

Budget Estimates Questions

Secretary

1. Why has the NSW Government stripped powers from the GSC?
2. Why does the Department insist on making plans for areas and imposing strategies on councils, but blames councils for issues with development applications and planning proposals?

Planning and Design

1. Why are plans for the Wilton Growth Area continuing to progress while legal proceedings are taking place for South East Wilton by the council?
2. Is the NSW Government concerned that Country Garden is looking to buy land at Wilton? Has the Minister or Department had meetings with them regarding this or any area? Did Daryl Maguire?
3. Why did the Department ignore advice regarding OEH regarding koala protection at Wilton?
4. How did the NSW come up with 16.8% tree canopy cover in Sydney?
5. Why did the Office of Open Space and Parklands give so much money to councils around the North Shore when these areas already have so much tree canopy cover?
6. How much time and money did the NSW Government spend on planning Sydenham to Bankstown? Why did the Government persist so long despite clear and constant objection from the community?
7. What is the Government's new plan for Sydenham to Bankstown? Does the housing target of 35,400 homes along the corridor remain in place under the decision to return some planning controls to local councils? Has the plan been scrapped?
8. Planning for the Planned Precincts has taken years. Why are the community still waiting?
9. Given the state of the housing market, is now the time to be imposing massive costs on developers in the form of SICs? Won't these new fees be passed onto homebuyers (including first homebuyers)?
10. Doesn't SICs take money away from local councils?

11. Why has the NSW Government strung developers and residents along for plans for Ingleside? Why has a fire safety review only just happened recently when it should've been done years ago? What input, if any, did the previous Minister have on this issue?
12. Why has growth in the North West exceeded NSW Government projections? Were the official forecasts incorrect?
13. Why have plans progressed for Sydney Olympic Park and Carter Street without guaranteed public transport upgrades?
14. The RMIT liveability report suggested that 41% of lower income households in Sydney are experience housing affordability stress, what is the NSW Government going to do about this?
15. What conversations has the Minister or Department had with Ray Hadley? What assurances has the Minister provided about his property?
16. Regarding the purchase of Fernhill, was the NSW Government aware of the court case between Biofin Pty Ltd (tenant of Fernhill) and Angas Securities (landowner)? Was the NSW Government aware of alleged misconduct of Biofin with regards to hosting events able to be heard clearly by surrounding neighbours at Fernhill without the proper approval from Penrith City Council and the landowners?
17. What is the NSW Government doing to handle increasing density in Sydney?
18. Why is the NSW Government introducing a Planned Precinct at West Schofield when there is a severe lack of commuter car parking and insufficient public transport?
19. Why does the Sydney Metro West end at Tallawong Station and not at Schofields station where it connects to the main T1 line and a new suburb is being planned for the area. Isn't this an example of the Government being short-sighted and not adequately planning for the future of the area?
20. Why is the NSW Government persisting with plans for Wentworth Point when there isn't an adequate provision of public transport to service the area?

Policy and Strategy

1. How many proposals for boarding houses and aged care homes have been approved, following receiving SEPP compatibility certification, despite the council opposing the proposal?

2. According to Ray Hadley, the Minister has said that he intends “to put in place, with the help of councils, that within a 1 km radius you can’t keep building these things on former rural land.” When will this happen?
3. Why does the SEPP for Affordable Housing allow the NSW government to override council's planning controls? What issue did this provision seek to address? Is the government considering amending or repealing the Affordable Housing SEPP to address concerns about boarding house developments that breach planning rules or are proposed in suburban areas of Sydney?
4. No trees have been given out under the free tree initiative. Will be keeping Bunnings [sic] keep the \$XX worth of government money?
5. When will the government just admit that medium density housing code is dead? Why is Ryde the only council getting a 24 month deferral? Can other councils request this? With so many councils against it, why is the NSW Government persisting?
6. Who is responsible for cladding decisions within the NSW Government? When is the register expected to come out? Will you guarantee that it will be public? If not, why are you comfortable risking the lives of the public by not warning them of buildings with potential fire risks?
7. Where did the data for Short-term holiday letting come from? There is reports of collusion around this issue. Is there any truth to this?
<https://m.byronnews.com.au/news/letters-holiday-letting-data-questioned/3482006/>
8. Short-term holding letting will harm housing availability and affordability by reducing the number of homes available for long-term rent. What is the NSW Government doing about this?

