

I consider that the [Victorian Urban](#) Development [Authority](#) Amendment ([Urban Renewal Authority](#) Victoria) Bill 2011 is compatible with the charter act because, to the extent that clause 12 may limit human rights, that limitation is reasonable and demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

Matthew Guy, MLC
Minister for Planning

Second reading

Ordered that second-reading speech be incorporated into Hansard on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning).

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

Incorporated speech as follows:

The objective of the bill is to amend the [Victorian Urban](#) Development [Authority](#) Act 2003 to:

1. abolish the [Victorian Urban](#) Development [Authority](#) (VicUrban) and establish the [Urban Renewal Authority](#) Victoria (the [authority](#)) as its successor in law;
2. amend the purpose of that act to reflect the purpose of the [authority](#);
3. set out additional functions of the [authority](#); and
4. provide eligibility criteria for appointment to the board of the authority.

The authority will play an important role in contributing to government's urban planning and development policies, including supporting the delivery of the government's metropolitan strategy and housing affordability policy agenda.

The proposed amendments will convey a clear message about the government's commitment to facilitating large-scale urban change within inner urban areas and the expectations on the authority in contributing to such strategic projects.

It is important to understand that the establishment of the authority is one component of the package of reforms that the government is progressing to improve the efficiency of the planning system.

Role of the authority

The authority will be expected to drive major long-term urban renewal projects and be financially self-sustaining by maintaining a balanced portfolio of profit-generating development projects to cross-subsidise its urban renewal activities.

The authority's focus will be on the strategic redevelopment of large-scale urban neighbourhoods for residential and mixed-use purposes. In many cases, these projects may be long term -- for example, both E-gate and Fishermans Bend, which have been identified as potential urban renewal areas, may require longer term development time frames, spanning up to 30 years.

A key function of the authority will be to carry out or manage or coordinate the carrying out of urban renewal projects. This function recognises that the specific role that the authority will play within its urban renewal projects will be varied and be based on a number of factors including the project location, the nature of the anticipated development and the policy outcomes required by government. This flexibility will enable the authority to target its activities to meet the characteristics of the proposed development.

The aim of the authority is to make land development ready, in order to attract private sector investment in strategic locations and facilitate market activity. Its primary activity will generally

focus on precinct structure planning with a view to enabling early release of development-ready land parcels. Other supporting activities will include master planning, development of specific business cases to determine feasibility, and land preparation including site acquisition, consolidation and subdivision.

To maximise outcomes, the authority will engage with private developers, government departments and agencies in the planning and design of new and innovative ways to deliver new urban accommodation in renewal areas.

The authority will subsume the majority of the functions of VicUrban. However, some of the previous functions of VicUrban have been amended to reflect the authority's central focus on urban renewal.

It will also complete the development of the Docklands.

In addition the amendments emphasise that the authority will have a key role in promoting housing affordability and diversity, and best practice in urban and community design within its urban renewal projects.

The complexity of many urban renewal projects will require the authority to be focused on its new functions and will also require increased oversight from government. To this effect, some of the previous functions of VicUrban will only be undertaken by the authority if expressly requested by the responsible minister.

The initial focus of the authority will be on specific projects identified by government as providing greatest strategic advantage.

To ensure an appropriate focus, the authority will only undertake the development of land or enter into arrangements or agreements for the development of land if expressly requested by the minister.

The authority will have a reduced presence within greenfield locations, compared with its predecessor VicUrban. The previous function of VicUrban explicitly relating to the provision of a competitive market for land is less necessary in today's market, as the private sector adequately provides healthy competition for this product. In the event that there is a requirement for government intervention in the greenfield market, this can be accommodated by a specific direction to the authority by the minister.

Any direction will take account of the implications of such intervention on particular segments of the market to ensure that there is no distortion in market outcomes.

Similarly, under direction of the minister, the authority may also play a role in facilitating development in strategic locations in regional Victoria.

Governance

The authority will be expected to lead urban renewal projects, a number of which may be large scale and complex, and it is critical that a strong governance regime is established that will support the commercial aptitude of the authority.

Upon commencement of the act, VicUrban will be abolished and the current members of the VicUrban board will go out of office.

