent book. I do not know if you are aware of any research in Australia —

**Ms JOLLY** — No.

**Ms CARLISLE** — No. We will have to have a look.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — It is very positive. I was listening to the ABC, and while they did not really know the reasons for this, one of the reasons that was suggested was that maybe young people like sitting on public transport because they can use their iPads and get on with their lives instead of being occupied with driving. I do not know if you have heard that. That is just one area, but it is an interesting offshoot around motor vehicles.

What I wanted to ask — and I think it is picked up here, but I will ask you to talk to it anyway — is: with these calming mechanisms, how is the proposal for 30 kilometres an hour in built-up areas travelling?

**Mr ELSBURY** — Slowly.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — Is it going to be successful, and what is the relationship between that and traffic congestion? The third bit of it is: what other road-calming approaches do you think might be workable?

**Ms CARLISLE** — I think the thing is that it has been really well implemented in many countries. In Germany it has been about 20 years since they introduced 30 kilometres per hour. In the UK ‘20’s plenty’ is in place across a lot of residential areas, so it is highly adopted. It is a very tried-and-tested thing, and I think that, comparatively speaking, Australia has quite high road speeds.

What we are looking at is residential areas — for example, neighbourhood areas, strip shopping and around major trip generators. For instance, universities, hospitals and schools should be 30 kilometres per hour, which is the safe speed for human interaction. If we are expecting humans to be on the streets, as a civilised society we should provide a traffic interaction that is safe for them. We think it is not going to happen overnight, but we would hope that in the next few years it will be achievable. In the city of Yarra, for instance, they now have about 83 per cent of their residential neighbourhoods down to 40 kilometres per hour, so that is some fantastic progress. There are other councils looking to do that.

**Mrs PEULICH** — My residents in Cranbourne would never get home.

**Ms CARLISLE** — It is not the arterials or the freeways; it is only when you go through residential areas.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — It is only when they turn off.

**Mrs PEULICH** — You are assuming a good connecting road.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — That is one part of our approach. Are there others that are useful?

**Ms CARLISLE** — There are ways of doing it without posting speed — for example, you can do treatments. I am not necessarily talking about humps, but you can push the pavement out into the street. The bulbing of pavements is a very interesting option. There has been a recent pilot in Auckland, New Zealand, where they have rolled out pavement bulbing, and they have put really interesting public art there. They have made play spaces on these bulbing areas, and it has really made the streets very vibrant.

The other one, which has recently come from Norfolk in England, is planting trees. They found that planting trees down the sides of streets automatically slows cars down because they are not as confident with their peripheral vision, so they drive a bit more safely and slowly. There are treatments that can be done, and at the moment in the Safe Speed Interest Group we are looking at how that might be done in a way that would mean that as many councils as possible could replicate those treatments — in other words, not super expensive. We are looking at what options there might be, but we have not got a conclusion yet.

**Ms JOLLY** — There are actually even more creative things that some communities have done when they have wanted to identify that it is a family street or a street with lots of children. They have painted their letterboxes in a colour and basically implied that it is a children’s street, and just doing that has slowed the traffic down. You can also have more activity in your front yard or on your nature strip so that people see that you are being active in your front yard, rather than everything going on out the back.

**Mr ELSBURY** — My daughter puts chalk all over the driveway.

**Ms JOLLY** — There are some interesting ways that you can do it without putting up a sign that says it has to be 30 kilometres an hour. There are different things.

**Mrs PEULICH** — In relation to tree planting — and I have read some of that stuff — there are recommendations about the types of trees. Obviously if there are prunus trees they do not have the same visual impact in terms of slowing traffic. It has to be decently sized vegetation.

**Ms JOLLY** — I think we have made it really easy because we have tried to have many things that are not in people's vision, so people think, 'I can go straight ahead and don't have to think about it'.

**Ms CARLISLE** — And go fast. We have been focusing on what the car flow needs rather than what the community needs.

**Mrs PEULICH** — I think they just rip them up because they lift the concrete; that is why.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — Following on from that, I have a great interest in this. We were talking before with Bicycle Victoria about routes that are alternatives to putting bikes on arterial roads — for example, using the next street back, which pretty well follows the arterial road but is not the arterial road, as the cycle street and that sort of thing. In terms of getting people into the streets, walking and cycling, if you use calming measures such as reducing speed limits to 30 kilometres an hour, putting trees in, pumps and what is happening in Auckland, as you mentioned, I think one of the spin-offs — I am not sure whether there is much evidence on this, but you might know — is that it makes it more inconvenient to use the car. We know that many car trips are less than 3 kilometres, and they get the car out because it is pretty easy to zoom up the street. If it is not really convenient to zoom up the street and will take you longer to go around this, across that and everything, then you might say, 'I might as well walk or get on the bike'. Is there any evidence you can point to about that?

**Ms JOLLY** — I think that is part of the planning issues as well. Some of our older residential — what do you call them? — estates, I suppose, have very much the cul-de-sac look and feel about them with no connectivity. That was very much not thinking about being able to make a walking or cycling trip easier; it was more about it being okay for the car. I think you are right. We have to flip it a bit and look at it from a walking and cycling perspective first and then perhaps from a car perspective second. I think that is the issue.

In some of the European countries we were talking about it is far more difficult to get in the car, whereas here it is actually easier for a lot of people. There are more barriers and obstacles to walking and cycling than there are to getting in the car, so I think we have to flip that. I think that picks up your other point about getting from A to B. We are probably talking about these short trips being the things we can work on first, not the long trips from home to work. It is more about the local trips.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Neighbourhood trips.

**Ms JOLLY** — It is about the neighbourhood trips for which people are still getting in the car, as you said, whether it is to the school, the shops, their neighbours or wherever. I think that is an area where we could start to get some wins on the board.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — And not having to fight in the supermarket car park.

**The CHAIR** — That is right. Thank you again. That was a great presentation. We have come to rely on the Heart Foundation for lots of really good advice, and I am sure that a lot of what you have put to us today will be thoroughly examined by the committee in its deliberations.

**Committee adjourned.**