

CORRECTED VERSION

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LAND DEVELOPMENT

Melbourne — 22 May 2008

Members

Mr D. Davis

Mr P. Hall

Mr P. Kavanagh

Mr E. O'Donohue

Ms S. Pennicuik

Mr B. Tee

Mr E. Thornley

Chair: Mr D. Davis

Deputy Chair: Mr B. Tee

Staff

Secretary: Mr R. Willis

Research Officer: Mr A. Walsh

Witnesses

Mr J. Madden, Minister for Planning,

Mr Y. Blacher, secretary,

Ms G. Overell, acting executive director, planning, policy and reform, Department of Planning and Community Development.

The CHAIR — I declare open this public hearing of Legislative Council Select Committee on Public Land Development. Today's hearings are in relation to the sale and development of public land. In particular I welcome the minister, the department's secretary and Ms Overell. All the 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 standing orders. Any comment you make outside the hearing may not be afforded such privilege. Witnesses will be provided with proof versions of the transcript in the next few days. If I can ask the minister to make a brief opening statement and then we will follow with questions. If I preface that by saying that there really is an extraordinary amount of material we want to cover. I put on record at this point that we may need to see you again at some point to cover the many issues and locations.

Mr MADDEN — Thank you very much, Chair.

The CHAIR — You are welcome.

Mr MADDEN — I appreciate this opportunity to present today. I am happy to discuss many of the issues that no doubt you may have an interest in. I also acknowledge that there are a significant number of people here to hear what I have to say in relation to these matters as well.

I am the Minister for Planning, as you are aware. I commenced as Minister for Planning on 1 December 2006. I attend before the select committee in my capacity as a minister of the Crown. On 26 April 2008 I received a letter from the committee, inviting me to attend this hearing and give evidence in relation to the role of my department and the role as minister in broad public land development issues and evidence received to date by the committee with respect to Melbourne 2030 and green wedges policy.

In giving evidence today I have regard to letters to me from the Attorney-General, dated 15 November 2007 and 23 November 2007, attaching copies of letters from the Attorney-General to the secretary of my department. In the letters to the secretary, the Attorney-General referred to the discussion that had been taking place between himself and the committee on the scope of the committee's terms of reference. I accept the interpretation of the terms and reference as outlined by the Attorney-General in that correspondence.

In order to understand the government's policy regarding the sale and alienation of public land it is beneficial to put in context how Crown land as a whole is dealt with. Crown land includes both public land and government land. The distinction between public land and government land is found in an agreement made in 1988 between the then Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands and the then Minister for Property and Services. This agreement gave effect to an order, the 1988 administrative arrangements order, which gave responsibility for the sale and alienation of Crown land under the Land Act 1958 to the Minister for Property and Services. Under an agreement between the two relevant ministers, as required then by the Premier, the 1988 administrative arrangements order provides that 'public land' is land with public importance which cannot be sold and 'government land' is land which can be sold. I understand that this distinction between public land and government land has been the basis of all government practice in relation to the sale and management of all Crown land since 1988. I note that the committee's terms of reference are confined only to public land but also to such land when it is both the subject of sale or alienation, and when such sale or alienation is coupled with or for the purposes of development.

As Minister for Planning, it is appropriate for me to provide information to the committee with respect to matters that fall within my portfolio responsibilities. My portfolio responsibilities include long-term planning for Victoria, overseeing the regulatory framework of planning, building policy, land development and forecasting, heritage, planning for housing and new communities. I am responsible for the planning system in Victoria. This system allows some types of use and development to occur on public land, subject to the requirements of relevant planning schemes. Public land across Victoria is protected by legislation and by planning schemes.

In terms of the government policy relating to the sale of land and all purchases, compulsory acquisitions and sales of land in excess of \$250 000 undertaken by the government are subject to compliance with government policy, titled 'Government Policy and Instructions for the Purchase, Compulsory Acquisition and Sale of Land'. This is a policy that all government agencies and authorities must comply with in employing a consistent, best practice approach to their property transactions. I understand the Department of Treasury and Finance in its written submission has forwarded the committee a copy of this policy.

The government land monitor is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to. The policy generally requires that the sale of land be through a public process after it is established that no other state government agencies require the land. It is an important element of the policy that the land is rezoned to the appropriate alternate zone prior to sale. Sales can occur to councils and the commonwealth where they require land for public purpose. Private treaty sales can occur where legislation permits or in exceptional circumstances. The sales bulletin board aids the process by providing a means by which state government agencies can communicate to each other the availability of surplus land. In conclusion, government land sales are subject to appropriate probity processes by the government land monitor and are ultimately subject to further scrutiny from the Auditor-General should any wrongdoing be alleged in the conduct of these sales.

As noted by the committee, I am also responsible for Melbourne 2030 and green wedges. I do not intend to repeat the detailed evidence already provided to the committee by the secretary of my department concerning the policy and principles underlying Melbourne 2030 and the green wedges. Nevertheless, the committee members should be aware that in 2006 the government announced an audit of Melbourne 2030. This was consistent with the government's commitment to keep Melbourne 2030 up to date. The audit has involved local government, the development industry, key stakeholders and the community. My role was to oversee the 2030 audit process.

In June 2007 I announced the appointment of a four-member, independent audit expert group to provide advice to the government on the effective implementation of Melbourne 2030. The expert group found the fundamental principles underpinning Melbourne 2030 to be more relevant than ever due to the pressure of increased population growth, transport congestion, housing affordability and climate change. That expert group stressed the urgency to implement the many initiatives of Melbourne 2030 if Melbourne's development is to be sustainable and the city to remain livable.

The government welcomes the report of the expert group and has responded by releasing the government's response *Planning for All of Melbourne*. The government has broadly accepted the advice of the Melbourne 2030 expert group in four key areas, namely planning for all of Melbourne; transport, managing congestion; environmental sustainability and climate change; and managing urban growth and change. The government will move forward with new policies to meet the challenges of climate change, population growth, transport congestion, housing affordability, and focus our attention on developing a new planning partnership with clearer state and local government responsibilities, increasing state government resourcing and coordination of implementation, establishing clear requirements for the amount and diversity of housing growth in each metropolitan municipality, improve activity centre planning and more effective community and stakeholder engagement, planning for longer term growth. As noted by the *Planning for All of Melbourne* report, the state budget builds on the government's substantial investment in sustainability with over \$1.6 billion of initiatives to strengthen our planning agenda and deliver on our infrastructure service commitments.