The authority will be established with an independent board of directors appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the minister.

It is critical to the success of the authority that the board of the authority is comprised of individuals with appropriate industry experience and business acumen to authoritatively guide policy directions and make commercial decisions for the authority.

The bill will introduce specific criteria that the minister may take into consideration when making a recommendation for an individual to be appointed to the board of the authority. The criteria will ensure that the board collectively has skills, experience or knowledge in the areas of infrastructure, property and land development, urban planning, economics, financial management, public administration, corporate governance, housing delivery, supply and affordability, and law (particularly commercial law).

The criteria will assist in establishing a highly skilled board which is well equipped to lead the authority in its new direction.

This will be particularly critical during its transitional and establishment phases.

The authority will operate in accordance with a corporate plan that will be prepared each financial year. The statement of corporate intent will be required to encompass an overall five-year period instead of the previous overall three-year period which applied to VicUrban.

This will contribute to a more comprehensive forward plan for the authority.

Transitional provisions

The bill provides transitional arrangements to transfer all current activities of VicUrban including its rights, assets, liabilities, obligations, contracts and agreements to the authority.

All employees of VicUrban will be transferred to the authority on the same terms and conditions.

It is recognised that there will need to be a transition of VicUrban's current business activities to align with the priorities of the authority. The first priority of the board of the authority will be to develop a transition plan for consideration by government.

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The transition plan will address critical issues relating to segregation of the authority's urban renewal business from the winding up of VicUrban's business activities that are outside of the authority's role, the development of a comprehensive communication plan and a strategy to ensure business continuity during this transitional period.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned for Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) on motion of Mr Lenders.

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 23 June.

Last Updated on Wednesday, 12 May 2010

28th June 2011

http://tex.parliament.vic.gov.au/bin/texhtmlt?form=jVicHansard.dumpall&db=hansard91&dodraft=0&house=COUNCIL&speech=12876&activity=Second+Reading&title=VICTORIAN+URBAN+DEVELOPMENT+AUTHORITY+AMENDMENT+%28URBAN+RENEWAL+AUTHORITY+VICTORIA%29+BILL+2011&date1=28&date2=June&date3=2011&query=true%0A%09and+%28+data+contains+%27VICTORIAN%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27URBAN%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27DEVELOPMENT%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27AUTHORITY%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27AMENDMENT%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27URBAN%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27RENEWAL%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27AUTHORITY%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27VICTORIA%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%27BILL%27%0A%09and+data+contains+%272011%27+%29%0A%09and+%28+hdate.hdate_3+=+2011+%29%0A

Debate resumed from 16 June; motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning).

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[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I welcome the opportunity to make a contribution to the debate on the [Victorian Urban Development Authority](#) Amendment ([Urban Renewal Authority](#) Victoria) Bill 2011, which in essence winds up VicUrban and transforms it into the [Urban Renewal Authority](#) Victoria. A number of issues still need to be resolved in terms of the consequences of the new [Urban Renewal Authority](#). The opposition has several areas of concern, including whether the new [Urban Renewal Authority](#) will have an independent board. There are two aspects to that concern.

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The first is that there are provisions in the bill whereby the minister effectively intercedes and becomes the gatekeeper and decision-maker in terms of the activities of the Urban Renewal Authority. Our second concern is the announcement of Mr Peter Clarke as chairman of its board, and this is a subject I will return

to. However, the first aspect of the bill I want to talk about are the provisions relating to the appointment of board members, including how they are appointed, and the role of the minister as the champion of the board.

Another issue that has emerged is a concern that with the proposal that VicUrban should disappear the focus that VicUrban had in terms of greenfields development will also disappear because the focus of the new authority will be inner urban renewal. There are concerns about communities in greenfields developments, some of which are nearly finished and others which are newly started, and that commitments made may not now be delivered by VicUrban. There is concern about what will occur in those communities and what will become of those developments.

While members of the opposition will not oppose the bill, we see the bill puts a greater focus on urban renewal and is a move away from greenfields development. Our concern is that there is an assumption that all is well with development on Melbourne's fringe and this bill provides an opportunity for VicUrban to move out of those developments and into a more inner urban mode. What does that mean for the shape of the growth of those communities? Will we see the development of dormitory suburbs as happened 20 or 30 years ago?

