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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE MET AT CARDINIA ROOM, COUNCIL HOUSE 2, 240 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE ON TUESDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

BUILT HERITAGE TOURISM INQUIRY

DISCUSSION WITH **Mr IAN WINTER**, MELBOURNE CITY COUNCIL.

Mr WINTER - My position as Manager Design at City of Melbourne is one where I basically provide design services to the council and those design services come in the form of architecture, landscape architecture and industrial design. It is a very broad portfolio. It covers both facilities and the public realm. It is not just about council buildings or council assets. They could be anything from an office building, town hall, sports pavilions et cetera, but those built structures in parks such as monuments, sporting pavilions et cetera, through to the public realm, which can be anything that basically we have control over in the street. In the public realm we get involved in master plans and we are doing some fairly significant master plans at the moment. We design parks. The depth and breadth of what we do, certainly within my branch but more importantly in the city design studio, is quite extensive.

We have been operating from a very small base that started back in 1985. We are now over 70 individuals. We have project managers supporting us, urban designers et cetera. It is a fairly broad portfolio. There is probably not that much we do not touch in terms of the tangibles.

When Barry McGuren initially spoke to me about this and he said clearly this has a tourism focus, the dilemma we have is that we have not really purposefully been involved in any project that has a tourism brief associated with it. We have moved into buildings, and Barry might have talked to you about that, such as the visitor centre in Federation Square, which is not an asset we own - we only lease it. We have a little visitor booth in the Burke Street Mall, and we are looking at other opportunities, particularly with other partners in the tourism market, to determine whether we can bring all those agencies together in a more cohesive way so tourism is a one-stop shop for the community at large. Whether they be local tourists, statewide tourists, national or international, we believe it is important to have a tourism focus so that in that person's eye, wherever they come from, there is recognition of a facility and they can navigate themselves through it.

I have prepared a fairly broad cross-section of projects we have been involved in in the last number of years. They vary in their offer from cultural centres, artistic offers, community infrastructure, but the common theme amongst them all is that they are taking unloved, quite often vacant, heritage buildings and structures and repurposing them in a way where they are of value to the community.

The first one is ArtPlay, which is an indoor facility. This is about engaging with a section of the community that sits outside the school curriculum, within the age range of 0-13 years. This building brings professional artists together with schools and other community groups and develops artistic skills within children. We have found that if

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you engage children with art at a very early age and get that sort of design sensibility within them from a very early age, that means they're going to benefit and the community will benefit in the future. Quite often there are limitations within school programs. This pushes them outside those normal boundaries that are sitting within the education system. The building is on the banks of Yarra, opposite the rowing sheds.

We took over a building that was basically a railway training building where they taught the train mechanics how to fix bogies on trains and all those hydraulic systems et cetera. It was a training workshop that showed them how to dismantle train engines and put them back together again. Surprisingly, it is a fairly elegant, industrial red brick building in a prime position on the banks of the Yarra. Inside, as you can see, it is a double volume space, quite airy and light. What we did was basically say the inside of the building really just needs a bit of a patch-up because the volume gives a creative and flexible opportunity to do all manner of things. The brief was to create a flexible space where art in its many forms could be carried out there.

The little contemporary addition on the side houses the basic functions that weren't within the building because it really was just a shell. It has office space, toilet space, a little kitchenette, et cetera, so that's an adjunct to the building itself. As you can see in the sketch, it's a fairly playful sort of addition.

Mr DEAN - That was a heritage-registered building?

Mr WINTER - Yes, correct. Most of these buildings are, therefore when we repurpose them we follow the principles of the Burra Charter, which says yes, show the history but more importantly, make it functional as well. When you bring those two together it is really important to showcase what is clearly new, where the interventions have taken place and in some respects it's complementary to the original form of the building.

CHAIR - Was there much community angst with this one in terms of developing something new beside a heritage structure like that?

Mr WINTER - No, surprisingly not in this case, because I think the community saw the value of this offer.

CHAIR - So it's the way it's sold, isn't it?

Mr WINTER - It is, and it showed that there is a gap. This was based on a model in Dublin called The Ark which was basically a program where they repurposed an old Georgian building in the middle of Dublin. We brought the creative producer from that facility over to Melbourne and gave him a six-month residency to help us develop the brief for this building. It was really important that the functions within the building had enduring capacity beyond the life of the capital spend. What we didn't want to do was create a building that looked magnificent but no-one knew what was going to go in it, and how do you secure that recurrent funding to keep these programs going into the future?

Mr DEAN - You worked very closely with your heritage commission - what do you call it?

Mr WINTER - Heritage Victoria, yes. We have initial discussions with them and give them a bit of an outline in the form of that previous sketch and say, 'Look, this is the sort of

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thing we're doing in principle, are you comfortable with that sort of direction before we embark on major design and documentation?'.

Mrs TAYLOR - The city owns the building?

Mr WINTER - The city owns the building, and continues to own it.

Mrs TAYLOR - It sounds like there's a bit of an education focus with the building, so does the state education department or the state government have a funding role?

Mr WINTER - Not directly. We have a series of grants for programs that run out of that facility and they can be from the state government but also from the Federal Government as well. Part of this project and the key to its success at the very beginning was to anchor that recurrent funding and then determine in terms of a business plan for the future how we would keep that going. There is also philanthropic funding associated with this. We were lucky to get a capital donation from the Myer Foundation, so that's clearly just as important as well. They saw the value in terms of giving something back to the community that was a benefit from now on.

CHAIR - What sort of value are we talking about?

Mr WINTER - Half a million dollars in terms of capital expenditure.

Mr FINCH - Ian, do kids come in here?

Mr WINTER - Yes.

Mr FINCH - From schools or just off the street? Is it mums taking their child for a walk who says, 'I'll go in have a look and see what's happening.'

Mr WINTER - It's both. It is a bookable program, so clearly there are defined programs where they engage with school groups and that's the formal part in the relationship, however, particularly on weekends, you can just take your children along and basically participate in whatever activity is running.

Mr FINCH - Mother's groups could come and meet at Art Play?

Mr WINTER - Yes.

CHAIR - Operationally, is the council totally responsible for its operation or is it a slightly removed body that operates it?

Mr WINTER - No, through our Arts and Culture branch we have a program that is developed through them and they are responsible for that currently and ongoing into the future. It's important to ensure that we're always one step ahead, that we don't get to the end of the financial year and someone says, 'Right, what's the program, how are we going to fund it and who is going to utilise it?'. We have a creative producer who's the same guy we imported from Ireland many moons ago. Simon has stayed on and has been key to the success of this project.

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Mr FINCH - Does the state government put in any education money to support what you're doing here?

Mr WINTER - Yes, for particular programs. Apart from that, it's not part of the normal education curriculum.

Mr FINCH - I'm sure they would be interested to make sure they had some creative new innovative stuff going on there that they could piggy-back on for the benefit of the schools.

Mr WINTER - Yes. This is just an overview of what life is like now down there. It has a children's playground adjacent to it which was really important. When families come, the children play in the play space. It has a disability swing you can see in the foreground and there's a whole heap of programs that spill out from the space. We utilise the external space as much as the internal space.

Mrs TAYLOR - Not an inexpensive facility to run, I imagine?

Mr WINTER - No, it's not.

Mrs TAYLOR - You run it seven days a week?

Mr WINTER - Correct.

CHAIR - The operational budget?

Mr WINTER - The operational budget is for the staff, such as the creative producer. A number of artists freely give of their time, which is really important; they're giving back to the community. It is trying to leverage off those opportunities and in some respects it works both ways because it gives them the opportunity to expose themselves to a market or community that they wouldn't normally have the ability to do.