As Minister for Planning, I am the lead minister for the implementation of the green wedge policy as set out in Melbourne 2030. The committee should be aware that the green wedges cover an area in the order of, I understand, 646 173 hectares. Of this, approximately 34 per cent is classified as Crown land, and the majority of the Crown land is within the Yarra Valley, Yarra and Dandenong Ranges green wedges. Green wedges are used for a wide variety of purposes such as agriculture, tourism, industry, critical infrastructure that supports urban areas.

On the green wedges, the expert group said that despite the success of many of the planning provisions in relevant legislation in protecting the green wedges, there are major challenges to the future of these areas. The expert group recommended the state government give higher priority to enhancing the contribution of green wedges to the sustainability and livability of Melbourne by implementing green wedge management plans, developing appropriate incentives and programs to assist landowners to manage and maintain this important resource, and ensuring that tourism and recreation developments in green wedges are only approved where they support Melbourne 2030.

With respect to the green wedges, the government will allocate additional resources to complete the 12 green wedge management plans. An additional \$700 000 over two years was provided in the 2008–09 state budget, and I will continue to ensure that the planning scheme controls deliver the intent of the green wedge policy. It is anticipated that aspects of the green wedge management plan will be included or referenced in the local planning policy framework of planning schemes and will provide the strategic basis for reviewing existing planning provisions of the green wedges. Any proposed change to the planning scheme will require a planning scheme amendment, which requires my authorisation to prepare, and it normally requires my approval. Legislative

protection of green wedge land is provided for under the Planning Environment Act 1987 part 3AA 'metropolitan green wedge protection'. This concludes my witness statement, and I am happy now to take any questions.

The CHAIR — Minister, thank you for your statement. It will come as no surprise to you, and I am sure you are well aware of this, that the committee has resolved its definition of public land as it is entitled to do under the standing orders of the Legislative Council.

Mr TEE — Not unanimously.

The CHAIR — In fact the committee did resolve at a meeting to accept the following definition:

That 'public land' refers broadly to the generally accepted dictionary definition of public land and is not limited by any legislative or administrative arrangements order.

It noted that it is not limited to but includes Crown land, land vested in or owned by a minister, government department, statutory authority, public authority or municipal council and land otherwise used for a public purpose. This has been backed up by every witness except government witnesses, and including by the MAV, when Ms Johnstone said to us:

From the previous discussion it was quite clear that the MAV would see the definition of public land as broad. We would see it as a broad definition because, from a community perspective, they are not ... concerned about which level of government or which piece of legislation ...

In that context I want to ask you about the government's decision to nobble the inquiry. The inquiry, as you will be aware, has had a lot of correspondence from the Attorney-General. I will pass that over to the minister

Mr MADDEN — Have you got another one, Chair? It just slipped through the gap in the table.

The CHAIR — Perhaps I should have made a paper plane of it, but no.

Mr MADDEN — Thank you very much.

The CHAIR — I note that on 4 September 2006 Walker Corporation, the successful tenderer at Kew Cottages, made a donation of \$100 000 to the Victorian branch of the Australian Labor Party. On 27 October 2006, within weeks, there was a secret multimillion-dollar contract signed with Walker Corporation for the 27 hectare site at Kew. At the time the planning minister, your predecessor, was Rob Hulls — he is now the Deputy Premier — and he is the one who has led the charge from the government level to narrow the committee's terms of reference, to narrow the committee's activities. I believe that the minister has attempted to nobble this inquiry because, in fact, this donation has corruptly succeeded in buying some improper influence with the then Bracks government and now with the Brumby government.

Mr TEE — Rubbish!

The CHAIR — I would ask you, Minister, was this donation used to improperly influence the then planning minister?

Mr MADDEN — Chair, there are a number of issues I would like to respond to there. First of all, as I mentioned in my initial statement, I have only been the planning minister for a period of 18 months.

The CHAIR — You were a cabinet minister at the time.

Mr MADDEN — I would also like to make comment in relation to any donations that are made to political parties — your party, our party, any other parties here at the table. My understanding is that those donations are made to those head offices; they do not come via members of Parliament, I understand, and I am sure that that has not been the case in your circumstance either. Can I also say that in relation to any of those allegations and your concerns about trying to link either a political donation from any group to any other members of Parliament — —

The CHAIR — Within weeks.

Mr TEE — Can he answer the question?

Mr MADDEN — I think you should put those concerns to those particular individuals. In this instance, as I have mentioned before, my role is as planning minister. I undertake that with due consideration with the responsibilities that I have. I am not influenced, under any circumstances, by anybody other than the experts who provide me with information or the advice that is provided to me by the department that is fearless and frank advice and I consider those as part of the due process; I take that advice and make those determinations accordingly. I must make it particularly clear: in no way am I influenced by anybody that shows an interest in any political party — yours or mine — in relation to the decisions that I make in relation to the planning process.

The CHAIR — Minister, you were a cabinet minister at the time, but the then Attorney-General, now Deputy Premier, made this extraordinary award to Walker Corporation — a multimillion-dollar award — within weeks of them having made this donation. We know also from earlier evidence this committee has heard that former Senator Graeme Richardson was active in lobbying the Labor Party and various ministers at that time. We know also that you have met — —

Mr TEE — No. That was not the evidence we had at all. There was no evidence that he had been lobbying anyone.

The CHAIR — We know also, Minister, that you have met with former Senator Graeme Richardson. I understand that you have indicated to a number of groups that you have not met in an official capacity. I wonder if you could indicate to the committee what meetings you have had with former Senator Graeme Richardson and in what capacity those meetings took place?

Mr MADDEN — There are a number of issues there. Of course, first of all in relation to any of these matters about developments, there are probity checks in relation to all of these matters. The land monitor oversees those probity arrangements in relation to disposal of any land that comes up for sale; and if there are any allegations of impropriety, then the Auditor-General can also pursue those, as I have already mentioned.

The CHAIR — You could order an inquiry into it. You could order a review of the process.

Mr TEE — Let him answer the question.

Mr MADDEN — Just let me finish the answer to your question please, Chair. There is certainly the ability for those matters to be probity checked through a number of checks and balances throughout that process. The only instance where I have met with former Senator Graeme Richardson was some years ago, prior to becoming planning minister, in a circumstance where you might meet — —

The CHAIR — You were a minister at the time?

Mr MADDEN — I was the sports minister at the time, but as might be the case as you might meet, say, the likes of Malcolm Fraser or you might meet the likes of any other former politician — —

The CHAIR — Brian Bourke, you might meet, or someone like that. That is the category Mr Richardson is in. He is a disgrace — —

Mr TEE — Can he answer the question? Give him a chance.

Mr MADDEN — Do you want to listen to my answer, Chair, or not?