VicUrban played an important role in setting benchmarks in greenfield development -- for example, it was VicUrban that made sure developments such as the Aurora project had bike paths, shops, employment opportunities and schools. All of these things were provided for as an active community package, and this not only became the benchmark for communities to live in but also the benchmark for developers in terms of how to develop a community rather than a series of homes.

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With the withdrawal of VicUrban from that role there is a concern that we will go backwards. People in those communities do not buy a house; in every community what we buy is a vision for how and where we want to live -- a dream in terms of the home that we want to make for ourselves and our families. VicUrban was about ensuring that if you had a home on Melbourne's fringe, then your home was located so that you were encouraged to exercise, including walking to your shops and having sufficient open space. That is at risk now as VicUrban moves out of that space.

Essentially the staff of VicUrban will stay on in their former roles, but this legislation provides the minister with the capacity to appoint his own people to the new authority's board. This is not only somewhat arrogant but certainly dismissive of the hard work that the existing board has done.

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[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- I will not take up too much of the house's time because I know we want to go into a committee stage, which I am very happy to do. I want to make some remarks but not so much to the chamber. I want to make some remarks to people who I know might be listening tonight or indeed who may read this tomorrow in Hansard. They are members of the public who live on the Aurora estate in Epping North in the region I represent, Northern Metropolitan Region.

Over the last few weeks they have been fed what can only be described as a bunch of absolutely disgraceful, scaremongering lies -- lies such as that their estate will not be completed and that community facilities will be ripped out from underneath them. Who has fed them this information? None other than their local member of Parliament, the member for Yan Yean in the other place, Danielle Green, ably assisted by Mr Tee, the shadow Minister for Planning.

I simply say to those people listening tonight, your concerns raised with me as to whether this material is in fact a scare campaign from the Labor Party are 100 per cent right. What we have had from the Labor Party has been an absolute disgrace -- --

Mr Tee -- You are selling them out! Down the drain. Just gone. Gone!

Hon. M. J. GUY -- Let me go further for the benefit of the vocal shadow minister. Contained in the pieces of paper I have here, in response to the shadow Minister for Planning who is yelling out that we are selling out the outer suburbs by moving the focus of the authority to the inner city, are almost 30 pieces of

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correspondence. They are letters written by the former Minister for Planning, Mr Madden, to VicUrban, the organisation we are replacing here tonight, which authorise the authority to dispose of a quarter of a billion dollars of land assets in areas such as Aurora. Did Mr Madden not tell Mr Tee that? I guess Mr Madden did not. Did Mr Lenders tell Mr Tee that? Did Mr Lenders tell Mr Tee that the previous government had factored in a quarter of a billion dollars of land sales, including Aurora, in this coming term should the Labor Party be re-elected?

Here we have the Australian Labor Party running into this chamber saying, 'You are selling out people living in Aurora', when all along that is what the Labor Party intended to do. What is better than that, though, is the fact that the letters contain an absolute direction from the then Minister for Planning, Justin Madden, demanding VicUrban change its business program to focus not on the outer suburbs but on inner suburban Melbourne.

There was absolute direction from the minister. Concerns were raised by the spiv member for Melton in the other place, Don Nardella, who called people 'spivs' and 'carpetbaggers' -- --

Mr Tee -- On a point of order, Acting President, the reference to the member for Melton as a 'spiv' is inappropriate, and the minister should withdraw his reference.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Elasmarr) -- Order! I ask the minister to withdraw his comment.

Hon. M. J. GUY -- I withdraw. Other members in the other chamber, such as the members for Yan Yean and Essendon, insulted members in the last Parliament in outer suburbs, talking about obese housing and McMansions, and talking down outer suburbs.

