



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL
TERRITORY**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE,
ENVIRONMENT AND WATER**

(Reference: [Inquiry into the ecological carrying capacity of the ACT and region](#))

Members:

**MS M HUNTER (The Chair)
MS M PORTER (The Deputy Chair)
MR Z SESELJA**

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

FRIDAY, 1 JULY 2011

**Secretary to the committee:
Dr S Lilburn (Ph: 6205 0199)**

By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents, including requests for clarification of the transcript of evidence, relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the Legislative Assembly website.

WITNESSES

CORBELL, MR SIMON, Attorney-General, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services and Minister for Police and Emergency Services **68**

MURRAY, MR CHRIS, Manager, Land Policy, Planning Services Branch, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate **68**

WILLIAMSON, MS GAY, Manager, Design Policy, Planning Services Branch, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate **68**

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Amended 21 January 2009

The committee met at 1.30 pm.

CORBELL, MR SIMON, Attorney-General, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services and Minister for Police and Emergency Services

MURRAY, MR CHRIS, Manager, Land Policy, Planning Services Branch, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate

WILLIAMSON, MS GAY, Manager, Design Policy, Planning Services Branch, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate

THE CHAIR: Good afternoon and welcome to the public hearing of the Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Water in our inquiry into the ecological carrying capacity of the ACT and region. I need to check that everybody has read and understood the privilege statement.

Mr Corbell: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair.

THE CHAIR: Minister, this is the second time that you have appeared before this inquiry. Last time it was in your capacity as environment minister, so thank you very much for making the time today. Would you like to start by making an opening statement?

Mr Corbell: Thank you, Madam Chair, and members of the committee. No, I do not intend to make an opening statement, but I and officers of the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate are happy to try and answer your questions.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. I want to start with a bit of the broad picture around the ACT and planning matters, and the government's plans around reducing the urban development footprint. We know that a lot of this is in the spatial plan. There has obviously been a lot of debate and discussion around densification of the city. At the same time we have the Molonglo development and ongoing development in parts of Gungahlin. Could you give an overall rundown on the plans around, as I said, reducing the urban development footprint, or limiting it?

Mr Corbell: Of course, much of this is set out in more detail in the government's submission. As members would be aware, the government's policy in terms of the urban development area of the city is currently set out in the Canberra spatial plan, which forms the interim planning strategy for the ACT following the passage of the Planning and Development Act in 2007.

The government has indicated that it intends to review the planning strategy. That work is well advanced and a draft planning strategy will be released for public comment later this year. However, the broad principles are not going to change from those set out in the spatial plan; that is, recognising that there are new urban development fronts in Molonglo but there is also a requirement to focus intensification of settlement in existing established areas of the city. The government's policy is to focus that intensification of settlement along transport corridors and around centres, whether that be Civic, town centres or group centres. So the draft planning strategy which will be released later this year will confirm that policy direction.

It is also very important when we take the view about settlement that we are not isolated from the region around us. There are very significant linkages in terms of movements of people and goods between the city of Canberra itself and regional centres—people living in regional centres such as Goulburn, Yass or even Cooma, Queanbeyan and Jerrabomberra obviously, new urban development in areas such as Googong, and growth in areas such as Bungendore. These are all important regional centres. In terms of the planning strategy, it is my very strong view that we need to ensure that the planning strategy takes account of, to the greatest extent feasible, given the different jurisdictional responsibilities, the fact that growth is also occurring in those regional centres.

The government supports the continued strengthening of the polycentric nature of the city, the town centres and the diversification of uses across those centres, whilst also recognising the pre-eminent role of the city centre as the heart of the civic administration of the city, and some of the higher order uses that come with Civic effectively being the first amongst equals in relation to that hierarchy.

That continues to be the government's overall planning strategy in terms of containing urban development and urban intensification within the established urban footprint, with the exception of the development fronts that are confirmed in the spatial plan in relation to Molonglo.

The spatial plan carved a broad parameter around the 7½ kilometre radius from the city centre for urban intensification activities. It would be reasonable to foreshadow that the government will move towards a refinement of that broad parameter in the draft planning strategy that focuses that development along corridors and around centres in a more targeted and strategic way rather than a broader parameter of a simple radius from the city centre.