The CHAIR — I do.

Mr MADDEN — In the same way that you might meet an individual in the circumstances around party functions, where you come into contact with those individuals or those conversations that take place, they are the circumstances in which I have met Senator Richardson and I have only met him once and in no way did it — —

The CHAIR — Did he lobby you at the time?

Mr MADDEN — In no way was he lobbying me, and in no way were there any discussions in relation to any matters about anything other than, I suppose, the internal machinations of party politics, as I have no doubt your party has often undertaken conversations on, I would expect.

The CHAIR — So he is a power broker, I think is what they call him? A disgraced one.

Mr MADDEN — Can I just say, Mr Davis, that your accusations are unsubstantiated in any way. The one time I had met with him was to meet with him for the first time and to introduce him — —

The CHAIR — When was that?

Mr MADDEN — Some years ago.

The CHAIR — When?

Mr MADDEN — Basically that was, in a sense, a conversation, to chat to him about party-political matters, but in no way did it involve any matters in relation to any organisations or anything other than the items that I have mentioned. In no way were they influencing any decisions of government. They bore no relationship to any matters that you have mentioned today.

The CHAIR — At the time that the Kew Cottages decision was made by then planning minister Rob Hulls, Graham Richardson was also meeting, as I understand it — and certainly the evidence that we have had suggests this very strongly — with certain officials in the department. Are you aware of that?

Mr TEE — We have not had any evidence to that effect.

Mr MADDEN — Mr Davis, can I just make this perfectly clear: at the time of all these dates and all these conspiracy theories that you might have, I was sports minister and Commonwealth Games minister at that time. My involvement was running around dealing with sporting groups, dealing with sports policy and dealing with decisions — —

The CHAIR — The games village, for example.

Mr MADDEN — And dealing with government in relation to matters of sport and the Commonwealth Games. It was a very busy time in relation to that.

Mr TEE — And successful.

Mr MADDEN — Yes, it was a very successful Commonwealth Games. But in no way have I dealt with any of these matters that you raise today in your conspiracy theories around any of these projects.

The CHAIR — I am certainly very concerned about the juxtaposition of the decision and the donation to the Labor Party. I am very concerned about the impact of former Senator Graham Richardson on the probity of the process. I would ask you whether you would consider reviewing the process by which the Kew Cottages contract was awarded.

Mr MADDEN — Can I just make this point, too, Mr Davis, that in relation to any of these projects in relation to the sale of land that involves government, there are a number of checks and balances. The most important in particular is the land monitor.

The CHAIR — For which you are responsible.

Mr MADDEN — Yes, and the land monitor's responsibility is to oversee that and provide me with the advice to say that all the probity mechanisms have been complied with. It provides me with guarantees that the probity process has been followed. If anybody decides that those probity processes have not been dealt with in accordance with stated government policy on the procedures of the land monitor, then they are entitled to raise that with the Auditor-General and seek to have the Auditor-General investigate that. So we have a number of checks and balances in relation to that. We are very committed to make sure we comply with all those probity requirements. Hence the role of the land monitor to ensure and provide the planning minister with advice that those probity checks have been complied with. Can I just also just make this point too, Mr Davis: that advice is also provided to me via the department. So it comes from the land monitor, through the department, to me.

The CHAIR — The same people who were being lobbied by Graham Richardson?

Mr TEE — There is no evidence of that.

Mr MADDEN — You can make any sort of accusation you want, but the probity checks have been done, the policy has been — —

The CHAIR — Will you release the probity audit if you will not inquire into it?

Mr MADDEN — The probity checks have been done.

The CHAIR — Will you release the probity audit?

Mr MADDEN — Can I finish my answer, Mr Davis? The compliance has been followed. And if you have any concerns in relation to this matter, you can write to the Auditor-General and ask him to investigate.

The CHAIR — I am asking you as minister responsible for the land monitor whether you will in either inquire into this or whether — —

Mr TEE — There are five of us here. Can the rest of us get a question?

The CHAIR — You will; you will get your turn.

Mr TEE — You have taken up half an hour on this one issue.

The CHAIR — Or will you be prepared to release the probity audits around Kew Cottages?

Mr MADDEN — I would have to take advice on that, Mr Davis. I am happy to take that question on notice.

The CHAIR — Mr Tee?

Mr TEE — Thank you very much, finally! Minister, you talked about the audit that had occurred in relation to Melbourne 2030 and the government's response to that audit. I am wondering how the government's response to the Melbourne 2030 audit will support green wedge policy and maintain public open space.

Mr MADDEN — There are certainly a number of issues in relation to green wedge policy. That sits alongside the urban growth boundary. It is important to note that they sit together. If you adjust one, no doubt you have to adjust the other.

In note also, Mr Tee, that in relation to urban growth boundary policy, the opposition Treasury spokesperson, Kim Wells, has placed on record his commitment to have the urban growth boundary dismantled. I think that stands in stark contrast to our government, which has a record for establishing green wedges, establishing the urban growth boundary and monitoring those, with a commitment to see those managed. That stands in stark contrast to the Liberal Party's position on these matters where it has on record committed itself to dismantling the urban growth boundary in the future.

My understanding is that that policy position stated by Kim Wells sits on record and remains on record and remains a policy commitment of the Liberal opposition. I assume that it is also the position of The Nationals as well, given that it is in coalition with the Liberal Party in relation to green wedges. It would like to see the urban growth boundaries dismantled, and basically a free-for-all right across those areas.

In terms of the 2030 audit, that is concluded. I released the government response yesterday, called *Planning for All of Melbourne*. The audit consisted first of all of a stocktake of recent trends, the 2006 census information and the report of the audit expert group chaired by Professor Rob Moodie. The independent expert group found that the fundamental principles underpinning Melbourne 2030 to be more relevant than ever due to the pressures of population growth, transport congestion, housing affordability and climate change. *Planning for All of Melbourne* addresses these challenges and sets out a framework for action over the next five years.

As noted, the state budget builds on the government's substantial investment in sustainability, with over \$1.6 billion of initiatives to strengthen our planning agenda and deliver on our infrastructure and service commitments. The government's response reiterates our commitment to green wedges policy, including the allocation of an additional \$700 000 over two years to the completion of 12 green wedge management plans. *Planning for All of Melbourne* also includes a commitment to direct the Growth Areas Authority, working with

councils and state agencies, to develop open space plans for each growth area, including the opportunity for multiple uses of undeveloped land.