Mr FINCH - But if you set up a special program you'd pay artists and creative people to design and work on it?

Mr WINTER - Yes, but it's not a significant amount of money, that's what I'm trying to say. This thing runs on the smell of an oily rag. It doesn't require substantial amounts of funding which a lot of programs do. It is leveraging that gift by other parts of the community to this that has made it really successful. If we had to do it on commercial terms it would be so expensive that people couldn't afford to buy into it. If you register your child, for instance, for a Saturday program - and please don't quote me on this because I'm not sure of the figures - the dollar cost to a parent to put their child in a program is inconsequential, probably less than the cost of a sandwich.

Mrs TAYLOR - Really? That's excellent.

Mr WINTER - It is. It's really key to keep that community audience moving through. They have done some fantastic things there. It's not just limited to the visual arts, there are music programs, creativity in its broadest sense of the art.

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CHAIR - Music and movement and all sorts of things?

Mr WINTER - Yes. We engage with people like the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. For instance, they may send down their chief violinist and a couple of percussion people.

CHAIR - And local regional orchestras, perhaps?

Mr WINTER - Exactly. The children engage with them and create musical pieces. It's a very successful program.

The next one I am going to show you is Signal, which then takes us into the next group of youth between 13 and 20. Art Play caters for the nought to thirteens so it was important to have something for youth within the city that they saw as their own space. Once again, it's a venue that provides an opportunity for youth to express themselves through creative pursuits.

This is an aerial shot of the Yarra and this is the pedestrian bridge which has the arc going over the top of it. This bridge here is the old Sandridge rail bridge which is one of the major routes from Port Melbourne into the city. Its original line goes through the middle of Crown Casino so it has been truncated at what is now a public space called Queensbridge Square and it lands on the north bank and we're basically sitting alongside the edge of Flinders Street Station. As you can see, there is a piece of public realm here which we reclaimed, land which is used by the railway. Once it was disused. No-one knew what to do with it. I will showcase that in the middle.

The building I am talking about is the old railway signal building, which is this location. That is what it was back in the 1950s. In essence, it is one of those classical railway architectural buildings. Basically, that was the heart and soul of the railway system at Flinders Street.

That is what it looked like when we took it over. There was there was a fire and it completely destroyed the top half of the building. Through Public Transport Victoria, the State Government decided it was surplus to their requirements, because the rail lines that it controlled were diminishing. We looked at this and thought,

Mrs TAYLOR - They obviously were not working it from there.

Mr WINTER - No, they certainly were not. They created a new signalling system.

We looked at this and thought, "This is a prime position. This is on the edge of the Yarra, central city, very conspicuous." There was an element of grunge we thought would appeal to that 30- to 20-year age group. We got some creative minds together and said, "How would we deliver a program that would optimise engaging with youth, and more importantly, display that creativity in a very visual sense, from a building of that nature?"

Mrs TAYLOR - You never considered demolishing it?

Mr WINTER - Never considered demolishing it. It was heritage listed. Fascinatingly, you can imagine when you go and talk to Heritage Victoria and you say, "What have we got

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here? We have a skirt of brick with a pile of rubble in the middle. What is left?" It was all about understanding the value of this as an iconic piece of Melbourne's transport system, and really important to signify that in some way for the future. Yes, it would have been very easy to demolish it, but that was not on the agenda.

We cleaned out all the rubble in the middle. We set up a structural frame, which created a first floor. Internally, we fitted it out with creative software, so youth could come in. This is free to them. It comes through school programs or engagement with universities, et cetera. It is really important to understand the relationship between schools, and ultimately in this age group, universities, and the potential they can offer.

CHAIR - Was there a lot of work needed on the foundations to support this upper structure?

Mr WINTER - Interestingly not. The good thing about railway buildings they have robust foundations.

CHAIR - They built them overspent.

Mr WINTER - They build them to last, absolutely. From that point of view, we were very lucky in the sense we could craft a very simple structural steel frame that literally sat on whatever you see there.

We created an interior that had these creative media suites. This is on the first floor and you can see the trees that line the edge of Flinders Street Station. There is an art space on the ground floor, which can be used for performing arts, et cetera. Quite small. It is not a big building but it is intensely used, and intensely programmed.

That is the finished product. In essence, you have a contemporary extrusion rising out of the brick base. You can see the amount of brickwork we had to reconstitute after the fire.

Mr FINCH - It does not look much like a signal station of yore.

Mr WINTER - No, it does not.

Mr FINCH - How do you salute the past?

Mr WINTER - You salute the past I suppose by, first, calling it Signal because that creates a verbal reference to what it was before. That already triggers in people's minds, 'Signal. How did it get the name?'. That then starts the dialogue about where this building came from. Its position adjacent to the railway yards is also a clue. When we sat down with Heritage Victoria, we needed to ensure they understood that if we created it in its original form, that was not going to be alliance with the Burra Charter. There was this sensitive discussion to say we acknowledge that all that is left is the base. We have a two storey volume, albeit with a contemporary sort of addition to it, which recreates the form. We did not put a pitched tiled roof on it as well, and certainly there was nothing left inside that we could salvage in terms of the signal levers and those sorts of things.

Mr DEAN - That is an interesting building. At the present time in Tasmania, I doubt very much that we would get Heritage Tasmania's support. The way that they see things -

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CHAIR - You would not get support.

Mr DEAN - There are a couple of buildings in Launceston where they have tried to do something like this, and they have stopped them because it would change the building too much from its original -

CHAIR - Is this the C.H. Smith you're talking about?

Mr DEAN - Absolutely. That is a good example. They had to modify all of that. It is interesting you have done this and it is good.

Mrs TAYLOR - There was not much left of this either. It was not like there was the building and you actually substantially changed the building.

CHAIR - They do have that stricture in architecture about not copying or mimicking the past, but in fact, showing the differences in eras. That is really well done in that regard, isn't it?

Mr DEAN - Rather than take away from that, the Boland Street cottages is a good example, which were burnt out similar to that. They wanted to build and change the shape of that around, and they would not let them. Heritage Tasmania said no. Consequently, now it is off the register because it has fallen into such disrepair -

CHAIR - That is the danger.

Mr FINCH - What about interpretation there at the site? Do people have walkway access past the building to that area?

Mr WINTER - Yes, they have. It is critical that you have a good relationship with, in our instance, Heritage Victoria. They have the confidence, working with us over a number of years now, to know we are not going to desecrate heritage per se. It is always a challenging discussion.

Interpretation is a good point you raised. We need to tell the story of where this came from. Quite often there is interpretive signage within the building, and more importantly, digitally. It is either on our website, or part of the programming of whatever program we deliver.

Mr FINCH - The young people who come in, do you try to connect them with the history and the origin of the building?

Mr WINTER - Yes, correct. They need to understand there is a sense of place around how cities are built, how they develop et cetera. Quite often you can use that understanding and link to get them to creatively think about the world they live in, which is the future.

Mrs TAYLOR - So you can walk across that bridge now, can't you?

Mr WINTER - Yes, you can. That is the next project I am going to show you. You can see we have created a public space. The double doors open onto the performance space, where creative dance et cetera occur. The benefit of those doors is that they open up to a

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plaza where there is a range of activities that spill out from the performance space into that area. It's about having that direct interface with passers-by and the community at large. The idea of this building is that it's an overt expression in many different ways. Visually, because what they develop during the day in their software creativity is displayed on the glass. The building is highly illuminated so it's a beacon from across the Yarra and other parts of the city. It's an attractor in some respects; it signals that something is happening here.