THE CHAIR: The former Chief Minister talked about the balance being 70 per cent greenfield and 30 per cent infill. With the review and the newer strategy coming out, is that also being reviewed or is it still pretty much going to be that sort of balance going forward, or those sorts of percentages going forward?

Mr Corbell: In terms of land release, are you referring to accommodation for new dwelling sites? Is that what you are referring to?

THE CHAIR: I think it was around greenfields developments versus the intensification that you were talking about.

Mr Corbell: As a measurement of what? Measured by what—settlement? Number of settlement sites?

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Williamson: In looking at the evaluation of the spatial plan in terms of what the finding is, we should be looking at the current split, which is the 50 per cent intensification which is close to the town centres and 50 per cent in terms of greenfield. What the minister might be trying to clarify is in terms of how that is

achieved in terms of private development versus government development. At the moment, in terms of having done a spatial plan evaluation, that split has actually been achieved when you look at the total development numbers in terms of dwelling numbers occurring with private development and land release.

MR SESELJA: How is that measured? Are you measuring it on the 7.5 kilometre radius of the spatial plan or are you talking about within the vicinity of town centres?

Mr Corbell: Total number of dwelling sites, or dwellings, brought to market.

MR SESELJA: But in terms of your fifty-fifty, what fits into the 50 infill?

Mr Corbell: Fifty-fifty is the number of dwellings brought to the market.

MR SESELJA: But in terms of how you define the parameters and what is infill and what is not—

Ms Williamson: It is the 7.5 kilometres.

MR SESELJA: Okay. So that fifty-fifty has been achieved in recent years; is that right? Do we have exact numbers on that? Do we keep track of those?

Mr Corbell: The government does keep a tally of those to the greatest extent possible. Obviously dwellings released by the private sector are driven by private redevelopment decisions of leased land and private property, but we do have analysis of that.

MR SESELJA: Is that analysis publicly available?

Ms Williamson: Yes, that is publicly available because we do that through the development approvals assessment. That is how we measure those things, and that is how we did that in terms of the evaluation.

MR SESELJA: I am talking about a consolidation, without someone going to every development application and figuring it out. Are those consolidated figures available anywhere?

Mr Corbell: I think it is included in land release. It is part of the government's analysis contained in the government's land release.

MR SESELJA: That is forward planning though, isn't it?

Mr Corbell: Yes, that is a forward planning document; nevertheless it has regard to previous activity. I can clarify that for the committee.

MR SESELJA: Yes, it might be helpful for the committee, if it is in a document that is available, if we are able to be pointed to where in that document, if it is on the website somewhere. It would be great if we could get that.

Mr Corbell: Sure, I can clarify that.

THE CHAIR: Also, within this review of the spatial plan, has there been any consideration of removing Kowen from possible future urban maps as urban development?

Mr Corbell: Kowen was first identified in the spatial plan in 2004-05 as an area for possible future urban use but it was deliberately left as an area for further investigation. It was not confirmed as for future urban use in the same way that Molonglo was. So it was given a different status. Kowen was identified because of its obvious proximity to existing urban areas, in particular Queanbeyan. But given its specific topographical challenges and geographical challenges, sitting as it does on a plateau above existing services and infrastructure, it does require much closer and more detailed examination.

The government will be outlining what the future of Kowen is in terms of its view when the draft planning strategy is released for public comment. But Kowen does present particular challenges in terms of provision of infrastructure in particular that do need to be closely considered.

MS PORTER: I wanted to reflect on what you said about our relationship with New South Wales and the fact that we have a lot of development happening in New South Wales, obviously in the local region. What discussions are we having with the New South Wales government about our relationship with them and this regional development that is happening around us?

Mr Corbell: I will ask Mr Murray in a moment to give you a bit more rundown on that, given his pedigree on these issues. Mr Murray has worked on both sides of the border and was previously the manager responsible for planning in the region on behalf of the New South Wales Department of Planning, so he has an understanding of these issues on both sides of the border.

I would say in general terms that the government seeks to engage with the New South Wales government in relation to planning for the region. There are formal written agreements in place that provide for consultation between the territory and the New South Wales government about regional planning strategies. Of particular interest to us is the Sydney to Canberra corridor and the planning work that the New South Wales government is doing in relation to that corridor that is of specific importance to us. I think there is certainly significant room for further improvements in the way the two governments engage with each other on planning issues in the region.