Overarching open space plans for each growth area will inform precinct structure plans — so the master planning — and will assist in ensuring provision is made for different types of open space needs in the most efficient manner. They include passive recreation, including cycling and walking trails; active recreation, including ovals for organised sport; making the most of waterways in growth areas; and opportunities to link remnant areas of native vegetation via the open space network, thus improving biodiversity outcomes. *Planning for All of Melbourne* is a landmark step, Mr Davis, in the government's ongoing work to manage growth and ensure that Melbourne remains one of the world's most livable capital cities. I go back to my initial point, which is we are committed to green wedges and the urban growth boundary. I note, and I would like the committee to note, that we know that the opposition is eager to dismantle the urban growth boundary.

The CHAIR — Nonsense.

Mr MADDEN — It is eager to see the green wedges eaten into. That remains as a stated policy position, as stated by Kim Wells.

The CHAIR — You have eaten into green wedges.

Mr TEE — That is what Mr Wells said.

Minister, the other issue that I want to touch on was the sale of public land. I am wondering if you could compare current practice with that which occurred in the early 90s?

Mr MADDEN — There are a number of issues there in relation to the way in which we as a government deal with basically land and land sales and, certainly if we go back to the 1990s, particularly the way in which those have been dealt with. As I have mentioned before, we are very committed to probity to make sure that there are checks and balances and to make sure that we can all have confidence in that, to make sure that there is sufficient transparency in relation to those matters no matter what — —

Mr O'DONOHUE — On a point of order, Chair, the minister is reading an answer, word for word. I ask that he table the document.

Mr TEE — I think he is looking for his answer in his documents.

Mr MADDEN — Mr O'Donohue, I think I might have been looking for the written answer, but I was not reading from a written answer. I am happy to provide you with any answers that you might wish to be provided with.

The CHAIR — Do you want to make that available?

Mr MADDEN — But if you let me answer the question, then you may or may not need it. Just let me answer the question first of all, Chair.

The CHAIR — Do you want to provide it?

Mr MADDEN — First of all, I make the point that we are committed to accountability, consistency and transparency in relation to these matters, particularly in terms of the administrative processes of public land management. I also make the point that that sets us well apart from Liberal governments that have been in this state — certainly the most recent Liberal government under the Kennett government — and what is particularly critical there, and I would like to remind the committee here, that the Liberal government sold over 300 schools. Those 300 schools were sold when the Liberal and National parties coalition was last in power.

The CHAIR — How many have you sold?

Mr MADDEN — Can I also remind you, Chair, that Ted Baillieu as the Liberal Party president supported those closures. At the time he was president of the Liberal Party and he no doubt supported those. Furthermore, his company — it was his company — that got the key contract to sell many of those schools. Baillieu Knight Frank won the contract to sell 48 of the schools, and Mr Baillieu himself has admitted to having a financial interest.

The CHAIR — Are you going to table that document?

Mr TEE — I am trying to listen to the question and the answer.

Mr MADDEN — In the parent company of the agency Baillieu Knight Frank — and Victorians deserve to know the truth about Mr Baillieu's role in the school closures. I also say, Chair, Mr Baillieu has been asked on countless occasions what his role was, and not once has he admitted to his direct link in the school sell-offs.

The CHAIR — I think this is beginning to stray. It is straying a long way.

Ms PENNICUIK — I think so, too, Chair.

Mr MADDEN — If this committee wishes to have a debate about the sale or alienation of government land, then it should take into account its own history. It should take into account the record of not just the present government but the previous government. I would ask that you consider that in the light of your questions here today.

Mr O'DONOHUE — Minister, you announced the new committees for activity centres and that those committees will have five members — three from the government and two from local government. How will those government members be appointed?

Mr MADDEN — Let me correct you first of all, Mr O'Donohue. Your facts are wrong. As I have mentioned, and I have made it quite public, there will be five members: two will be representatives from the specific local government in which a project proposal may or may not be undertaken; the other two will be representatives of state government; and the fifth member will be an independent Chair, and that member will be appointed through consultation with the MAV and the respective other members on those development assessment committees. Your first comments in relation to the weighting of those committees is incorrect. I wanted to make that perfectly clear. What is critical here is that on those committees those people from local government can be either councillors or officers and those members can be nominated by the respective council in which a proposal may take place. An independent chair, as I said, would be appointed in conjunction with the MAV. So they could arbitrate on who that independent person should be so that both sides are relatively comfortable with that individual, but the MAV would be the main determinant of that individual. The other two, I expect, would be planning experts of some sort representing the state government. This would give us an objective manner of assessing projects. Also what is critical here is ensuring that the respective clarity around the policy and the zoning would be basically determined by local governments. We are not taking away any powers — and I know that you would like to make that case — but we are clarifying the difference between — —

The CHAIR — Nonsense. You are stripping the powers.

Mr TEE — He is answering the question.

Mr MADDEN — We are clarifying a specific difference between policy and decision-making. The critical issue here is that it will give clarity. Also no doubt there will be a need to give clarity to those zones where decisions need to be made. That means that there are checks and balances. I look forward, and I have made that commitment publicly, to working with local governments and communities. One of the other major comments made in the 2030 audit was that we need to have strong stakeholder engagement, community engagement and involvement in determining what happens in the community. Let us put the controls in place and let us have objective decision-making through this process through the development of assessment committees. What is critical is to do the initial work. I am very eager to work with councils to reflect what should happen in those communities with the support of those communities. At the moment there is some ambiguity in relation to what can and cannot happen. Often there is an argument at the council chamber, or councils may not make a decision; it ends up at VCAT and they seek to clear if there is not clarity — —

The CHAIR — They are trying to kill local government — that is what it is.

Mr TEE — Hang on. If you do not want the answer, then do not ask the question.

Mr MADDEN — If there is not the clarity, then VCAT tries to make the decision clarifying that.

Ms PENNICUIK — It is just a policy speech, Mr Tee.

Mr TEE — He asked for it.

Mr MADDEN — I think there is a great opportunity to work with local communities in partnership with local government so that there are objective decisions made in relation to projects, but what is critical is the foundation work — the zoning, the controls, and the policy at a local level — gives clarity and informs the decision-making. At the moment there is often a lack of clarity, and then VCAT is used as an appeal mechanism when there is a lack of clarity and decisions have or have not been made. I am eager to see less decisions made at VCAT and more decisions made objectively with these development assessment committees. I am also very keen to make sure that we work very closely with local government to ensure that their policies reflect their ambitions and the ambitions of their communities.

Mr O'DONOHUE — Minister, from your answer, there will be two members of these committees appointed by government. There will be two appointed from local government but not necessarily duly elected councillors, and the chairman will be appointed by the Labor mate, Dick Gross. In effect you could have five members of this committee who are not elected, do not represent their communities and they will be implementing the will of the Labor government?