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Now the Australian Labor Party has the gall to run a scare campaign to the people in Aurora, saying that their communities will be destroyed simply through the refocusing of an organisation, and here is the material on what it was going to do all along. Here are the letters written by Mr Tee's former government. I wonder how many conversations Mr Madden had with Mr Tee about his plans, his absolute directions to VicUrban to change the focus of that organisation. How many conversations did Mr Lenders have with the current shadow ministry about it committing in the previous government to a quarter of a billion dollars of land sales out of VicUrban, which included the sale of Aurora. Tonight we have the Labor Party members threatening and scaring, driving people in the outer suburbs to tears because they may have changes made in their community, when the Labor Party was going to do that all along; and not only that, it is in print. Shame on you! You have shown yourself to be a hypocrite of the highest order, a man not up to the job that he has.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Elasmarr) -- Order! The minister, through the Chair!

Hon. M. J. GUY -- You are quite right, Acting President. He has shown, through you Chair, that he is a hypocrite and not up to the job he has.

Mr Leane -- On a point of order, Acting President, the President has ruled on calling individual members hypocrites and said it was unparliamentary. The minister should withdraw.

Mr Finn -- On the point of order, Acting President, my very clear understanding is that if Mr Tee has taken offence at what the minister has said, since Mr Tee is in the house he is well within his rights, and presumably it is well within his ability, to rise to his feet and ask for a withdrawal. It is not Mr Leane's place to take offence on Mr Tee's behalf, despite what he might like to do.

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It is well within Mr Tee's rights to get up and ask for a withdrawal himself.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Elasmarr) -- Order! Again I ask the minister to withdraw his comment.

Hon. M. J. GUY -- I withdraw. I simply say in conclusion that the hypocrisy of the Australian Labor Party is absolute. It is absolutely astonishing and offensive, and it is no wonder that its primary vote is beyond the depths of 30 per cent in every state and nationally in this country when it treats people with such disrespect. It talks down the outer suburbs with venom and then its members walk into this Parliament months later to scare people in an appalling and abhorrent way, when all along the proof is otherwise: that the spivs opposite in the Labor Party, with their mates in the Socialist Left, were always designed to demolish outer urban developments in Melbourne.

I look forward to this committee debate. I very much look forward to running through every single piece of paper I have and reading every bit of them, whether we are here till 4.00 a.m. or 5.00 a.m. Mr Tee will be nothing but a flash in the pan, as is typical of members opposite who have had responsibility for the shadow portfolio before him, who ideologically hate outer suburbs. That has been proven by this evidence today.

Motion agreed to.

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[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- This goes to the issue the minister raised in his reply -- that is, there is a degree of concern about what happens with the assets that VicUrban holds, and one of those issues comes up in regard to the commencement where the default position is 1 July 2012. Can the minister give us an indication of whether or not that would be the time at which the operation comes into effect or would it be a time before then? Is there any sense of when the bill will be enacted?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- Mr Tee has raised two points: about the continuation of contracts, and in relation to the commencement of the operation of the bill. On the first point, the commencement of the operation will be fairly soon. There is no defined date as yet; we will wait and see what happens in the Parliament tonight. The second point is what Mr Tee has raised in the substantive debate and again now around the continuation of contracts.

Given there is such interest from the Australian Greens, and indeed the Australian Labor Party, tonight about the VicUrban website, I am betting that none of them has been to that website to see a very clear indication that all contracts that have been entered into by VicUrban will be fulfilled. All will be fulfilled.

All the contracts in place, the community services and community infrastructure that have been committed to for places like Aurora, will be fulfilled. As I said in my summary of the second-reading debate, this stands in

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stark contrast to the previous government, which sought to sell VicUrban's asset in Aurora. Indeed the previous Minister for Planning clearly indicated to the VicUrban board that it should remove VicUrban from outer urban estates like Aurora in Epping, like the Officer development and others. He directed VicUrban to focus on inner urban estates and to dispose of land in outer areas of Melbourne. That was part of the attempt by the former Treasurer John Lenders to rip \$250 million from the balance sheet of VicUrban and put it back into general revenue. VicUrban was there to provide funds from the sale of assets like Aurora and Officer -- I am speaking to the clause -- to fill a \$250 million black hole. It is an outstanding revelation given that Labor is now claiming it is standing up for areas that it tried to sell.

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I realise we are on the commencement clause. I have a number of questions that go to the assets provisions.

I seek guidance from you, Acting President: should I deal with them in the commencement clause or wait until we get to the relevant clause in the bill?