It would be fair to say that whilst the region is very important to us because it is on our doorstep and has a direct and daily impact on the operations of the city, its transport network and so on, New South Wales obviously has a much larger range of issues that it has to address, particularly growth in Sydney. Obviously, whilst regional issues are important to it, it has a range of competing priorities in terms of where its attention has to be.

That is something that we continue to engage with them on. There is a regional settlement strategy and there is a regional planning framework that the two governments continue to have a dialogue over. I will ask Mr Murray to tell you a bit

more about that if he can.

Mr Murray: Thank you, minister. In my former role I was a regional director for the Department of Planning in New South Wales before I came here. In that role I sat on the other side, negotiating regional settlement strategies and framework discussions between the two governments. I was also responsible for significant components of the Sydney-Canberra corridor regional strategy, and major rezonings like Googong that have progressed and will be, as I understand it, commencing development fairly soon.

That is my background. I think the minister has outlined the full range of things there. We had done a cross-border sustainable settlement strategy. It became quite progressed at some stage. Discussions when I was on that side of the fence were around Kowen having a natural relationship initially to Queanbeyan, because it is to the north of Queanbeyan. So if Kowen were to progress we would have to be sensitive to how Queanbeyan in New South Wales thought about it. Also in that role I had quite a lot to do with state and regional development. It covered a fairly broad area, so I am quite happy to answer specific questions that you might have.

THE CHAIR: I guess it is very much around how well these sorts of interactions are going and how well it can coordinate things in the region. The inquiry received a letter from the New South Wales Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, on 1 December 2010. It referred to the sorts of numbers in future population and so forth that were forecast in the region. It was interesting that this letter also stated:

I ... request the inquiry make no assumptions that could limit the capacity of NSW to respond to investment opportunities as they arise.

I think they are very much saying, as you said, that there are challenges and there are pressures, and they are looking at how they can get people out of Sydney, resettle other parts of New South Wales and so forth. So I am interested in how robust those interactions between the ACT and New South Wales are, in having a coordinated approach, or is it still very much that we play our own game and there are particular matters that we will engage on? You were just saying, minister, that it could improve. I am wondering what sorts of things do need to improve if we are truly going to have a regional approach to this issue of planning.

Mr Corbell: The regional settlement strategy outlines in broad terms where settlement will occur in the region. Obviously that is firmly within the bailiwick of the New South Wales jurisdiction and the operation of their Planning Act and their powers.

New South Wales, not unreasonably, makes the point very clearly that this is their responsibility and they will determine, according to their priorities as a government, how development will occur within the context of that broad framework that has been agreed between the two jurisdictions. So that is the nature of a jurisdiction having sovereignty over those matters.

The ACT government respects and understands that and we seek to cooperate with the New South Wales government on these issues and make sure that impacts of

particular development proposals which are consistent with the broad planning strategy—the settlement strategy, I should say—are taken into account at an early stage, discussed and taken account of in any final planning approvals that are given by the New South Wales government or the local councils as appropriate.

I think there is always room to further enhance and strengthen the dialogue between the two governments. That is something which I will certainly be seeking to pursue because I think the ACT's future is fundamentally linked with the future of the region. Effectively, what we are starting to see is the establishment—and I do not mean to be parochial—of a greater Canberra. That is not to diminish the communities of Yass, Goulburn, Cooma, Bungendore, Queanbeyan or Jerrabomberra; but the fact is that we have a greater Canberra region starting to emerge. It is essential, when it comes to our decisions around transport infrastructure and service delivery, that we identify opportunities to enhance cooperation between the two jurisdictions in relation to those issues.

Whether that is in terms of cross-border costs for service delivery and having residents of New South Wales coming to the territory to utilise the territory's services—health, education and so on—or whether it is the transport pressures as a result of movements of people and goods between the city and the region, these are things on which there are opportunities for strengthening dialogue. I think the work that the former Chief Minister started with the lord mayor of Queanbeyan was a very good start in terms of identifying that there are transport issues between Queanbeyan and Canberra. We need to establish mechanisms to talk about, resolve and identify joint actions in relation to those matters.

That is the sort of dialogue that will need to continue to be developed, I believe, into the future. There are significant opportunities for the territory to strengthen that and to also identify how growth can be accommodated, not just in the city but in the region, and how transport connections in particular can be developed to allow the more frequent and more rapid movement of people between the city and those regional centres. So those are things which I think are certainly priorities.