We engage with a manufacturer that creates what is called 'intelligent' glass which means anything created on a software program on a computer can be visually displayed in these panels here. They are like a display screen, so whatever you create on the monitor in front of you can be displayed on the glass. During the day they're all creating this sort of stuff and program it so it goes throughout the night as well. It's a continually activated building, both during the day because of the people in there and then digitally at night-time. It's amazing the effect that has had. This was a pretty tough area of the city with lots of crime but it's now become an attraction. By creating a public realm that's attractive to walk along, providing additional lighting and activating this space, suddenly a lot of that behaviour has disappeared.

CHAIR - Did the plaza exist before this building was done up?

Mr WINTER - No, it was a railway embankment.

Mr FINCH - Is it open 7 days a week?

Mr WINTER - Yes, because invariably a lot of the youth don't keep the expected normal hours so you have to cater for when they're prepared to engage, so it's a very open program.

Mrs TAYLOR - How late does it go during the day? I imagine it's not 9-5.

Mr WINTER - No. You could have programs there up until about 9 p.m. but that's subject to capacity and having the people to run it. We have a creative producer there and technical support for all the IT equipment. After that, it's engaging with that broader community - university, institutions, schools, wherever we can get that engagement to create that diverse program.

Mrs TAYLOR - Do you get grant funding for particular programs?

Mr WINTER - Yes.

CHAIR - How costly was that special glass?

Mr WINTER - It was quite expensive as a material. In other words, if that was laminated glass, you would be looking at three times the cost of normal glass. The offer that this gives you compared to basic glass where you're going to have to just stick something up on the window made it worthwhile.

CHAIR - Is it solar-gain glass that actually generates electricity?

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Mr WINTER - Correct, it has a bit of that as well. We also have photovoltaic panels which support the demand for electricity within the building. There are many different iterations of this and we got the first iteration of it but it has improved dramatically since then. It wasn't a competitive price either, because there was only one manufacturer at the time.

Mr DEAN - How long ago has that now been in place?

Mr WINTER - This was 2009 from memory so six years, which in terms of development of technology is a lifetime.

Mr DEAN - It's a brilliant concept in my view. As you've said, you've turned a crime ghetto area into something that allows the people to be involved.

Mr WINTER - It was an unloved piece of public space. People didn't want to walk along there. It was hostile and there was no amenity. I think the relationship between the bridge being not a railway crossing - not a utilitarian offer anymore - and turning that into a pedestrian crossing suddenly made the connection to Flinders Street possible, which is probably a good segue into the travellers at Sandridge Bridge.

Mr DEAN - It's particularly interesting to me because I come from a police background so I'm interested to see how you have turned it around into such a great area.

Mr WINTER - The police, all those government agencies around supporting youth et cetera, were all engaged in the original dialogue. It was really important to get their support and test some of the ideas we've ultimately delivered here. There's always an area of doubt in people's minds, particularly when you're creating something that hasn't been done before - in other words, it's unproven - but that's the space we like to be in.

CHAIR - Are you on a time frame yourself, by the way?

Mr WINTER - I'm okay until 11.30, but I know you have Heritage Victoria coming in and you probably want a break, so we'll just see how it pans out.

Mr FINCH - As to the financing of that project, how did you deal with all that? It was only part of a bigger picture, so who were the agencies involved to draw from?

Mr WINTER - With Signal itself, purely the City of Melbourne in terms of the capital spend. Sandridge Bridge was a state government project. Luckily the timing of that was consistent with the Commonwealth Games at the time. We also had a philanthropic benefactor. I will talk to you about the elements of that in the Sandridge Bridge proposal. It was almost one of those perfect nights where the planets were lining up where a number of agencies were coming together which we capitalised on in terms of being able to get funding to deliver this.

At its start it wasn't coordinated at all. It was just an opportunistic position that we found ourselves in where the state government said, 'The Signal Box is burnt out; we don't have the money to do anything with this. It's an asset we don't need anymore. You can take it from us and do what you want with it.', and they just basically walked away.

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CHAIR - It was in their interests, really, if you think about it because the city is going to generate the activity.

Mr WINTER - Quite often most of our projects have been of an opportunistic nature. It is basically having the vision to see something in something that no-one else can. I think that's where creativity comes into it. Quite often you would look at that pile of bricks and say, 'Goodness me, what on earth could you do with that? What value is it?' We knew there was inherent value because of its place, its history, its place and position within the city and potentially the revitalisation of the Yarra corridor, which was really important to us. For many years Melbourne had turned its back on the Yarra and now we've opened it all up again.

Mr FINCH - How long have you been involved with this sort of thing, Ian?

Mr WINTER - Since 1995. I came here on a three-month contract and stayed. There was an opportunity to join the City of Melbourne and I wanted to give something back to the community. The whole premise of the city design studio is one where we love and are passionate about the city, both its heritage and basically what its contemporary future is as well. I think if you have that inherent within you it is a wonderfully rewarding place to work, it really is. We have a very supportive council as well which also is really critical.

Mr FINCH - It is what you mentioned about the revitalisation of the Yarra. For us observers from Tasmania we used to refer to it as the river that floated upside down. To see it probably 15 years ago it had been hard-edged and then been brought back to life. I suppose the dynamic element was Federation Square which really must have got the creative juices sparking. It's fantastic.

Mr WINTER - It originally started off with the development of Southbank. That was the first foray where industrial land was overtaken. You're right, the Yarra was something you crossed very quickly and really didn't recognise as an asset. I think that was really when the planets lined up and it all came together.

This is Sandridge Bridge at night and it is a fairly utilitarian sort of rail bridge. Once again, the line was closed into Flinders Street Station and we had a railway bridge that really no-one knew what to do with. There were a number of commercial opportunities that could have been realised from this. People wanted to put shops on there and goodness knows what else, but we felt it was an important connector from Southbank to the north bank and vice versa and should be used as something that was an iconic piece of heritage structure but which had a new contemporary use.

We engaged through an EOI process with an artist called Nadim Karim who had developed these structures in other parts of the world. They are called the Travellers and they tell the story of the different phases of migration to Australia from the very early settlers through to the 1950s and 60s when the Italian and European migrants came in their forces, right the way through to where the current migration sits with Horn of Africa countries et cetera. Each one of these depicts one of those spaces. We engaged with the state government and said here is an opportunity to create a cultural icon for Melbourne. It could be world renowned and in the expression that you see here. They agreed to fund it with the City of Melbourne and basically that's what we did.

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BUILT HERITAGE TOURISM IN TASMANIA, MELBOURNE 1/9/2015 (WINTER)**

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We stripped all the railway lines off the building, created these fairly enormous stainless steel structures so they are enduring quality and all very different. The history of migration is etched on these glass panels which run along the length of the bridge. As you can see all we have done is very simply taken the rail lines off and put a concrete pavement finish on it so it acts as a walkway connector from the north bank of the Yarra to Southbank.

CHAIR - I thought you were going to tell me those things move.

Mr WINTER - They do, however we have a few technical problems at the moment. They are on moveable bogeys which sit between the two spans of the bridge which are in parallel and they come out in the morning and go home at night. They don't disappear into a warehouse, they literally shunt up against each other, but at the moment we've got a problem with the bogeys which is why they're permanently fixed in position. That is something that did not quite work as well as we expected.

CHAIR - What was the reasoning behind shunting them back up? Was it to stop people climbing on them?