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Finn) -- Order! I think it would be helpful if we waited until we got to the appropriate clause.

Clause agreed to; clauses 3 to 5 agreed to.

Clause 6

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- Clause 6 is the definitions clause, and paragraph (b) provides the definition of urban renewal. It is a broad definition -- it refers to the redevelopment of large-scale urban neighbourhoods -- and I wonder if the minister could give us an indication as to the extent of that.

I take it that it is not inner urban Melbourne, that it can extend to Footscray or Morwell, for example. Can the minister give us a sense as to how far that definition extends?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- Urban renewal is a definition that can apply anywhere around Victoria.

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- Could it apply to the eastern suburbs of Melbourne? The minister says it could apply anywhere in Victoria. Does that include regional or rural towns?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- All those places are in Victoria.

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- It raises the question: what has been the change in focus if everything is in?

On that basis it could be greenfield developments. What is the change in definition from the VicUrban definition?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- Mr Tee's point is a very good one. He should ask himself why then he and Danielle Green, the member for Yan Yean in the other place, have been saying to people in Aurora that the government is going to pull out of outer urban development. When I read the substantive speeches in the other chamber, I saw that the opposition's focus was its claim that the government will take VicUrban out of the outer urban market entirely overnight and sell all its assets. Mr Tee raised a very good point: what is the change in definition if that is not the case? Mr Tee is quite right: that is not the case. He

has just confirmed to the chamber exactly what I have said all along -- that is, urban renewal will be in existing urban areas, obviously, which may be the subject of urban change.

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The Urban Renewal Authority Victoria will come in with a mandate, which will be the board's to direct. The areas could be in outer urban Melbourne, Melbourne's middle suburbs, as we have talked about, Melbourne's southern suburbs, in areas such as the Maribyrnong defence land or regional cities like Geelong and areas. Mr Tee referred to the mandate of the authority. The reason for putting that in was to give a definition that provides some clarity -- it simply tidies up what was in the legislation previously -- and that provides the government with a range of options.

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I am beginning to think that Mr Barber's understanding of the bill might be right. The second-reading speech provides that the authority will have a reduced presence within greenfield locations. I am trying to understand how that is consistent with the answer the minister has just given that it can be anywhere.

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- It is very clear: reduced does not mean none. It is as simple as that.

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- The second-reading speech also talks about how the initial focus would be on specific projects identified by the government. In relation to that I wonder whether the government has a number of sites in mind, what they are and whether there will be a capacity for community engagement in terms of the identification of sites. Will there be consultation prior to the list being finalised? What process is envisaged for the identification of these specific projects?

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[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- The government is going through an audit of land within the urban growth boundary for metropolitan Melbourne. That audit will identify a number of sites, and any large sites that are deemed urban renewal opportunities may be designated for the operation of the authority.

Clause agreed to; clauses 7 and 8 agreed to.

Clause 9

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I am giving the minister the opportunity to demonstrate that there is an independent source of power, provided for in this bill, for this authority to enter into an agreement or an arrangement for the development of land.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Finn) -- Order! The minister.

Mr Tee -- I've given you four chances. If you can't -- --

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- This is a fifth chance, and I am not going to answer it a fifth time. I have made it very clear.

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- That is the answer I wanted. This question is in relation to the requested-by-the-minister aspect, which I think we will need to acknowledge is an important change.

The question also goes to the issue of the communities out at Aurora, Meridian, Lynbrook, Riverwalk, and the sudden change in the legislation meaning that the urban renewal authority can enter into arrangements or agreements if requested by the minister. My question is: what guarantee will the minister give those communities that the urban renewal authority will be the authority that will continue the developments they have entered into? These are communities that do not necessarily have contracts; community members have contracts for the building of a house, but with VicUrban they have an understanding that goes to communities, to schools, to shops and to parklands. What the minister has provided in this bill is the capacity of the urban renewal authority, if requested by the minister, to enter into an arrangement with another developer involving their homes, their dreams and their communities.

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- Says the Australian Labor Party, which said that these people lived in obese housing.