THE CHAIR: Yes, they are critical issues, and there were those discussions. What has been the outcome of those discussions that happened between the former Chief Minister and the Mayor of Queanbeyan? Is that matter being resolved? As you say, it is not just going to be between us and Queanbeyan; these issues are going to pop up between us and Goulburn, between us and Yass. We are getting growth in Murrumbateman and all over. What has been the outcome of that to date? In a way, it gives us an idea of whether future dialogue might be successful.

Mr Corbell: In the relatively short period of time that I have been the responsible minister, I have not at this point in time been able to pursue that in the detail I would have wished, but obviously it is still early in terms of the new administrative arrangements.

I know that, in general terms, a range of actions and a framework for discussion have been agreed between the two jurisdictions—that is, the Queanbeyan City Council and the ACT government. Of course, there is also the Regional Leaders Forum which is convened by the Chief Minister and which talks with the elected local government

representatives from not just Queanbeyan but the broader region on a regular basis.

THE CHAIR: Twice a year.

Mr Corbell: So those fora exist, but unless Mr Murray or Ms Williamson can assist, at this relatively early stage of the new administrative arrangements it is not a matter that I have been able to pursue in further detail at this time.

Ms Williamson: I think it would be fair to say that the Chief Minister's directorate has actually had carriage of a lot of the regional planning issues and the Regional Leaders Forum. It is seeking to re-engage a lot of those discussions and re-ignite those. There has been some discussion on those things. It might be more appropriate to direct it that way. But it has had the responsibility for that regional planning, and I know that it has been workshopping and trying to develop more robust kinds of agreements and how it might take those forward.

THE CHAIR: So is there an issue that needs to be sorted through, even within the ACT, between the sustainability directorate that you are involved with and the Chief Minister's around how these work? A lot of what will need to be worked through in the Regional Leaders Forum and in some of these agreements is going to be around planning issues. There is a link there also to the environmental issues.

Mr Corbell: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I know it is early days for you in taking on particularly the planning role, but do you see a greater role for you as minister? These very much do sit within your portfolio areas.

Mr Corbell: As I say, Ms Hunter, I think it is very important, and it is an area of both interest and future focus for me. It is worth making the point that traditionally the Chief Minister has always held the portfolio responsibility for intergovernmental relations, which includes relationships with jurisdictions outside the territory. So whether it has been this administration or previous administrations, that role has traditionally sat with the Chief Minister.

I think that is sensible because it is a whole-of-government approach. Issues around intergovernmental relations will touch upon a broad range of portfolio responsibilities—everything from transport infrastructure and settlement matters through to service delivery matters, education, health, financial relationships and so on. So it is sensible that that be dealt with at a central agency level from the centre, from the Chief Minister and Cabinet Directorate. That is why it sits there, and I think that makes sense.

But the issue for the government is to ensure that, as we progress our work on planning strategy for the city and the territory, we make sure we are properly engaged and properly informed by those discussions in those fora that occur in the region. Certainly, that is a matter that we will continue to liaise with our colleagues in CMCD about, as well as directly with counterparts in planning agencies over the border and in local government authorities over the border.

THE CHAIR: Are there any particular developments or proposed developments in the region that are of concern to the ACT that you are aware of at the moment? What negative impacts or general concerns have been identified?

Mr Corbell: The one that members would be familiar with is the development at Tralee. The government has a determined position in relation to that development, which is that we believe that whilst the development per se is not necessarily problematic, the fact that development will occur under an area of increasing aircraft traffic is of concern to us, and we have consistently indicated that position to both commonwealth and New South Wales authorities.

Apart from that matter, the government believes that the development that is occurring in the region is taking place in accordance with the regional settlement strategy, and development at Tralee per se is not objected to by the ACT. We just argue that it should be a different land use activity at that site, not residential use. But that is ultimately a matter that will be determined by New South Wales, and that is recognised as such in the arrangements we have with them.

MR SESELJA: I have a few questions. Minister, what has been the level of contact with your interstate colleague, the planning minister in New South Wales? Have you made contact with the new planning minister and had discussions about some of these planning issues?

Mr Corbell: As I say, it is early days. I have not yet had that opportunity.

MR SESELJA: Moving to another issue, you talked before about Kowen. What is actually the process now going forward with Kowen? Is it on hold in terms of any future studies? Is it just identified for possible future residential use and then at some point in the future the government will determine whether it wants to do further and detailed studies before going ahead? Is there basically a holding pattern at the moment?