Mr WINTER - It was at a dynamic interpretation to say the travellers are coming out, they're arriving in the country and once they're here they're sedentary, which was the stationing of them at the end of the day. That was the artistic expression behind it. There they are from another viewpoint and they're fairly spectacular.

Mrs TAYLOR - You have only done half the bridge?

Mr WINTER - Yes. We stripped the other side of the bridge so it is just in its skeletal form and has no rail lines or platform and we're currently looking at an opportunity to green that side of the bridge. What I mean by that is we're into opportunities for producing urban food sources and are looking at the opportunity to get -

CHAIR - Community garden?

Mr WINTER - Yes, I gave you the flash name for it but in essence it's a community garden, and also to expand on our urban forest strategy which puts more greenery within the city. That is only the early seed of an idea and we haven't moved that one forward but it's currently on our books.

CHAIR - I thought you were going to tell me you were going to put walkways in there that generate electricity as people walk on them.

Mr WINTER - No, but that's not a bad idea. I can see your creative minds already underway which is fantastic.

Because the bridge was at a high level we had to get it graded and because it was truncated at the southern end we created this sloped section of the bridge, and in discussion with Heritage Victoria we identified that as a contemporary intervention which is why it has the bright yellow structure. It almost mimics the girder structure of

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the original bridge but is very clearly a modern element, and you can see the skeletal form of the bridge stripped on the other side. That is a future work in progress.

CHAIR - Watch this space.

Mr WINTER - Watch this space - and clearly lighting is really important. To ensure your journey is safe illumination is really important to the city and, where possible, you enhance it with something that is more artistic than just straightforward lighting.

There is an indigenous component to this. We engaged with the indigenous community and got an indigenous artist to create a piece which was reflective of the indigenous presence on this land which goes back 40 000 years. This sculpture is called Guyip and it sits at a point on the river where the Yarra transitions from freshwater to saltwater because it is tidal and the saltwater comes up to where Sandridge Bridge was. Originally there was a waterfall there with lots of rock and that was the transition point.

We have gone beyond our extension to creativity to something that is a little bit more the norm and I have a couple of examples here which I am going to take you through. This was an old school building called the J H Boyd School for Girls, and the original building is this rather strange Victorian gothic section here, and then it had a 1930s almost castellated Elizabethan style added onto it. It was originally constructed in the late 1880s, so it has a fairly substantial history. It was surplus to the education department's requirements and was in an area that is developing in terms of residential population in Southbank. Through our community infrastructure plan we identified a need to build a community centre and library so when the state government said it didn't need the facility anymore we jumped at the opportunity purchase it. It also has a significant tract of land behind it which we're going to be developing shortly into a new urban park.

Mr FINCH - Where is it?

Mr WINTER - In Southbank on the corner of City Road and Queensbridge Street. What that means geographically is that if you cross the Sandridge Bridge and keep walking in that direction past Crown Casino you'll get to the King Street overpass and see this building there in a very prominent location.

CHAIR - A great tower.

Mr WINTER - It is a great tower. That was the headmaster's study right at the very top, up an incredibly steep incline, so you really were going up to the gods. We looked at what we needed to do, as to what the community infrastructure plan and the community were telling us. They were saying, 'We want a park. We want recreational space, both active and passive, but we also want facilities in the form of a library. We want community services offered in maternal and child health, and playgroup space.'

Once we had understood the capacity of the building, we found there was another opportunity where we could create a more diverse mix of service opportunities for the future. We developed an artists' studio program for artists within the city struggling to find space that was rentable at the right price. It was not subsidised. It was a case of saying this is affordable space. An artist who is developing a particular offer, beyond the

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basic arts offer, could utilise space at a fairly low rental, and be part of the local community as well.

CHAIR - Where did you get the feedback as to what the community wanted?

Mr WINTER - We went through a community engagement process. We were developing a statistical analysis of that part of the city, which was indicating there was a demographic that was burgeoning at an alarming rate. Despite the fact people were living in apartments in those days, there was a need to cater for young families, for instance. As we found at Docklands, the idea that you could develop a precinct without an understanding of family, was nonsensical. It was not empty nesters and it certainly was not the community at the other end, which were youth and people in the 25-30 age group. There were families requiring support as well.

We now have a facility that has artists' studios. They range from jewellery makers to a range of visual artists who create many things. We have a number of business grants that are supported through our business branch. They can access business grants to support the development of, in essence, what they are producing. We have a family services offer, which is maternal and child health, family counselling, et cetera. We have a playgroup space, which has access to an outdoor play space with a sandpit. We have a café, which is the hub of everything. We have realised that, in a lot of these buildings, you have to have an attractor beyond the services council can offer. All our community infrastructure facilities have a café as an anchor. We generally negotiate with social enterprises. We do not go for the commercial operators to run the cafés. There is a social enterprise that operates this centre.

Mr DEAN - It is a bit like our child and family centres in many respects.

CHAIR - Yes, although this seems to be a third party social enterprise, which finds employment for people.

Mr WINTER - The signage was a bit controversial because it did not necessarily align with our corporate template.

The library area is at the rear of the property. We have a fairly contemporary extension on the back, which was designed by an Indigenous artist, so there is a reference pattern there to Indigenous culture. The artist studios are at the top.

Mr FINCH - The artist space upstairs, do they have a space assigned to them?

Mr WINTER - Yes, they do.

Mr FINCH - Is that able to be visually accessed by people going up and having a look? Can they watch the artists at work?

Mr WINTER - Yes, that was something we had to negotiate, the terms by which they could engage with the community at large. Quite often artists are very private and do not like to be accessed, so it is by negotiation. It is important for them to display their wares as part of the program offer within the building itself, rather than be silent and

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inconspicuous to almost not seeing it. They needed to be an active part, so we needed to write that into the licence arrangement we identified with them.

This is our latest project that only opened a few weeks ago. Once again, it was an old school building, Victorian in its nature, although it has had some additions along the way. The rounded arch is a more Romanesque element of it. Once again, a State Government asset, with no school facility there since the 1960s. This is it at night. I will just quickly run through the interior so you get a visual understanding. This is at the rear of the building we put on a contemporary extension, once again to signify between the old and the new. This is half of the children's library. That is the end.

Once again, it has great offers for the public, a recording studio, for instance. We provide a very diverse range of offers in our community facilities. Just as importantly, the staff are not your traditional librarians or your community infrastructure providers. They have a skill set that is beyond the norm. At Docklands Library, for instance, we have people there who have PhDs and are astrophysicists, and things like that.

What we are very keen to do in all our facilities is bring that collective intelligence from the community together, so people can learn from each other. We do not necessarily need to be specialists in our own right, but what we are good at is bringing the community together. People do want to donate and they are happy to do that free of charge. People who are nearing or are in retirement have enormous breadth of offer that they can give back to the community.

CHAIR - We have the University of the Third Age in Hobart that does that. I am not sure whether it is in other places.

Mr FINCH - Yes, it is.

Mrs TAYLOR - Where is this one?

Mr WINTER - This one is in Carlton and it sits as part of the university precinct. The university has now purchased the rest of the site from the State Government and they will be redeveloping that into the future. It was originally the Royal Women's Hospital site, before it was moved to the new Parkville site.

CHAIR - With this and the previous one, does the council charge a rate for people who occupy? An artist that occupies that previous one do you actually charge them rental?

Mr WINTER - There is a nominal charge, but it is very affordable. We realised that the creative communities that have been edged out of the city was a problem for us. It was really important to have that diversity of offerings. Cities are not just about retail. They are about different experiences. It is trying to realise those and anchor them so that each feed off each other.