Mr MADDEN — I think first of all, Mr O'Donohue, that your qualification of the MAV discredits you as well as discrediting your interpretation of the MAV.

The CHAIR — I think they called you the smiling assassin, didn't they?

Mr TEE — I think that is right.

Mr MADDEN — I think that it does great discredit to you and to the MAV and to Dick Gross. Dick Gross is no doubt a spokesperson for the MAV, but he does not make all the decisions for the MAV. It is a representative body, so of course the members of the MAV will determine the sort of broad representation not only of the organisation but the sorts of individuals who might chair those development assessment committees.

The CHAIR — They hate this. They know what is going on.

Mr MADDEN — I think you do yourself a great disservice, Mr O'Donohue. The other component here is that, as I have said in a number of instances, the representatives that come from local government, the specific local government in which these decisions relate to, could be two councillors — they could be two officers — that can be nominated by that respective council. It is up to those councillors around the council chamber to nominate who they believe should be their representative.

Mr TEE — It is very democratic.

Mr MADDEN — That can be either a rotational system or a rotating system, so it does not have to be the same person relating to each decision. It could be a ward councillor that reflects the views of a ward in which development may or may not take place; it might be the mayor; or it could be the councillor who is the chair of the respective planning group. It can be any one of those individuals. It might be the CEO; it could be the head of their planning system. They will be able to nominate those respective representatives. I look forward to ensuring that councils are given as much flexibility as possible to nominate the sorts of personnel they like, given the circumstance or project that might be proposed.

Mr O'DONOHUE — Minister, the overview to the response of the 2030 audit states:

The current period of high population and economic growth is increasing demand for housing, water, power, transport and other infrastructure. Victoria needs to find new ways to manage this growth and increased demand sustainability while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Breaking the link between economic growth and Victoria's levels of greenhouse gas emissions will be fundamental to reducing Victorians' impact on climate change.

Given that the government is planning on constructing an enormous industrial desalination plant on what is now public land — —

Mr TEE — Are you reading your question?

Mr O'DONOHUE — On the pristine Bass Coast — —

Mr TEE — Is that a point of order?

Mr O'DONOHUE — A plant that will consume enormous quantities of either gas or coal — —

Mr MADDEN — Excuse me, Chair, I think Mr O'Donohue is reading the question now too.

Mr TEE — Are you going to table it?

Mr MADDEN — If you want to refer to people reading their notes — —

Mr O'DONOHUE — I am happy to table the answer. Perhaps you would like to listen to the question.

Mr MADDEN — I just think if you are going to be picky about whether people read from notes or not, then it should run both ways, Chair.

The CHAIR — We are short on time. Just keep going, please.

Mr O'DONOHUE — Minister, has not the government failed its own test to break the nexus between economic and population growth and greenhouse gas emissions?

Mr MADDEN — There are a couple of matters here, Mr O'Donohue. As I outlined in my statement, because I am the planning minister invested with authorities in relation to making planning decisions, I am not the proponent for the desalination plant. There will be an environment effects statement undertaken in relation to that. We have not only made that quite — —

The CHAIR — But not the preliminary plant.

Mr MADDEN — I am just saying not only have we made it quite public that that will take place, but what we have also made clear and gone out to the public with is the terms of reference for the environment effects statement for this plant and asked for people to make comment in relation to those terms of reference. There is an opportunity for the community to either broaden that focus or narrow that focus or have it consider other matters in relation to what the environment effects statement should take into account.

The environment effects statement no doubt will report in relation to the project. That will be provided to me. I will also be provided with advice from the department and then I will have to make a determination as Minister for Planning with the authority that vests in me in relation to that project. But can I make it perfectly clear that I am not the proponent for the project. The Minister for Water, I understand, is the proponent for the project. The extension of that, I understand, is one of the water authorities is also the proponent for the project. I look forward to receiving the environment effects statement so I can make the relevant decisions in relation to these projects.

Now, you might say, 'Okay, the government is a proponent. Of course they are not going to be influenced about the decision they have already made in relation to the project'. Let us also bear in mind that there have been instances where there have been environment effects statements that have been undertaken, panel reports or reviews done and the government has deemed not to proceed with projects. That was the case in Nowingi. Whilst you might be sceptical in relation to what does come to the planning minister and the decisions that might be made by the planning minister with the authority that vests with — —

The CHAIR — The Premier has said it is going ahead no matter what.

Mr MADDEN — With the powers that are vested in the planning minister, I will wait and see that environment effects statement, and I will make that decision with the advice that I will receive from the department. We will know the outcome of that when the decision is made.

The CHAIR — Good luck in overruling the Premier.

Mr KAVANAGH — Thank you for your evidence today, Mr Madden. I would like to ask you about Kew Cottages and donations in general. In this room several months ago I asked a very large donor to your political party why he made those donations. I got a very inconsistent and contradictory answer, actually. Why do you think they make those donations?

Mr MADDEN — I am not sure, Mr Kavanagh. I am not involved in the machinery of the Labor Party, I am not involved in the way in which the administration operates, and I am not involved in the circumstances around political donations. My role here in this place is a dual role. One is to represent the constituency who have elected me — the western region of Melbourne — and I take that role particular seriously and I undertake that with great pride and great enthusiasm. Having being born in the west and raised in the west, I have now been elected to represent the west. The is what drives me in this position. The other one is I have been given responsibility as planning minister. I have a great love for the built urban environment and all the machinations of that, the effects and the impacts. I studied architecture for five years, worked as an architect for two years in order to achieve my registration as an architect. My commitment to service and love and a passion for the built form of the urban environment stand on record. My commitment to represent my constituency is there and forms the driving force for me to undertake the role that I take.

Mr KAVANAGH — I did ask you about political donations though, Mr Madden.

Mr MADDEN — Yes. That is what drives me and that is what motivates me.

Mr KAVANAGH — Not political donations?

Mr MADDEN — Thank you, Mr Kavanagh. I do not take any notice of who donates what to the Labor Party, even when it is published in the paper. I make my decisions according to the responsibilities I have. I am not influenced in any way by anybody from the administration of the Labor Party, nor am I influenced by anybody who might make a donation.

The CHAIR — Your predecessor was, though.

Mr KAVANAGH — But on that particular point, that particular witness said that all of this money — and it is very large amounts of money — gets you enhanced access to ministers. Is he wrong or are you wrong?