Mr Corbell: The approach in relation to Kowen is that the government will clarify how it wishes to approach the issue of Kowen in the draft planning strategy when it is released later this year.

MR SESELJA: With a number of these developments that are going on—and you talked about greater Canberra—there is obviously a need for the government to respond in a number of ways. One is that we have infrastructure needs. There are cross-border payments and all of those sorts of things. But from a competition point of view, if people are choosing to live over the border, they obviously choose sometimes for affordability but also sometimes for lifestyle issues—they want a bigger block or they want a semi-rural lifestyle. Is there any policy response to that? We have got a lot of land. Is there examination being done of whether we can provide a little more diversity in the kind of product we have on the fringes of the ACT to respond to that, so that people settle on this side of the border, pay taxes here and become part of the ACT?

Mr Corbell: Do you mean in terms of semi-rural type uses?

MR SESELJA: Those sorts of options, yes.

Mr Corbell: The government's policy has been to adopt a settlement pattern for the city which is the most efficient and the most sustainable option. We have not accepted the development of semi-rural acreage-type development within the city. There are a range of good planning and environmental reasons for that. The planning reasons are that it is a very difficult form of development to service and provide the level of municipal service that residents would expect or demand. The highly dispersed and low density nature of that development makes it difficult to service in terms of municipal services. With things like waste collection, emergency services provision and public transport, it is a very difficult type of settlement to support in that regard.

It raises very serious concerns around management of land in terms of dealing with invasive species—invasive weeds, plants and so on. It also raises serious questions about fire fuel management. Particularly if acreage plots exist on the urban edge, fire fuel management becomes extremely problematic because it is private land, and we are talking about people who perhaps are moving to these sites with no previous experience of land management and dealing with issues like fire fuel management, but then it becomes directly their responsibility.

These are really challenging and difficult issues. So those reasons have historically militated against the territory adopting that sort of approach. I think that is the right policy setting for the city. A hard urban edge is a good thing for our city in terms of dealing with fire fuel management, fire protection. And I think that a hard urban edge is very important in terms of maintaining a consistent level of municipal service provision and so on.

The territory has diversified a little in relation to this matter in terms of the development of the new rural villages at Uriarra and to a lesser degree at Stromlo—although Stromlo is really an extension of—

THE CHAIR: It is part of the city now, isn't it?

Mr Corbell: Big blocks in effectively a suburban environment, whereas Uriarra is much more rural. Nevertheless, even at Uriarra, whilst they are big blocks, they are still within a very defined area with hard urban edges around it. A very significant amount of planning work has occurred, particularly in relation to fire fuel management in relation to that site.

The other point worth making in relation to that type of development is that that would have to be a matter which the National Capital Authority would have to agree to. They have similarly adopted the position that that sort of peri-urban development is not suitable. They would take the view, particularly from a broader aesthetic perspective, that that would compromise the bush capital character of the city. It would see a blurring between the urban setting and the rural setting which makes Canberra unique in terms of its visual and aesthetic presentation. They have previously not accepted proposals by, for example, the previous Carnell government to try and advance those types of developments.

That is a very long answer but that is the history of proposals for that sort of peri-

urban development in the city. The government has no plans to revisit that. That is why I say it is important that we strengthen our perspective in terms of regional development and planning, recognising that people will choose to go into the region for both lifestyle and in some instances affordability reasons. We must make sure that transport planning and service delivery issues continue to be strengthened through the regional planning framework.

MR SESELJA: Are there any live proposals that you are aware of for subdivisions just over the border? There has been some talk in the past that there were moves around Dunlop and just over the border from there for some developments in New South Wales. Is there anything that the government is aware of in terms of proposals like that?

Mr Corbell: Yes, I am aware of proposals from private companies in relation to cross-border development. There is a proposal which has been advocated by private landholders in relation to development that spans the border in the west Belconnen area.

MS SESELJA: What is your awareness of the status of that? Is that something on which the ACT government has had discussions with either some of the councils or the New South Wales government? If so, how progressed are those proposals?