CHAIR - We've had the same issue with the Salamanca precinct where coffee shops and the like, because of the commercial nature of them and the return they give, are crowding out the artistic elements. That has always been a difficult issue.

Mr WINTER - It is.

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Mr FINCH - We were talking last night, when we were looking from the Arbory Restaurant across to the Southbank, about the fact that there used to be a lot of retail going on in there. Generally, it has turned into eating places, restaurants and that sort of thing. Is that evident to people of Melbourne, that the shift has occurred and retail has gone back into the city?

Mr WINTER - Back into the CBD, absolutely. There is a good reason behind that as well. As the arts precinct has developed, in other words, the Arts Centre and all the offers that it has with Hamer Hall, et cetera - which has been completely refurbished recently - the support that that side of the city centre requires is that hospitality side rather than retail. For instance, the reason those restaurants, cafés and everything else are very active is because they support the programs that are going on at the Arts Centre. The retail did start to fail. It is trying to identify how you transition easily and engage with people and say you have an audience coming in to watch a theatre piece, to hear a recital at the Recital Hall, et cetera, so how on earth do you capture all that and say there is a critical mass here that you need to support from a commercial sort of activation as well?

CHAIR - And it is also the tourism aspect, isn't it?

Mr WINTER - It is, yes. Melbourne is quite unique in the sense that it has probably close to a million people coming into the city every day. The idea is that, yes, they are coming into work. They are coming in to access retail and for a wide variety of experiences. How do you fundamentally reinforce that? By creating special places, developing a public realm that is interesting and engaging to traverse. Then, just as importantly, how do you provide connections to those other venues that are attractive in terms of what the city has to offer?

The fabric of a Victorian city when Melbourne was laid out was beneficial. We find ourselves very privileged that the Victorian visionaries knew how to lay out a city. Our laneways program, for instance, we had a lot of work starting back in the 1980s where we started to revitalise laneways beyond their functional basis of just being a service lane. We started doing strange little things like repave them. As part of that repaving we would put a little artistic piece in, like a slither of stainless steel or something. People suddenly started to then value the space differently. The commercial sector, with a little bit of a catalyst by council, put the major investment in. That is where the centre place of this world started.

CHAIR - We have done a bit of that in North Hobart.

Mrs TAYLOR - The other thing is that lifestyle has changed over that time too. Where both partners are working, people do not cook as much at home as they used to. At the end of the work day they are looking for meals, and at lunchtime, which has helped that whole dynamic to change. This must be a substantial part of the city's program.

Mr WINTER - Yes, it is.

Mrs TAYLOR - You are talking about big dollars in some. While I understand that grants and stuff are available, you still have to get the grants. Also there is that backbone that has to be city funding, I imagine.

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Mr WINTER - Yes, there is. Our capital works program clearly funds a lot of this. Of course that is based on rates revenue and other revenue sources that we can engage with. Of course in local government there are not that many.

CHAIR - The community is very supportive of that?

Mr WINTER - Yes. Our community engagement processes have improved vastly over the last number of years. So when we go out and engage with the community we are very clear about what it is we are engaging about. It is important to get that right at the beginning. There is a lot of front-end that we need to do, almost the pre-design phase, before we engage with the community.

Mrs TAYLOR - The same with heritage, I would imagine.

Mr WINTER - The same with heritage. There is absolutely no point going up with a filter that is this wide. You need to go out with something that you can have the capacity to control and ultimately deliver, because that is where the confidence in the community comes from.

CHAIR - There are two ways of doing that. You either go out into the community and say, 'What do you think we ought to be doing with this space?'. Or if you have the idea and you want to carry that forward, being able to sell that idea to the community in a way that is going to bring them on board. There are two different aspects there. It is probably the second that the city has done and is saying they want. Someone has had the vision, so they want to get that vision in place, as opposed to saying, 'How do you want to see your city develop?'.

Mr FINCH - We have a bit of a conundrum in Launceston at this time in that the university has been very progressive in the state. We have three campuses - Hobart, Launceston and Burnie. They are making some very strong moves in respect of their own development. I am fearful that there is a concern that the community in Launceston is not being taken along as fulsomely as the community would probably want to see. It is a little bit about the university making their moves on what they want to do to achieve their ends, but not really drawing the community along with them. They're making their moves and saying to the community, 'This is what we've done and it's going to be good for you'. We have to work through that because we want to be as enthusiastic as the university is and we don't want to be damp squibs, but the community has to be involved. You have talked about the engagement, the research and taking the community along with you for the benefit of the community.

Mr WINTER - We value our universities and have an excellent dialogue with them. There is mutual respect; we can both benefit from value coming from the public side of the equation and potentially the university side of the equation. It's important for the universities to understand they control a lot of public realm. In other words, they are not necessarily gates and fences, but you need to create an offer where the public feels free to wander through. I understand universities like control but the value to them is more than just the extent of their campus. We have been very successful in negotiations with RMIT and Melbourne University in getting that principle well understood, to the point where we are currently working with the University of Melbourne on a large public-run

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project in Carlton. It is basically taking a heritage garden - the university owns almost all the real estate around it and they have a very clear interest in ensuring it works for their campus. More importantly, we are saying the community at large within that Carlton area also values it for other things, so that is where you get together and work with them to determine a joint outcome that values both sides.

Mr DEAN - That is what's happened back home. The university, the council and the state government have got together and said, 'This is what we're going to do. This is our plan. It's virtually in concrete, so now we'll go and tell the public about it', rather than having them involved in the process.

Mrs TAYLOR - Ian, how big is the City of Melbourne geographically?

Mr WINTER - We are 4 million-plus people from a metropolitan point of view. I have a fact sheet I can give you, which I am happy to email when I get back.

CHAIR - The forecast is that you will outgrow Sydney by the year 2050.

Mr WINTER - Yes, they're talking about a population in the region of 8 million people, which is significant.

Mrs TAYLOR - So the City of Melbourne encompasses all that?

Mr WINTER - No. Our municipal boundary is quite tight. We have high- and medium-density living in most of our areas. The fringe - neighbouring councils such as the City of Yarra, City of Maribyrnong, City of Port Phillip - are not part of our understanding. Metropolitan Melbourne is huge, but the city itself is a quite small footprint.

Mrs TAYLOR - A lot of your area is commercial and public spaces within the city, which means your rate balance is interesting as well.

Mr WINTER - We have a CBD grid, which is basically the Hoddle grid, which is the area you see around you. Then there is the periphery of that, which then goes into residential. We have Docklands as a developing part of the city. We are close to, by 2020 hopefully, fully developing Docklands. That is technically a new suburb of Melbourne.

Mr FINCH - In respect of the federal government being involved and the partnerships you might develop there, do you look to the federal government to take an interest in what you're doing here, what the City of Melbourne is doing, or is this your bailiwick, your area of operation, and that's quite separate to what you are doing?

Mr WINTER - We engage with the Federal Government because our agenda and certainly council's agenda is to talk about cities for the future and how you transform cities to be sustainable into the future as well, and that can only be discussed at a federal level. It is important that there is an agenda at the federal level that supports that sort of vision into the future as well.

Mr FINCH - What about dollars? What about financial support? If you're trying to get a project up, do you think you have to go to the state government and the Federal Government to have the full partnerships here?

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Mr WINTER - In a lot of instances clearly most of those relationships are with the state government. However, you need to look at the relationship between the state and the Federal Government as well, but if there are opportunities that can be realised through revitalisation of cities funding or whatever they may be called at the time, it is important that we understand the opportunities that present themselves to the City of Melbourne and we will do that. As I say, quite often how they're shaped is contingent on the Federal Government having a policy that supports those sorts of initiatives.