Planning Services

1. Why was the Planning Panels set up without any community consultation?
2. Why can the Minister make autonomous decisions in rezoning reviews, gateway determinations and rezoning decisions?

Catherine Hill Bay Water Utility (NEW)

Does that Department agree with the EPA that the Catherine Hill Bay Water Utility poses unacceptable risks?

Does the Government support the dumping of raw sewage into beachside lagoons, such as is proposed at Catherine Hill Bay?

What health risks are associated by the dumping of raw sewage into beachside lagoons, such as is proposed at Catherine Hill Bay?

ACCC report - and Liddell and Vales Point (sales of Macquarie Generation)

What is the NSW Government doing to protect baseload power supply when AGL shut Liddell Power Station in four years?

Given the NSW Government sold Liddell Power Station for one dollar, how much has the government spent supporting the growth of renewable energy sources to make up the shortfall in electricity when AGL shut the station down in 2022?

ACCC report - retail competition, Thwaites Review comparison

The Thwaites Review found Victorians are not gaining the full benefit from a competitive retail energy market. Can you guarantee the market in NSW is delivering the full benefit to consumers?

How can the NSW Government guarantee consumers are not being ripped off by energy retailers?

Blackouts and outages

How much does blackouts and outages cost businesses in NSW and what is the Government doing to prevent them?

Energy - Disconnections – Business and residential

With rising energy costs, how many businesses and consumers are having their energy supply disconnected?

What support does the Government offer consumers who are under financial stress due to the rise in energy prices.

Energy supply & demand - for summer peaks

We all saw what happened in South Australia two years ago. Can the Government guarantee that the same won't happen in NSW?

What are you doing to protect the NSW power supply during heatwaves this summer?

Renewable energy + Snowy Hydro 2.0

Is this Government doing enough on renewable energy?

Apart from Snowy Hydro 2.0, what else has the Government done to support the renewable energy market in NSW?

Electricity Pricing/retail, FiTs

Energy prices are on the rise. What is the Government doing to encourage retails to keep the price down?

Smart meters and meter readings (connections and installation)

Is the rollout of smart meters in NSW meeting expectations?

What is being done to ensure NSW consumers are not being slugged with extra fees through the misuse of smart meter data during peak periods?

Regulatory Proposals - Ausgrid, Endeavour, Essential - network revenue and pricing

With families across NSW seeing their electricity bills skyrocket, why does the NSW Government insist on saying that network fees are falling?

Will you admit that network charges are only a small component of families electricity bills? What else is the Government doing to reduce bills for families?

What is the Government doing to ensure electricity retailers are not overcharging consumers for network charges?

Potable reuse

With NSW facing the worst drought in its history, will the Government review its stance on potable reuse?

Is potable reuse water safe for the community?

Water supply to Dungog residents

How much will it cost the state to upgrade Dungog's water supply to make it safe for human consumption?

Has the Government estimated the cost on the community for supplying the residents of Dungog with unsafe drinking water for decades?

Shoalhaven transfers and MWP

With NSW facing the worst drought in its history, does the Shoalhaven transfer changes mean Sydney will be facing severe water restrictions this year?

Water NSW submission to independent panel on mining in the catchments

Why did the NSW Government approved the modification applications for Dendrobium before the Independent Panel on Mining in the Catchments released its final report?

What is the cost for the health of the Sydney drinking water catchment? Is that higher than the amount the Government is set to make from royalties by allowing mining to occur in the catchment?

Hunter water role in PFAS contamination at Williamtown

What has Hunter Water done to ensure the supply has not been exposed to PFAS through Grahamstown Dam?

What has Hunter Water done to the Tomago Sandbanks after PFAS was identified there?