Mr Corbell: There have been a range of discussions and negotiations between the government and the parties involved who own the land on the other side of the border who have advanced this development proposal. There have, as a consequence, also been discussions between the government and the local government area that has jurisdiction in the New South Wales portion of the development. Those are matters that the government is keeping under consideration at this time. No decision has been made and no agreement has been given in relation to the proposal, but there is a proposal from a development proponent.

MR SESELJA: In terms of the ACT government's role in any such proposal, is it primarily around water? Is it around—

Mr Corbell: No.

MR SESELJA: What would the ACT government have to tick off on or do you have any ability to prevent those kinds of developments from going ahead if you do form the view that they are not in the best interests of the ACT?

Mr Corbell: The proposal is a contiguous proposal, so it is a proposal that involves development both within the territory and over the border. The proposal from the development proponent is for a genuine cross-border development that would occur both on the territory side of the border and on the New South Wales side of the border. That proposal has raised a broad range of issues, particularly at a fundamentally practical level, around service delivery. For example, it is entirely contiguous, so for people living in this area there would be no difference in terms of the physical area as to whether they were in New South Wales or the ACT.

THE CHAIR: Because the access will also be through the ACT?

Mr Corbell: The access would be through the ACT to the New South Wales portion. Therefore this raises questions about service delivery, waste services and municipal services. There are also more fundamental issues like emergency services provision and policing. These are very real issues and the government is very conscious of the complexities of these issues. I have to stress that this is a proposal from a private developer. We have been open to a discussion with that developer about their proposal but no decision has been made and no agreement has been given in relation to that proposal at this time.

MR SESELJA: Are we talking standard residential?

Mr Corbell: Yes.

MR SESELJA: If so, how many blocks or residences approximately are being considered as part of this proposal?

Mr Corbell: I cannot recall the proposed yield. But we are talking about a standard residential suburban development.

MR SESELJA: Are you able to provide that on notice in terms of the potential scale of this proposed development?

Mr Corbell: Yes, I am.

MS PORTER: The planning and environment committee was at a conference, I think it was in Tasmania, where we heard from some of our colleagues from Brisbane—having just listened to you talking about the subdivision issue. Apparently in the outer Brisbane area they have told farmers: “If you subdivide this land we are not going to provide services to those people. There will be no bus service out there; none of those services. We want you to know we cannot afford for people to keep going out and out.” That is my understanding. It was quite a definite decision that they made to notify people that if they did that they would not receive services. I did want to ask about another area, but if you are going to continue on the same point—

Mr Corbell: Just on that point, it is common, in relation to private developments in other jurisdictions around the country, that those sorts of clear expressions are made, and sometimes they are even built into the contract, effectively, that the buyer of the land enters into. “I acknowledge that the local council will not provide X, Y and Z.” Even where that occurs, that does not reduce the prospect that over time there will be political pressure placed on elected representatives to enhance and improve service delivery, and that is the real issue.

The other point I should have made about that acreage-type development is that that type of development, particularly if it occurs right on the urban edge, compromises the ability of some future administration to be able to utilise the land at a higher yield. As soon as it is subdivided and put into separate title, block consolidation and land acquisition issues become incredibly complex and problematic, and you are unable to, for example, use that land at some future point for what might be a higher and better use—that is, a proper suburban development pattern, because it has already been

subdivided, it has already been compromised, and land acquisition costs basically make it extremely difficult to get it back and to put it to better use.

That is the other reason why traditionally in the ACT we have not accepted that sort of approach, because it compromises that issue.

THE CHAIR: I want to go back to this idea about the cross-border development. We do have a situation, as you know, out in west Belconnen where there are a number of properties and more or less a handful of people. Along Parkwood Road, at some point you cross into New South Wales. For these people, it is not so much about waste services or whatever but it is about emergency services, and particularly police. They have to call through to Queanbeyan or Goulburn if some incident occurs. It seems quite ridiculous that we do have this situation.

Has that been part of your discussions? I know it no doubt would be, as you said, with the new development, but in your portfolio, and also with your emergency services hat on, I suppose—you are not here today wearing that hat—those sorts of issues need to be cleared up as well. It is a ridiculous situation at the moment.

Mr Corbell: The most complex area is in relation to policing, because obviously police can only act and take action where they have legal authority to do so. There is some arrangement in place in relation to police, in an emergency, crossing the border; for example, we have had instances between Queanbeyan and Canberra where police are pursuing someone who has refused to stop for a vehicle search in Queanbeyan and they flee into the territory. The police do not have to stop at the border; they can continue. But there is a requirement for transition to occur promptly and for ACT Policing to take control, and vice versa on the other side of the border. Those arrangements are well established in relation to Canberra-Queanbeyan.