Mrs TAYLOR - Can I ask about your relationship with the Heritage Council? Obviously you work together when there is a project. Is there an ongoing or formal relationship between you or is it just project by project?

Mr WINTER - It's really just project by project. I suppose there are other parts of council that also engage with them. For instance, our statutory planners in the realm they work within where they're dealing with projects from the private sector that have a heritage component with them as well. We provide heritage advice, but not within my area. We have heritage advisers who have that heritage sort of architectural background.

CHAIR - To private enterprise?

Mr WINTER - To private enterprise, and they are supported. We try to engage with the private sector as much as possible. We would much prefer them to come in and have a pre-design discussion about the parameters of what they're thinking about rather than just lodge something cold and then you're on the back foot already. Sometimes it is better to have those negotiations up front. We offer a free service to have that sort of engagement. Sometimes you have to provide them with an opportunity to rethink or recraft a proposal that will be of benefit to both them and the city, and that's what's really important.

Mrs TAYLOR - The projects your area is responsible for are really publicly owned projects. One of the issues we are looking at is about heritage property that sits within private hands and how we help them to redesign or repurpose their property and make them commercial, because the alternative is that if nothing happens they fall eventually into disrepair. Does the council deal with those through the planning or other areas as well?

Mr WINTER - Generally they would be identified through the statutory planning process. I can't think of an example where, for instance, we have actively engaged in a project like that where it is in private ownership and have had some degree of influence. Most projects that you see here are within public ownership in the form of a state government agency. There is no private ownership in any of these sorts of entities so that's not something we have explored.

CHAIR - There would be a lot of heritage buildings within the city that have been renovated or restored for B&Bs and those sorts of things.

Mr WINTER - Yes, there are, and there are numerous examples you can see just walking up and down the street where the original function of the building, the purpose for which it was built, has transformed over a number of years.

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Mrs TAYLOR - Have you had any heritage buildings that you have not either wanted or been able to do something with that you have sold on to the private sector or where you have had public-private partnerships to develop?

Mr WINTER - The only one that springs to mind in recent times is that a number of years ago we purchased the Queen Victoria Hospital block. Part of the hospital as it was originally formed was retained for the future so we took control of that site and ensured that the remnant part of the hospital in negotiation with Heritage Victoria was maintained and then we developed that contemporary understanding we went to the market with to developers and said, 'You can develop these sites but these are the parameters around which you can do that.'. That was about creating access to the site as well. In other words, don't create a barrier to the street and maintain the fluidity of access like we have in our laneways, so you can walk basically from Flinders Street through a series of arcades and properties before you hit a barrier. It was important that we framed that in that way and the only way to do that was to purchase the site and get that direct control.

CHAIR - Did you do it through an EOI?

Mr WINTER - We then remarketed it to the private sector.

Mrs TAYLOR - Have you sold it all?

Mr WINTER - We have sold it all.

Mrs TAYLOR - Even the central heritage part?

Mr WINTER - Yes.

CHAIR - Did you do that through an EOI process?

Mr WINTER - Yes, it went through an EOI process before so we ensured that there was competition within the market, but it was very focused on the -

CHAIR - The outcome you wanted to see.

Mr WINTER - brief we wanted, and that was about ensuring that whatever was developed there provided activation for the city in a sustainable way. It wasn't going to be a big box that had one way in and one way out.

Mr FINCH - Can I ask about Federation Square and the complications that have might have gone with getting that link between the city and the river through that specific site? What were the battles that went on? I remember there was a monstrosity of a building there that I think was a power utility.

Mr WINTER - There were twin towers that housed the Gas and Fuel Corporation. That was almost an impassable object that separated Flinders Street from the Yarra itself.

Mr FINCH - Did that have any heritage value?

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Mr WINTER - In some respects you could probably say that 1960s architecture has some heritage value as well, however in this instance that wasn't supported. There was a strong claim to say there were other examples of that period of architecture that were better than what was there.

Mr FINCH - In hindsight, 15 years on from when it got underway, how has it been accepted in Melbourne? Have people embraced it? What we see in Tassie is that they have. It is a meeting place, a place to gather.

Mr WINTER - It is a meeting place. It is a point of confluence from people who are in the city already. It is a destination because you have Flinders Street Station as a major transport mode. You have lots of public transport centred around there. The public realm is one where it is a meeting place but there are plenty of other offers there. It has performance space in the form of a stage and has strong connections to the Yarra, plus it has major organisations such as the Australian Centre for the Moving Image and the programming that operates out of there is fantastic. It is also supported by retail in the form of restaurants and other supporting parts as well.

Mr FINCH - So it is working?

Mr WINTER - We have a fabulous public debating area called the Edge. I don't know whether you've seen it but it's a sort of framed glazed box that projects towards the Yarra and there are a number of programs that operate there. We run one called Melbourne Conversations, which is where you bring a range of speakers about a particular topic together and it is a public forum, free to attend, and so we utilise that space as well. It has been very well accepted and the architecture is engaging. If nothing else, whether you like it or not it doesn't matter, it's an engaging piece and is working incredibly well.

CHAIR - You have mentioned the 1960s buildings and the like and how some see that as heritage. Have there been any conversations with the community about that issue and what the community feels about heritage in the area of Melbourne?

Mr WINTER - Heritage can probably expand on this more than I because clearly that is their space. The public forums they run in terms of their engagement with the community about getting feedback on proposals et cetera, particularly by parties that may be affected by either a demolition or a repurposing, I think is key to their success as much as it is to ours.

CHAIR - When ever we think of heritage, for the most part we think of old buildings which are Georgian.

Mr WINTER - I think we need to move that focus because Australia is a young country and its period in history is quite short in terms of European and other settlements.

CHAIR - Yes, 200 years.

Mr WINTER - There is an acknowledgement that there are architectural gems out there that would have been created in the 1960s and as time moves on, I am sure the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s are also going to provide examples at a point in time where pieces of architecture are well recognised for the technology they utilised and potentially their

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social contribution to the city. It's important we don't think about heritage in just design or architectural terms. There is a social benefit and it's really important to realise that because you can't do one without the other. There's no point in having a grand Victorian building with nobody in it. It is just a façade and doesn't mean anything.

CHAIR - That was a terrific presentation, we really appreciate it and have gained a lot from it. Thank you very much.

Mr WINTER - Next time you're town fell free to contact me and I'll be happy to show you some of the more hidden gems because we identify Melbourne as a city of discovery. Not everything is obvious. We don't have a harbour but we have a lot of hidden gems which people truly appreciate.

Mr DEAN - Ian, your background and what you have done here, what you are doing and what you are involved in would be very advantageous for us. I am not running our people down at all but in the Launceston City Council, for example, we have a lot of heritage buildings that fit into this similar category. The cordial factory is good example of a re-used premises that would probably mirror the Signal station here that you have. It seems to me it would leave itself open to something like that for youth. We have a bad youth problem in Launceston, criminal activity and so on and it seems to me there would be some benefit and advantage there. I might put our people in the Launceston City Council in contact with you. I guess they would know you anyway.

Mr WINTER - We can expand on the types of program and how it is funded and those things. I've really glossed over a lot of this but you need those robust business plans behind them to ensure they sustain themselves into the future.