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Let me again say to the people the ALP insulted six months ago and who it now purports to defend tonight: all the contracts and all the structured planning and development plans that have been submitted will be honoured. They will be honoured, and they will be honoured in a timely manner, in a manner that has been set out in the development plans and, more to the point, in a manner the previous government did not seek to honour them. The previous government sought simply to sell those parcels of land without joint-venturing them and without guaranteeing any of the development plans that existed in any of the areas that Mr Tee mentioned. The current government will guarantee that those development plans will be honoured.

There is a key difference between what I have said tonight and the mischievous -- well, there is a four-letter word starting with 'l', but I will use another term -- commentary that has been made by Mr Tee and the member for Yan Yean in particular, which is utterly untrue.

Those members have run around outer urban suburbs of Melbourne telling people that shops will not be built; parks will not be established -- even though the parks the members were talking about already exist; and that railway lines will not be built -- and again these were railway lines that were never budgeted for by the previous government. They have been saying none of those facilities will be built.

I say simply: the development plans that have been put forward are plans we are still working towards, and they will be honoured. The previous government sought simply to sell those planned developments and use them as a quick cash cow.

[Mr TEE \(Eastern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I will give the minister a second chance.

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The question was: for those communities that are currently hanging on to their dream of a dream community, be it in Aurora, be it in Meridian, be it in Lynbrook or be it in Riverwalk, what guarantee does the minister give those communities that the new urban renewal authority will complete their communities?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- There is the guarantee on the website saying those development plans will be completed, the guarantee in my previously issued press release, the guarantee in the second-reading speech, the guarantee of the Premier, the guarantee that has existed in all government commentary to date, the guarantee of the incoming chairman of the urban renewal authority and indeed the guarantee of the chairman of VicUrban, made today, that the contracts and the plans put forward by VicUrban will be carried out. In the outer growth areas that will be the case.

I do not know how many times I need to restate this. Is there any other way I can state this? I do it despite those opposite wanting to sell the relevant land off and scrap those development plans. I am going to complete them. Is there any way I can say that more clearly so that there is not a third question? How would Mr Tee like me to state this even more clearly for him? Those opposite wanted to sell these developments for cash, and I intend to complete them.

Ms Mikakos interjected.

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[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- On a point of order, I think Ms Mikakos should withdraw the gratuitous comment involving obscene words.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Finn) -- Order! I did not quite hear what she said. Was it an obscene acronym perhaps?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- There was one indeed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Finn) -- Order! The minister has taken offence at Ms Mikakos's comment; I ask her to withdraw.

Ms Mikakos -- On the point of order, Acting President, the usual practice would be that the minister would disclose what it was he took offence to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Finn) -- Order!

I think the minister heard very well what the member said, and I think I did too. I ask Ms Mikakos to withdraw.

[Ms MIKAKOS \(Northern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I withdraw, Chair.

In relation to this line of questioning, Aurora has been a flagship development for VicUrban for many years, and I have been very proud that that flagship development has been occurring in my electorate of Northern Metropolitan Region, which is also the minister's electorate. I would hope that as the new Minister for Planning the minister would be a champion for the completion of this development, and I would hope that residents who have bought into that estate will benefit from the completion of the development over time. I do not think it is appropriate that the minister is seeking to be flippant about concerns that the local member, the member for Yan Yean in the Assembly, Danielle Green, has raised in relation to the operation of this bill.

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I too was very alarmed when I looked at the second-reading speech and read that:

The authority will have a reduced presence within greenfield locations, compared with its predecessor VicUrban.

This issue has already been explored very capably by Mr Tee, but those residents deserve a detailed explanation in relation to that shift in emphasis. I think Ms Green has been doing a stellar job in raising the concerns of those residents around these issues.

I want to pursue a range of issues around Aurora specifically because I would like the minister to have the opportunity this evening to give certain assurances to residents in relation to that development. In particular, the structure plan for the Aurora development includes a rail reservation and public transport corridor.

I would like the minister to address whether that corridor will be preserved and whether that community will ever have train or bus services delivered to it as a result of that reservation.