There are standing arrangements in relation to the delivery of other emergency services—fire and ambulance—where New South Wales authorities can request the attendance of ACT response capability into New South Wales. That happens regularly, but it is still a relatively isolated occurrence. It occurs in instances where New South Wales is not able to respond because of other demands or the specific location or the need for a capability that they do not have available but which we do.

It is a very different question when you have got an urban area contiguous with the ACT border which you can reasonably expect will be a source of consistent and regular requests for service delivery. So there is a difference between an ad hoc need for response and the establishment of an urban area which then becomes a regular generator of requirements for service delivery.

That is really the question that we will have to address if there is ever the development of these sorts of contiguous urban areas immediately adjacent to the territory. Particularly in the Yass Valley shire, which is the area to the west of west Belconnen, that is a very odd arrangement in terms of the jurisdictional responsibility. It is isolated even from other parts of the Yass Valley shire. It is remote for them, it is difficult for them to service, and obviously it is not within our jurisdictional responsibilities. So there are specific issues there which are very complex.

THE CHAIR: Are they insurmountable?

Mr Corbell: They are difficult. This comes back to who has the ability to levy and raise revenue, and then who passes that revenue on to the service deliverer. It may be possible to enter into contractual arrangements for the delivery of certain services, but you would want some pretty strong guarantees about the ability for the revenue payment to meet the ongoing level of demand and the growing level of demand for services as development grows over time. And you would have to clarify the legal framework that gives authority and appropriate protection, particularly for police and emergency services to do their job in those areas. There are issues such as maintenance of the asset, ownership of public assets and so on. Whose is it? Who pays for it? There are all these issues which are complex and have not previously been encountered in the territory's experience.

THE CHAIR: Is there a timetable for these sort of discussions or is there a particular forum that these discussions are being conducted in? How are you proceeding with this?

Mr Corbell: Mr Seselja was asking me about west Belconnen. There is a proposal in relation to the west Belconnen area. It is a proposal from a private developer, not from the territory. The territory has indicated its willingness to discuss the proposal but has not given any commitments in relation to it. So at this stage it remains exploratory in nature and no decision has been taken in relation to the proposal.

THE CHAIR: With respect to those residents down at the end of Parkwood Road, is there any plan to—

Mr Corbell: I am sorry?

THE CHAIR: With respect to the people who are living at the end of Parkwood Road down to Ginninderra Falls, is there any plan to sort that issue out? It has been raised a number of times.

Mr Corbell: We continue to liaise with Yass Valley shire council in relation to issues that residents in that location raise, and we try to deal with it on a case-by-case basis.

MS PORTER: Minister, on page 7 of your submission it talks about the ageing population—17.3 per cent of the population by 2029-30. It also says that the majority of the increase in population will occur in Tuggeranong and Belconnen, which I find interesting because traditionally when we used to think about it, it was in the inner north and the inner south. Obviously it is shifting. I was wondering about our planning strategies and how we take into account that shift—if it is a shift, and I presume it is a shift—in the ageing population.

Mr Corbell: Yes. Obviously, because of the way the city has been developed over time, we get these very marked shifts in demographic based on when particular areas were developed, when they were first occupied—

MS PORTER: So the nappy valley was Tuggeranong and—

Mr Corbell: And we are moving through the cycle. Previously areas of the inner north and inner south were the areas that had the oldest average population. That is now gradually moving out, following sequentially the pattern of development of the city. So now, for example, Woden and Weston Creek I think have the oldest average age profile of any part of the city and we expect that that will now move out into parts of Belconnen and Tuggeranong over time. That is what is occurring, and it reflects the pattern of development of the city. Ms Williamson might be able to add to the answer.

Ms Williamson: It is something that we have considered in terms of the spatial plan evaluation and in terms of reviewing the planning strategy and how we may be able to use urban intensification or create more diverse urban environments to actually start to look at how we might even out some of that spread in terms of the suburbs and the districts, so that we can actually plan in the long term for social infrastructure and those things. What the minister was talking about in terms of looking at intensification around the town centres and in the districts and the group centres is a really good opportunity to try and create greater social diversity and a greater demographic mix in terms of those things.