2011 election commitment to priority sewerage program (including Yarrerra)

Is the Government meeting its 2011 election commitment to the priority sewerage program? Which areas are not meeting that commitment?

Water Security - MWP (NEW)

With the state gripped by the worst drought in history, can you guarantee there will be no need to implement water restrictions this summer?

Is the Government going to activate the desalination plant to protect the Sydney water supply this year? What other options does the Government have?

Ridgелands

How long ago did the Department know that Ridgелands had not set up its community fund? Why was nothing done?

Does the Department accept it failed in its duty to ensure that the Ridgелands community fund had been set up?

Shenhua Watermark project

Why did the NSW Government decide to renew the EL for Shenhua after it brought back 51 per cent of the land to protect the black soils of the Liverpool Plains?

Was there an agreement between the Government and Shenhua to grant the EL extension in exchange for the buyback?

Why did the Government only buy back 51 percent of Shenhua, when it brought back 100 per cent of other ELs?

Why did the Government spend any money on the Shenhua buyback given the EL had already expired and could have just been cancelled?

Nucoal

How much has the stripping of Nucoal's EL cost the taxpayer so far?

Was the decision to strip NuCoal of its EL a rash decision?

Santos Narrabri project

With more than 22,000 objections to the Narrabri Gas Project, why is the Government continuing to push the application through the planning system?

The Department recently sent the Narrabri Project RtS back to Santos for more information. What additional info did the department ask for, and does this mean the Department is unlikely to approve it?

Kylie Hargraves

Why was Deputy Secretary Kylie Hargreaves asked to leave the Department last year? Was there concerns that the Department was neglecting its role?

Strategic Release

What is the Government doing to protect the integrity of exploration licence system?

The Strategic Release Framework was release a number of years ago. Why is it taking so long to make any areas available?

What areas have been identified as suitable for Strategic Release? Are the local community aware their community has been earmarked for exploration licences and are they supportive of it?

Petroleum offshore licences PEP 11

Did the Government think of the risks to the community and the economy when it allowed seismic testing on the PEP11 gas field?

Wallarrah 2

What has the NSW Government done to ensure the Central Coast's water supply won't be affected by the Wallarah2 Coal mine?

Why did the Government ignore the wishes of the community and the advice of independent experts when it approved the Wallarah2 mine?

Overview NSW Mining Industry (Facts, figures)

With the bottom dropping out of the coal industry, isn't it time the NSW Government looked to different income streams in the future?

As mining is unsustainable in the future, what is the Government doing to protect the economy from future market collapses in the mining industry?

Renewal of PEL461

With the NSW public making it clear they don't support CSG, why did the NSW Government renew PEL461? What does this mean for the people of Lake Macquarie?

Coal Innovation NSW Fund

How much was spent propping up the Coal Innovation Fund, which awards funds to groups to continue to pedal [sic] the "clean coal" fallacy?

Managing fatigue in mining workplaces (Investigations into accidents/mining fatalities)

We've seen some shocking accidents in mines which have been attributed to fatigue. What is the NSW Government doing to reduce fatigue on mine sites?

Black lung

Last year, a case of Black Lung was detected in NSW. Has any more cases been detected and what is the Government doing to ensure mine workers are checked for the disease?

Resources Regulator Compliance and Enforcement Activities (Formerly Mine Safety - Compliance and Enforcement Activities)

Opal claims in Lightning Ridge have been targeted by the Resources Regulator this year. What was the outcome of this blitz? Was a problem identified and what is the Government doing to bring the industry into line?

Significant Mine Safety Incidents (formerly Major Investigations - Appin, Yancoal, Ridglands)

What is the Government doing about Yancoal, who has seen some major incidents take place at their mine in the Hunter Valley?

Is the Government confident that operations at Cadia Mine are safe, after a number of seismic activities and the failure of the tailings dam earlier this year?

Rehabilitation Reform

Does NSW have enough bonds to cover the cost of mining rehabilitation across the state?

Fit and Proper - Kepco Bylong, Wollongong Coal, Ausgold

What provisions are in place to ensure that controversial mining activities are fit and proper for purpose. Has the Government found any miners not fit and proper?