Mr MADDEN — Put it this way: I have said on a number of occasions, ‘My door is open all the time’. It might not necessarily be easy to get it scheduled in my diary, but my door is open to the public all the time. I notice there are members of the audience here who are very passionate about their local issues and specific issues and their communities. It is great to see such a large audience here today. I know they are very passionate. We share those passions. We may not necessarily share exactly what the planning process delivers — we may not agree on that — but it is great to see those people here.

Mr KAVANAGH — But you are suggesting that this money that is being spent by these large corporations is entirely a waste of money.

Mr MADDEN — It might be. I cannot comment, Mr Kavanagh.

Mr KAVANAGH — So if you were a shareholder, you would be very angry, wouldn’t you? At the shareholders meeting, you would be asking them, ‘Why are you giving all this money to the ALP and getting nothing for it?’

Mr MADDEN — I think if I were a shareholder I might be, Mr Kavanagh, for sure. I not sure who donates to the Labor Party. I am not sure who donates to the Liberal Party, and I am not sure who donates to the DLP or the Greens.

Mr KAVANAGH — The developers of Kew Cottages do not donate to the DLP, I can tell you that, Mr Madden.

Mr MADDEN — But I am sure whoever makes donations for whatever reasons, if it makes them feel good about their involvement in the political process and the support they make, that is up to them, Mr Kavanagh.

Mr KAVANAGH — But your point is that these hundreds of thousands of dollars to obtain enhanced access do not do that at all; they do not get enhanced access.

Mr MADDEN — I am accessible. I am not sure — I may not be accessible at the rate at which people might like or I might not give them the answers that they like, Mr Kavanagh, but I think I am relatively accessible. I notice there are a lot of familiar faces here. Again, I compliment them because I know they are very passionate

about their own circumstances. I empathise with that, and I appreciate the fact that they are passionate about their communities and the things that they hold dear to their hearts in relation to Melbourne. I may not necessarily completely agree with that, but I recognise that. I know that I have spent time with a number of these people on a number of occasions, hearing their concerns and their aspirations. Also, as I have acknowledged them today, I have acknowledged the sincerity with which they make that commitment. I am open to those people. I am open to local government. My door is open to developers if they have got a proposition that they think is important for Melbourne. That is what my role as planning minister is. I will continue to have an open door policy and give people the opportunity to tell me what they have feel they need to tell me.

Mr KAVANAGH — But in short you are saying that the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent by these hard-headed businessmen to get better access does not work. They do not get better access than the community representatives you are talking about.

Mr MADDEN — They certainly do not get better access to me. I can see a lot of people here who have got access to me.

The CHAIR — Graham Richardson did, though.

Mr MADDEN — They do not have to do anything in particular to get access other make a call and try and put a schedule in their diary or my diary. Sometimes that works; sometimes it does not.

Mr KAVANAGH — Thank you. Could I ask you about something else? It is something that I have raised in the house. At Port Campbell, as you know, many people consider that there is a danger to the headland in Port Campbell by a development that is being held up at the moment. Can you tell us something about the process whereby that situation came about? I know it is paused at the moment, but is it not extraordinary that it could be considered to give land to a private company that could endanger one of the most beautiful ports in the world?

Mr MADDEN — I certainly appreciate your interest in this matter, Mr Kavanagh. I know there are members of the audience here who have a very strong commitment to this matter as well. I just want to make it clear that as Minister for Planning I am not responsible for the decisions to allow public land for commercial purposes. This is the responsibility of the minister for the environment. I understand a planning permit was issued by VCAT for this development on 8 March 2006 and as yet I understand no development has commenced on the site. I understand the permit was due to lapse in March 2008. I understand the council considered an extension request at its meeting on 25 March 2008 and resolved to refuse to extend the permit. I understand the applicant has requested a review of the council's decision at VCAT, and a date for the hearing of this review has not been set by VCAT. I also understand the development relies on the use of the adjoining Crown land, known as fishermen's car park, for bus access and egress and the Department of Sustainability and Environment issued a consent, I understand, under the Coastal Management Act 1995. I also understand that that lapses on 8 August 2008. An application for a planning permit for this development is currently being considered and I have — I must make this clear — no involvement in that process either.

Mr KAVANAGH — Right.

Mr MADDEN — The approval process is administered by the Corangamite Shire Council as the responsible authority, with the review by VCAT, basically.

Mr KAVANAGH — If the development is approved in the end though, but there are still concerns about the integrity of the headland because of the development, will you intervene to demand an environmental study of the project, for example.

Mr MADDEN — Can I ask you to repeat that please, Mr Kavanagh? I missed that.

Mr KAVANAGH — If the project does go ahead, if permission is given, and yet there remain concerns about the integrity of the headland because of the development, will you intervene to do what you can to see that an environmental study is done?

Mr MADDEN — As I have mentioned to a number of people before, I am not the planning authority in this instance and I would take advice on those matters in relation to any technical issues in relation to the site, because I know that one of the qualifications of the permit that has been issued on that site is, I think, the

geotechnical investigation, to qualify whether or not that can guarantee that it would not undermine the headland. I think that is one of the critical issues of the permit that has been issued, I understand, by VCAT. No doubt that is a major qualification that would have to be proved. But I would have to take advice on those matters, the technical matters and the legal matters, because I am not entirely sure at this point in time, and I am happy to provide you with that on notice, whether I have any entitlement to intervene at this point beyond the decisions already made at VCAT.

Mr KAVANAGH — Just with Kew Cottages, a lot of the land has not been developed yet. If someone were to show a better use than further residential development for the remaining part of the site, would that be considered?

Mr MADDEN — In terms of Kew Cottages, basically I understand that is the responsibility of the Minister for Major Projects.

The CHAIR — You have planning authority.

Mr MADDEN — I think you are probably best served by putting that request to the Minister for Major Projects in relation to what may or may not happen on the site.

Mr KAVANAGH — A lot of the correspondence the committee has received is about policy on the sale of government land to councils and in particular about whether councils should be required to pay full market value for land sold to them by the state government. You have talked about that you are a captive of policy really but you contribute to policy, so can I ask you what you think are the proper policy considerations to be taken into account on that?

Mr MADDEN — In asking that question, when you are asking me what I think are the proper policy considerations, are you asking me for in a sense — —

Mr KAVANAGH — Should the state government charge full market value to councils and, if not, how much and in what circumstances?

Mr MADDEN — In many ways it is not for me to say what any land is worth and what the offsets should or should not be in terms of what might be fair market value. The critical issue here in terms of the release of land is predominantly the responsibility of the minister for finance, with the qualification, of course, of the land monitor, which I have the responsibility for, which ensures that proper probity has been complied with.