Some of the research that we have done has shown, in terms of the Australian institute of real estate, that ageing in place is really important and that ageing within the neighbourhood is really important. We need to create the opportunity for more diverse housing opportunities within the existing districts so that that can happen, and that is something that we will try to explore in terms of the next draft of the planning strategy.

THE CHAIR: And will that also include the specific design of those dwellings and incorporating universal design into those—

Ms Williamson: The draft strategy itself cannot actually stipulate those things but—

THE CHAIR: I know, but there is a connection.

Ms Williamson: Certainly, we would be suggesting and highlighting that we need to take those things into account and do further work and bring those forward into territory plan policies in terms of looking at universal design and those things.

THE CHAIR: I want to go back to the transport corridors. Obviously this is a very important part of this whole idea of intensification, where we do it and how we do it. Minister, will the new plan clearly state what corridors we are talking about? We know at the moment we are talking about town centres. It is pretty clear as to where a town centre is and so forth. We know Northbourne Avenue would be a corridor, but are you working on what the particular roads, corridors and so forth would be and will that be clearly included in this revised plan?

Mr Corbell: Yes, they will. I think many of these corridors are not really a mystery. They are set out in the territory plan. The intertown public transport corridor is identified on the territory plan and you know what they are: Northbourne Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, Adelaide Avenue, Yarra Glen, Athllon Drive—

THE CHAIR: Anything beyond that? Are you contemplating others?

Mr Corbell: down to Tuggeranong, Belconnen Way through to Belconnen town centre and then Ginninderra Drive out to west Belconnen; and then obviously Flemington Road out to Gungahlin. So the intertown public transport corridor is well identified in our existing statutory planning framework, and that is a very important area for intensification of residential development.

There will be some secondary elements of those secondary corridors, if you like—that is not a particular status that they have been given; it is just my description of them. Outside the IPT, there will nevertheless be a number of other corridors that are identified as well in the planning strategy that over time are sensible to be considered because they are close to that intertown public transport corridor.

THE CHAIR: Finally, climate change assessments in planning decisions: is that being progressed and where are we up to with that?

Mr Corbell: I am sorry, what was the question, Madam Chair?

THE CHAIR: Climate change assessments in planning decisions.

Ms Williamson: As part of the spatial plan evaluation and part of the sustainable future work, we have done some work on climate change, more particularly in terms of what are the risks and the vulnerabilities for the city and what would be some of the inherent strengths in Canberra's urban form and urban structure. So, yes, that work has been undertaken.

It would be fair to say that the spatial plan and the legacy of our planning actually serve Canberra very well in that regard. With the spatial plan and the idea of trying to create a more compact city and a more efficient city and by looking at how we intensify along the transport corridors, it actually gives us a very good opportunity to respond and adapt to climate change. Canberra does not have, like many other cities, a heat island effect. That is not discernible. Mainly, our risk is from extreme heat and flooding. Canberra actually has quite good infrastructure and is actually quite well served to try and overcome those things as well.

The risk vulnerability is on the web. The risk vulnerability is a very comprehensive report. Sections of it have been released and put onto what was the old ACTPLA website under the sustainable future program. The entire report is not on there because there are obviously some sensitivities in terms of social sensitivities around some of that which we felt we could not put on in terms of the social analysis that was done in terms of where vulnerable people might be. But there is certainly an appraisal of it that is on there.

Mr Corbell: In terms of climate impacts, that vulnerability assessment identifies and is a very detailed analysis of the potential impact of changes in average temperature over time as a result of warming in the atmosphere and what the potential impacts are on existing and future urban settlement. So it is a very good analysis around, as Ms Williamson says, heat island effects, flooding effects, severe weather and natural disaster effects. That analysis is very robust. It was done by ACON, if I recall correctly. It is a very good analysis of risk vulnerability of climate change to the urban

environment of Canberra.

Ms Williamson: That work was also supported by a second consultancy in terms of taking that and looking at what is the adaptive capacity as well. They are both on there.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much for giving your time this afternoon. Thank you to Ms Williamson and Mr Murray, and also to you, minister. Welcome back to the planning portfolio.

Mr Corbell: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: A copy of the transcript will be sent out. If people notice some errors, can they let the secretariat know. There were two questions taken on notice and we look forward to the responses. That is the end of this hearing this afternoon.

The committee adjourned at 2.28 pm.