Mr FINCH - Ian, we find that for a lot of young Tasmanians, when they first journey out of the state it is to Melbourne. We like to think we can pull them back to Tasmania but unfortunately Melbourne is making it very hard these days because it is such a great place to come to and a great place to live, which has not always been the case. Melbourne is such a liveable city now, very exotic.

CHAIR - It was the world's most liveable city at one point, wasn't it?

Mr WINTER - Yes. Over time we have developed a palette that is both legible and sustainable that underpins the city. We have our bluestoning program, for instance, where we are gradually removing the asphalt footpaths and putting bluestone across the whole of the CBD. Our street furniture is recognised -

CHAIR - Is that bluestone as in tiles?

Mr WINTER - As in pavement tiles on the street et cetera. There is a suite we have developed over a number of years that is consistent, durable and enduring into the future. It is important to get that understanding because you don't turn a corner in Melbourne and suddenly it goes haywire and changes to bricks or whatever else, which tends to alarm people. They like that consistency and legibility of how you move through streets, those consistent signals they're getting along the way. Signage is important as well. Quite often it is how you draw people through. My director, Rob Adams, always says

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you'll never have a good city unless you have good streets. It's a very simple principle to follow but quite often people don't follow it.

Mrs TAYLOR - That's a good mantra.

Mr WINTER - It is a good mantra because people understand what that means. You can go into lots of hyperbole and design language but you're not going to get there if you do that.

CHAIR - Thanks again.

DISCUSSION CONCLUDED

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DISCUSSION WITH Ms JO BESHARA, FUNCTIONS AND EVENTS, AND Mr STEVE RICHARDSON, MAJOR SITES OPERATIONS MANAGER, NATIONAL TRUST VICTORIA.

CHAIR - Thank you very much for coming today.

Mrs TAYLOR - I think your titles are both really interesting, major sites, operations manager. What does that mean?

Mr RICHARDSON - What that means is that the majority of our team are actually in England at the moment, which is a part of the National Trust across the globe. We have come on our operational background, so hopefully we can answer those questions on an operational background more so than on a heritage background.

As an operational background, the National Trust has realised that to engage the community, we have to use the buildings, or use some of the facilities, in other ways. If we were just to put up a sign that said 'Museum', I am not convinced that we would get as high a visitation as we are. We are getting good visitation with some of our sites. To explore and engage the community in other ways, we are dealing with the community in other ways, like with White Night, where we would do after-hours work, or with the Comedy Festival or the Fringe Festival we will engage some of the community through the buildings in other ways.

Mr FINCH - In your National Trust properties?

Mr RICHARDSON - In some of the properties.

CHAIR - Sorry, what I should have led in with was to ask you to state your name. It was remiss of me. If you can tell us your name and exactly what you do, that would be important for both of you if you would not mind.

Mr RICHARDSON - My name is Steven Richardson. I am with the National Trust. I represent the operations for major sites of the National Trust, which would be sites like the Old Melbourne Gaol, the City Watch House, the Magistrate's Court, *Polly Woodside*, and my colleague here is Jo.

Ms BESHARA - I am Jo Beshara. I look after all functions and events at our properties in Melbourne and our regional properties. I look after about 14 properties. It can be either people booking properties for things like ceremonies, or it could be activating some of our properties for our own events, such as pop-up bars at the old Melbourne Gaol. I sit in a commercial team at head office and that is my role.

Mrs TAYLOR - Are you both involved with properties that National Trust owns?

Mr RICHARDSON - Or are custodians for.

Ms BESHARA - Yes, or manage.

Mrs TAYLOR - Who would they belong to if they were - that you were custodians for?

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Ms BESHARA - They would be government.

Mr RICHARDSON - Part of the state.

Ms BESHARA - Like the Old Melbourne Gaol, we do not own that property, do we?

Mr RICHARDSON - No, but we would be custodians on behalf of the government.

Mr FINCH - That is a money raising opportunity. Being the custodians, the government pays you to look after it?

Mr RICHARDSON - It is, but we have a story to tell. Some of the events are money raising and some are not. We are forever getting correspondence from the community to assist with questions about the past. A lot of our work, through paid employment and volunteers, is helping and engaging the community in lots of ways.

Mr FINCH - Are you Victorian focused? You seem to suggest your sites are Melbourne based.

Mr RICHARDSON - As operations, I look after the Melbourne-based sites but we are Victoria based.

Ms BESHARA - My properties are Victoria and Melbourne.

Mr FINCH - The number of properties that fall in the remit of the National Trust?

Mr RICHARDSON - I could not be precise on 34, but it is around that figure.

Mr FINCH - Are all those properties functioning properties? Do they all have a purpose?

Ms BESHARA - They are not all functioning.

Mr RICHARDSON - No. But where we can, we engage the community and as part of the commercial team, we are exploring more and more ideas of how we go about engaging the community. It could be through gardening programs, through history re-enactments, or it could be through plays, theatre, or events, education.

CHAIR - It is not just for tourists, but for the general public?

Ms BESHARA - Yes. All of them have tourism as part of their focus, but there is not one that is just tourism.

Mr RICHARDSON - No. A big part of the focus is education. Through the schools programs, we run multiple schools programs at all different age levels. We activate the community through the schools.

Mrs TAYLOR - Who pays for those?

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Mr RICHARDSON - Some of them are voluntary and some are through a tour set up, where a school will be charged a small fee to help cover the costs of some of the literature we could be putting out, or whether we are using facilitators or actors, or how we are delivering that program.

Ms BESHARA - We tend to get grants from the Government to develop more programs for education.

Mrs TAYLOR - State Government?

Ms BESHARA - Yes.

Mr RICHARDSON - Locally and federally, but generally state.

Ms BESHARA - Then we can develop new educational programs and then we take them out to the schools.

Mrs TAYLOR - Would you get some of those grants from the Education Department?

Mr RICHARDSON - We need the education section to be able to answer that correctly. I would not count it out because money has come from all different areas for different reasons and some of them vary. With the Magistrates Court, we do a re-enactment of a drink driving case and some money has come through traffic. The last one we put together is *Respect Me*, which is about sexting for teenagers, and that has had a really good following. Some money just came through from the Law Institute, because it was backing the law. It is interesting where some of the direction comes from, but where it ends up is fantastic, back in the community.

Ms BESHARA - Each property is very different. At the gaol we have a huge education component, whereas Ripponlea will have a smaller education component but a very large following of exhibitions that we put on to attract different ages and demographics. Each property is very different in its purpose.

Mr FINCH - Jo, do you have to generate that or do people come to you with ideas? How does it work?

Ms BESHARA - Some of the things we generate ourselves. Some will come through our collections team and some will come through our commercial manager contacting particular people, say the ABC, which is where our latest exhibitions come from. We've got an exhibition of Phryne Fisher's *Murder Mysteries* costumes there at the moment. That is through a collaboration with the ABC, the costume maker, our commercial team and our curators as a joint project that will then tour around Australia.

CHAIR - Are you talking about the television series?

Ms BESHARA - Yes.

Mrs TAYLOR - I'm looking forward to it coming to Tasmania, I must say.

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Mr RICHARDSON - It is a great exhibition but on top of running that exhibition we will be still juggling weddings that can be held in the gardens, education programs -

Mrs TAYLOR - Is this Ripponlea you're talking about?

Ms BESHARA - Yes.

Mr RICHARDSON - At the moment we are doing an interesting one around by the dam and lake. That has put a new spin on it because the house is occupied with the exhibition so we will go about the education programs in a different way.

Mr FINCH - Is that a National Trust tour?

Ms BESHARA - That will go to National Trust properties around Australia, which is the first time it has ever happened. That was to do with the commercial manager and the ABC and everyone agreeing and everyone being able to enjoy.