If land is released for anything rather than fair market value, then, in a sense, that has to have a degree of transparency, because on the one hand some councils would like land released at less than market value — and I can understand why local government might wish that, because it does not cost them as much, the ratepayers do not have to pay as much, and it might allow them to do more things on the land that they may not have been initially able to do if they had purchased it at full market value; so I certainly understand that argument — but some of the accusations today are that land might have been released at less than market value, or could be, or not complied with. We have to ensure that we are consistent, that we are transparent and that we have the appropriate checks and balances in the system, because I am sure that if we released land at less than market value, then we would have to be able to prove the circumstances, have the appropriate checks and balances in place and also make sure that all the probity concerns were adhered to.

The minister for finance is responsible for the release of that land. I am responsible to make sure that some of the probity checks are complied with through the land monitor. No doubt if people feel that either one of those has not been complied with in an appropriate way, then the Auditor-General can oversight that to ensure that it has been. If there is some qualification or perception that the Auditor-General might want to make, then that can be made. Remember this is a government that gave enhanced powers to the Auditor-General, so we are committed to that. Can I just say, where the Auditor-General has provided me with reports in relation to a whole series of matters, of course, I take them on board with the utmost consideration and am very appreciative that we are able to get that, in a sense, independent advice in relation to many of these matters. We have seen a recent report from the Auditor-General in relation to local government, which has been very informative.

Ms PENNICUIK — Thank you, Minister. I appreciate you being here today. We have had 136 submissions to this inquiry, and a lot of issues have arisen. I have prepared a great number of questions for you

today, and it would have been good if we had been able to have you for a bit longer because I fear I am not going to be able to get all of my questions in.

I will start the first one by following on from what Mr Kavanagh was saying, because a great many of the submissions have come from local councils and they have indeed raised the issue of the transfer of land from state government — public land, owned by the public — to local government at market value. Basically every council has complained about that process. You are talking about market value. My question is: how is market value compared to the value of the land for the public as open space or for community use? How are those two compared? Councils have complained that the only document that is referred to is the compulsory sale or acquisition policy document that requires land to be transferred at market value, whereas from the councils' point of view and the communities' point of view they already own the land and it is simply being transferred to a community use. I note in the paper today that the independent expert group has made comments about that and is encouraging the government to re-look at that issue.

Mr MADDEN — There are a number of matters there. The first one, Ms Pennicuik, is I am always happy to answer further questions. Noticing here that these faces that sit opposite me today are all from the upper house and I have a question time at 2 o'clock not 12 o'clock — on days in Parliament you are always entitled to ask me more questions and I am always happy to answer more questions in Parliament, so you might even get a better opportunity to ask me further questions with supplementary questions in relation to any of the matters I answer today.

Ms PENNICUIK — Perhaps you could answer this question, Minister.

Mr MADDEN — I am always happy to answer questions, and I am surprised that we have got to have this rather than just asking me questions in Parliament. The other matter is about what is fair market value and what is not.

Ms PENNICUIK — How does it compare to continued public use of what is, in fact, public land?

Mr MADDEN — Sure.

Ms PENNICUIK — What is the market value as a commercial value? The other value is an intrinsic value.

Mr MADDEN — Yes. I certainly understand and appreciate the question. I think it is a very good question, but it is not a question I can answer because really it is a question for the minister for finance to determine because he is the minister responsible for the disposal of land and the procedures for disposing of it.

Ms PENNICUIK — I do not think councils will get much joy from that answer. Minister, you have had a lot of questions from me in the Parliament on this particular subject, which is the development of the triangle site.

Mr MADDEN — I have just received some advice. My understanding is that public land cannot be sold.

Ms PENNICUIK — Transferred I am talking about.

The CHAIR — Even you tripped up on your silly definition.

Ms PENNICUIK — I was talking about transfer of use

Mr MADDEN — I just wanted to clarify that.

Ms PENNICUIK — I think, Minister, you have strayed a little bit from the terms of reference throughout the day. Maybe we could be a bit relaxed about that.

Regarding the triangle site, from which you have had a lot of questions from me, I would like to look at the planning process there. You would be aware, Minister, that there was an urban design framework that took many years to develop. A development overlay was put on that site, which included the urban design framework. The community is very concerned that the development, as proposed, does not conform with that urban design framework. In fact third-party appeal rights were taken away from the community because they were assured that the development plan for that site would comply with the urban design framework. In fact it does not in many

respects. It does not protect views, it has too many shops, it has too many restaurants. It has uses there such as a TAFE college, a supermarket et cetera, which were never envisaged in the urban design framework. My question is: without appeal rights and with the council being completely conflicted by being the proponent, the committee of management and the responsible authority, who is going to look after the public's interest and who is going to enforce the urban design framework that overlays that site?

Mr MADDEN — I think there is a critical component here that needs to be reinforced. It is basically that the Port Phillip council, as you have mentioned, is the responsible authority for administering the planning scheme for the St Kilda triangle site. There are council elections at the end of the year. I am sure that if people are uncomfortable with that, then people will have the opportunity to make their judgement accordingly. Let us not forget the site itself — and I will give you the example of members of my own family. I was driving through St Kilda, and they had seen the headlines in the paper. My wife even mentioned, 'What is this horrible thing going to happen here?'. We drove through St Kilda and I pointed to the site. It was a Sunday afternoon and the site was a clay-based car park with hundreds of cars parked across it on a Sunday afternoon.

Ms PENNICUIK — Minister, I am aware that part of site is a car park at the moment. What I am talking about — —

Mr MADDEN — Not part of the site, but the vast majority of the site is, and what I am saying to you, Ms Pennicuik, as I have mentioned — —

Ms PENNICUIK — Yes, Minister, I want to know who is going to enforce the urban design framework?

Mr MADDEN — Yes, let me just finish what I have to say too, Ms Pennicuik. As I have said on a number of occasions, this has been a matter of contention and debate in the Port Phillip community for many years. Even now, if you ask those who are not satisfied with the proposal that is currently before the Port Phillip council, if you ask those people what it is they want on that site, people cannot say what it is they want on this site.

Ms PENNICUIK — No, that is not accurate, Minister.

Mr MADDEN — There is no singular agreement as to what is on that site.

Ms PENNICUIK — There is an urban design framework with which the development plans does not comply.

Mr MADDEN — The Port Phillip council has the responsibility. It has made that decision. It has entered into contracts and it has made that call. It is the respective planning authority for that site.

Ms PENNICUIK — And the proponent for the developer.

Mr MADDEN — If the proposition is to leave it as it is, as a clay-based car park — — .

Ms PENNICUIK — No-one is making that proposition.