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- I cannot let this chance go. Here we have a member who has been here for the best part of a decade. She sees a rail reservation put through the middle of an estate in her own electorate and she is now getting up and demanding answers as to when the current government is going to fund a project that she advocated for for 10 years and got not a cent towards. A failed member, who for 10 years does not get a cent towards something, runs out after losing an election and says, 'Now you need to fund the projects that I failed to get funding for for the last decade'.

Ms Mikakos -- You scrapped the busway.

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Hon. M. J. GUY -- I simply again refer to commentary made at the time by the previous Minister for Planning in the Australian Financial Review and in letters he sent to the board of VicUrban where he directed it to dispose of land assets that it had in its possession. I simply say that the fears being pumped up by the member for Yan Yean in the other place are obscene. Fears are being pumped into people who are living in a terrific outer urban estate, trying to get on with their lives, by their local members of Parliament, both upper and lower house -- in fact Mr Tee is effectively a local member of Parliament, given he lives in my electorate, not in his own -- who are running around town and running into this electorate trying to scare people. I will say it again: the plans that were put forward will be honoured. Those people have nothing to be concerned about in relation to the completion of that development. Indeed I am a big supporter of outer urban development and have been for some time. My commentary on that is on the record, as opposed to others who referred to that and other developments as 'obese housing' and 'McMansions' and talked them down.

I simply say again that the government has made commitments. The Urban Renewal Authority will complete the projects and the contracts that have been put on the table and the development plans within them in the outer urban areas. That is one in particular that, as Ms Mikakos says, I will have a keen interest in. If we can get better outcomes for local communities, we will explore them -- better outcomes as opposed to a

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number of the blocks in the northern part of the Aurora estate which are some way off coming on stream.

[Mr BARBER \(Northern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I am even more outraged on this point than the minister is, if that is possible. Back in 2006 the VicUrban website in relation to the Aurora estate actually stated that all houses on the estate -- and these are virtually the words that were on the website -- would be within 400 metres of public transport and 800 metres from the railway station. That is what it said on the website in early 2006. The then Labor government announced Meeting our Transport Challenges and the projects listed in the appendix indicated that the South Morang extension was going to happen decades down the track and the North Epping extension had been taken completely off the list of future projects, so well outside 2025 in that instance. Within a few days of Meeting our Transport Challenges being released, VicUrban took the words off the website.

If anyone has any doubt about this, they can check the question that I asked in estimates hearings of Minister Theophanous, who was then the minister responsible for VicUrban. He basically laughed it off. He said, 'It is pretty close to a freeway so they can be in the city reasonably fast on the new Craigieburn bypass'.

It is reasonable to ask a new government when it thinks it might get around to building a North Epping railway spur, but to put it in the terms that Ms Mikakos just did is I think an absolute outrage. The former government took the carpet out from underneath those who had already committed to living in North Epping. From 2006 up to 2010 it never promised to reinstate that particular rail project, albeit leaving a reservation in place, because over that time the structure plan for the estate did not change, and it still has not changed as far I am aware.

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[Ms MIKAKOS \(Northern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I take that to be a comment in support of the minister. As I said, there is a range of issues from those affected residents in relation to the structure plan that deserves a response. There is also one of the very necessary arterial roads, the north-south link shown in the structure plan, which is in fact Edgars Road, for which 700 metres of the extension from Cooper Street to O'Herns Road remains unfunded. What assurances can the minister give Epping North residents that this remaining part of that crucial road will be funded?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- In relation to the development of Aurora and the road the member is talking about, one is separate from the other. As someone who is the former parliamentary secretary for planning, who presided over letters being sent to VicUrban effectively for the sale of this development, who now feigns concern about the residents living in that development, I just wonder when Ms Mikakos last went out there.

I suggest she has not been out there. The road she is talking about is one with arterial access to it, which would be considered outside of a development plan for that site.

[Ms MIKAKOS \(Northern Metropolitan\)](#) -- I take that to be a no from the minister. The other issue that I think is of great significance to affected residents is that relating to schools. The Aurora structure plan indicates that five schools are to be built there. What assurances can the minister give the affected community that those schools will proceed?

[Hon. M. J. GUY \(Minister for Planning\)](#) -- The same guarantees that Labor gave them before the election.

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Clause agreed to; clauses 16 to 23 agreed to.

Reported to house without amendment.

Report adopted.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.