Question

How much did the Department's Transitional Development Office spend on the Year of Communications for 2018?

How much did the Department's Transitional and Development Office spend on the Planned Precincts public awareness, communication and/or advertising campaign in 2017 and 2018?

Did the Secretary offer to fund the Department's Transitional and Development Office \$6 million to work on the Department's internal communications campaign "The Year of Communications" and the Planned Precincts public campaign?

Why was the Planned Precincts public communications campaign cancelled?

Why has the Government permitted the Shepherds Bay development to proceed in Meadowbank when there is a critical shortage of car parking, traffic issues and increased density. By approving huge developments like Shepherds Bay has the Government failed the people of the City of Ryde Council area?

Did the Department stage a staff event at the Sydney Opera House featuring an interpretative theatre group performing a "planning" show?

Did the Department ignore advice from an Independent Expert Panel on the impact of Dendrobium Coal Mine's Longwall 16 when the panel said it was "not in a position to reach a confident conclusion" that the extraction of Longwall 16 would result in breach of the conditions?

Is the Government ensuring best practice design is implemented at the Martin Place Metro over station development site?

Why is the Minister determining the Macquarie Bank over station development proposal. Given the Liberal Party's close links to the company isn't this a potential conflict of interest?

Why is the Government pressing ahead with plans to build an extra 450 dwellings in Epping. Parramatta Council have raised density, traffic and

available commercial floor space concerns which are being ignored by the Government.

Why will the Port Stephens area receive little funding under the new Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution?

What is the Government doing to address overcrowding and traffic concerns around Byron Bay Parklands during the annual festivals held in the area such as Splendor in the Grass?

Is the Government failing regional NSW towns like Bourke by not adequately planning or funding town's for the future?

The ABC reported that the Department ignored advice from Department of Industry, Water in its assessment of the Bylong Coal Project?

Why is the Department still considering the Narrabri Gas Project after receiving more than 23,000 submissions against the proposal?

Why is the Department assessing the Snowy Hydro 2.0 project when the proponent is not legally allowed to build its power station on Australia Heritage-listed state national park?

The Sydney Football Stadium is being done in two stages, so how can the community comment on a concept it cannot see?

The planning approval for the new stadium at Parramatta was also in two stages and took 10 months. That means demolition should occur in April 2019. Why is the assessment process for this project being fast tracked?

How many fines have been issued to trucks working on the WestConnex projects that are illegally using local roads?

How many truck movements are involved in the WestConnex M4 widening and New M5 projects?

The Premier's top priority is housing affordability and has fast tracked tens of thousands of home approvals to increase supply. Why then are there more than 20,000 vacant apartments in Sydney?

Why did the Department approve Springvale Coal mine's request for extraction of another longwall when there is already proven evidence of the impact of this coalmine on local heritage-listed swamp land?

What is the Government proactively doing to address the growing problem of Sydney's shortage of available cemetery burial space?

What is the Government's position on two current cemetery proposals for Wallacia and Varroville?

Given available cemetery space is becoming a critical issue why isn't the Minister determining the projects. Isn't this another example of the Minister avoiding controversial projects where he is the final decision maker?

Is the Government planning on building a containment cell at the remediation site at Nelson Road, Hunters Hill?

Why has the Department not exercised its power under the Environmental Planning and Assessments Act to finalise its assessment of the application?

Does the Government's inactivity at Hunters Hill pose a risk for contaminants including radium to enter the Parramatta River/Sydney Harbour?

Why has the Government backed away from plans/discussions to build a treatment centre for the Hunters Hill contaminants? Is the Government now also not pursuing a national treatment centre?

Why has the Government reduced the minimum setback conditions for the Martin Place Metro over station development. Is this because the applicant is Macquarie Bank?

Ecological experts have raised concerns about Kings Forest residential subdivision. Is the Department planning to ignore sound advice to deliver on its promise to build a new hospital?

The Kings Forest residential subdivision area is considered a critical area for koalas. How can the Department justify potentially disturbing this habitat ?