Mr MADDEN — I think we need to reflect on the arduous, lengthy process that has been undertaken by the Port Phillip council in relation to this matter and the differing opinions on what should or should not be in that urban design framework or how it should or should not be interpreted. All these matters are also open to interpretation. If people object to that, they are entitled to. They are entitled to be quite vocal about that. A critical component of planning is the democratic process, but it is also worth bearing in mind that this has taken a very long time to get to this point. If people still reject the proposition, they have the opportunity to make their feelings heard at council elections. Can I just reinforce that if this proposal does not proceed, I suspect it would take almost another five years to try to resolve what should take place at the site. For another five years at least, you would see a clay-based car park with hundreds of cars parked on it, weekend after weekend after weekend.

Ms PENNICUIK — Minister, can I go on to another issue which has been raised with us, which is the issue of Caulfield Racecourse, which is probably better known as Caulfield public park and racecourse. However, the public park component of that particular large tract of public land is underdone, to say the least. Council representatives on the board of trustees recently went to a meeting of the board of trustees and proposed motions regarding expansion of the use of that tract of public land, which has been put aside as a park and recreation land as well as a racecourse, and those motions were overturned by the trustees that a majority of board members were

representing or were previously associated with the racing industry. I am wondering what the minister is planning to do about the ongoing alienation of this significant piece of public land.

Mr MADDEN — I think there are a number of matters here. My understanding is that there has been no formal application for any development at this stage on the site. There has been a lot of discussion about — — .

Ms PENNICUIK — There is certainly a proposal for a plan that we have seen.

Mr MADDEN — There are certainly discussions and ideas.

Ms PENNICUIK — The committee was shown a scale model.

Mr MADDEN — As I said, ideas, but I do not believe there has been a formal proposal or a proposition or an application made in relation to the project that has been discussed. My understanding is within those organisations there is a range of varying opinions on what should and should not take place. It is not for me to comment on what is a good idea or what is not a good idea. If somebody makes an application, it should be judged on its merits, but of course whether it is the land that you have talked about or other land, then I am sure that will influence either those who need to make the respective decisions, the respective authorities, as to what should or should not proceed and what does or does not stack up and whether or not it is attractive or not. I will wait, as you will, to see what might or might not be submitted. I also appreciate that organisations like this are sometimes looking beyond, I suppose, their own brief and that is a judgement call on their part as to whether they should proceed, whether they should be ambitious in relation to these matters. I await any submission or any presentation or any application.

Ms PENNICUIK — Besides any application for a planning approval, you also have responsibility for appointing members to the board of trustees. I know that there is still a vacancy there and that the board is overrepresented by either members of the Melbourne Racing Club or people previously associated with racing, which is why racing is the primary activity even though that is not what the land is reserved for. It is reserved to be a public park and a racecourse. The public is pretty well locked out of there for all intents and purposes. I am wondering two things: are you going to appoint someone perhaps from the community to that vacant position on the board; and what ability do you have to direct the board to fulfil its full brief and not just part of its brief to do with racing, because that is the concern of the community?

Mr MADDEN — There are a number of issues there, and one is about appointing someone to that position. I will make a decision accordingly in relation to that with advice from the department and what may or may not be adequate representation of the respective views given the make-up of the trust. I also understand, without a lot of background or a lot of detail to this matter, that there is an array of different land titles in relation to the potential for proposals. I am not entirely clear on where the proposals are in relation to the land. I think there is a mix of titles, and I think some are depending on what the proposition is. I am not sure if the things I have heard are similar to the things you have seen in relation to models or what other people have heard. I cannot speculate on what is or is not the case. All I do know, though, is that there is a different array of land titles and landholdings. Any proposal that might be forthcoming, no doubt we would have to consider those matters. I cannot comment any further on that. I am also conscious that Caulfield racecourse is a unique set of circumstances, and I am monitoring the situation in relation to what happens with those trustees, the decisions they need to make and the use of that land. That is part of my responsibility.

The CHAIR — Minister, I want to thank you for appearing here today. I want to indicate one further simple question, which is some information the committee has sought in writing from the department. As you say, you are responsible for the land monitor. I would ask you if you could provide to the committee a list, including the value and location, of each piece of land sold and registered with the land monitor since the start of 2030 in 2002.

Mr MADDEN — I am happy to take the question on notice.

Mr TEE — Minister, in regard to the matter of the sale of schools, I am wondering if you could take on notice a request to provide documents in relation to the evidence that you gave about the sale of schools by the then president of the Liberal Party, Mr Baillieu.

Ms PENNICUIK — That is outside the terms of reference of this inquiry.

Mr TEE — I am just asking the question.

Mr MADDEN — I am happy to take both those questions on notice and provide the inquiry with the advice that I can.

The CHAIR — The committee has written to the department and sought that information on the land monitor. I would like you to indicate that you will provide the list of all government land sold since 2002, since the start of 2030. We need that full list of land.

Mr MADDEN — As I said, I am happy to take it on notice. I am not trying to avoid it. I have to find out the circumstances on how I provide it.

The CHAIR — I am sure you have seen the letters.

Mr MADDEN — And how much resourcing it might take to acquire that information for you.

The CHAIR — You could print it out.

Mr MADDEN — I do not have any objection to providing you with that information.

The CHAIR — Thank you. Can I just indicate we may need to have you back to follow up a number of these questions, because there is a large number of other tracts of land that the committee has had significant evidence on and hearings on that we have not had a chance to talk to you today about.

Mr MADDEN — Certainly, Chair. I also appreciate that you always have access to me in the Parliament. I would encourage you to continue to ask me questions in the Parliament in relation to any of these matters.

Ms PENNICUIK — I assure you I will, Minister.

Mr MADDEN — You will probably get more of an opportunity to ask me more questions there than you will here, because you have to share the questions here in rotation, whereas in the Parliament no doubt you can exert your authority and get the questions first, Mr Davis.

The CHAIR — Thank you, Minister. I note your colleague, the Minister for Major Projects, is waiting very patiently.

Mr MADDEN — Can I also note, Mr Davis, that I notice in the audience today there are a number of community representatives from respective groups, and I wish to compliment them. I know that they will always have issues that they seek to represent, but can I compliment them for their passion and their commitment to those issues. A number of them are familiar faces.

The CHAIR — Yesterday was a severe blow to them, Minister, where you stripped away council powers over a lot of these issues.

Mr MADDEN — I recognise, Mr Davis, that many of these people have travelled long distances to be here today. I appreciate their commitment, and I look forward to trying to assist those groups and those community groups in what they seek to achieve.

The CHAIR — Thank you, Minister. I thank the bureaucrats as well for their assistance.

Witnesses withdrew.