Mr FINCH - It will be a source of marketing.

Ms BESHARA - Yes, absolutely.

CHAIR - Of the buildings you deal with, are there any you would consider that have been renovated as opposed to restored to be repurposed?

Mr RICHARDSON - That's a really tricky line. If you look at something like *Polly Woodside* as an example, *Polly Woodside* was a ship designed to last for 30 years yet here we are 130 years on and it's literally like ripping up \$100 notes when you're doing maintenance on that sort of ship. A simple thing like caulking, for instance, which in the old-fashioned way would have used horsehair or string between the wood and then tar over the top - does that continue in that format or do we use a modern approach and use silicone? At the moment we're continuing it in that format and so it becomes very challenging because those skills are no longer held by many people, and if you follow that theme through every detail of that ship it is an extremely challenging situation.

CHAIR - We have a lot of people in Tassie who know that. When you are dealing with these things I have been asking the question about what basis you work from. For instance, with buildings the principles of the Burra Charter is one set of standards that people, various organisations adhere to but there may well be other standards that are adhered to. In your experience, do you know what standard is used to decide what should and should not be done?

Ms BESHARA - The person who looks after that section is not in Australia at the moment. He would be the correct person to answer that. As far as the program we follow, we go to as original as possible within safety reasons, so we would bring it back to its original state.

Mrs TAYLOR - We have just had Melbourne City Council talking about Signal, for instance, the building they have restored or repurposed on the north bank of the Yarra. All that was left there was part of four walls.

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CHAIR - Basically a shell.

Mrs TAYLOR - Only the bottom floor. They have done something totally different with that but kept what was there originally as well.

Ms BESHARA - We're a bit different through.

Mr RICHARDSON - We are careful. We have just renovated toilets, for instance, at the Old Melbourne Gaol. If you say put it back to the original - well, we've taken asbestos out of there. There are lots of rules and regulations and air monitoring and bits and pieces that you're following for safety and that's paramount, but you would like it to be as close as what is possible to be there.

Mr FINCH - I would like to ask about the maintenance program you would need to have on your 30-odd properties and the investment that needs to go into that. How is the National Trust financially set up or working now and into the future in respect of being able to make that allocation of money to keep your properties up to the standard that they need to be, to be used facilities? Is it a big draw on your funds?

Ms BESHARA - Absolutely.

Mr FINCH - Jo, you're the one with all the pressure here to make sure you're getting the money in from events et cetera to try to help cover the cost of that maintenance program.

Ms BESHARA - Yes. Before the commercial team were put in place at the National Trust, which has only been in the last three years, we were reliant on our membership base and we ran at a loss. We never had the money to be able to put back into properties apart from Ripponlea, because we were left money to maintain that property, but everything else was at cost to the National Trust. What we have tried to do, which we have been successful at in the past two years, is turn around the revenue so we are making money and then putting that money back into looking after the properties, but it's a huge task.

Mr FINCH - You are part of that; making money is part of this function and events business development work that you do. I don't think it's an area we have moved into in Tasmania, but our National Trust you probably would say is struggling to a certain extent to maintain its properties.

Mr DEAN - Who are your members? You said you relied on the members.

Ms BESHARA - The public who buy membership. Traditionally they were an older demographic so our members were dying off. Part of what we've tried to do is make our properties more accessible and excitable to younger generations who will then come in and want to preserve our properties and become members instead of saying, 'Who are the National Trust, what do they own?'. We want people in their twenties and early thirties coming to a pop-up bar at the jail at night and saying, 'Wow, this is great, it's the first time I've been here since I was a kid at school.' Then we can educate them.

Mrs TAYLOR - Then saying we think this is important to help preserve.

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Mr RICHARDSON - On top of that we'll have a few volunteers on the evening explaining parts of the jail or the venue we're in and the interest is fantastic. People just sort of go, 'Wow.' It doesn't occur to them to come because they're thinking it's a museum but if you're interacting with them in another way it's a fantastic thing.

Mr FINCH - It's like the kids with Anzac Day, just that search for knowledge wanting to understand what Anzac Day is all about.

Mrs TAYLOR - So you are actually repurposing?

Ms BESHARA - Yes.

Mr RICHARDSON - Correct.

Mrs TAYLOR - Of the 30 properties you own, how many of them would be either now or that you can see in the future commercially viable and self-sustaining? Some of them wouldn't be, I imagine?

Ms BESHARA - There's a lot that wouldn't be just because of where they're positioned in Victoria and things like that.

Mr RICHARDSON - Even the ones that are halfway there are more for the community purely rather than a money-making exercise.

Ms BESHARA - Probably only Melbourne ones, really.

Mr RICHARDSON - The Melbourne-based ones, even if you said the top half-dozen, are really key sites to generate an income and we really focus on those to support the other buildings.

Ms BESHARA - Probably Barwon Park, which is in Winchelsea, probably an hour and a half from Melbourne by car.

Mr RICHARDSON - It's about 10 kilometres outside Geelong.

Ms BESHARA - That has become quite viable, not just in weddings and functions and visitation, but also we've been able to put an exhibition there which attracted a lot of local people from that area as well. That has become viable in the last 12 months.

Mrs TAYLOR - Exhibitions have been very successful then?

Ms BESHARA - Yes, they have.

CHAIR - These are obviously paid entry?

Ms BESHARA - Yes. Apart from *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries* that is on at the moment, last year we had an exhibition that was created by us from the commercial team and our curators on wedding gowns belonging to famous Australians, overseas princesses, Australian designers, popstars like Kylie Minogue, which we called Love Design Riches. It was about coming to look at beautiful wedding frocks. That was at Ripponlea and then

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went down to Barwon Park. It travelled and that was very successful. It got the community really engaged down at Winchelsea and Geelong, and the surf coast shire as well because it brought in visitation to the whole district for people to come and see for three months.

Mr FINCH - I used to do a lot of fashion parades in Launceston and one year we did swimsuits over the years. It was fantastic to see the different costumes and outfits over the years.

Ms BESHARA - Yes, of interest to all ages, too.

Mr FINCH - Yes. That is something we don't have in Tasmania and it might be an initiative we can discuss with the state government. Our recommendations will go to the state government and we hope to sow some seeds, and that might be a good way. With the National Trust, while we have fantastic properties, it is very hard with the volunteer base that is ageing.

Mrs TAYLOR - We use them as museums.

Mr RICHARDSON - The secret to that is you need to change the thinking.

CHAIR - Some of them run events - I know Runnymede does - but they aren't particularly about the property.

Mrs TAYLOR - When you have a pop-up cafe at the goal, say, it's not about the goal.

Mr FINCH - How does a pop-up bar work? How do you generate the interest and get people there?

Mr RICHARDSON - A bit of assisted discovery. You steer them in the way of an event. We mightn't necessarily publicise where that event is until close to the date, but we have a following now. We have a database and a following that has trust in what we deliver. We plan to always exceed the experience by having a two-piece or three-piece band or do something with a twist on top of the event. We might decide to throw in a paella bar or something like that and that adds another dimension to it. It is a layered approach.

Mrs TAYLOR - Do you collect data from the people who come?

Ms BESHARA - Yes. For the first one we went out to the marketplace. Our first one was about whisky, so we collected data about barristers. We thought barristers, whisky, cigar smoking, in the city, they're going to love it. We actively tried to build up a database from people we thought would enjoy whisky. We went to whisky enthusiasts, people who wrote about whisky, food bloggers et cetera and then went to the media with it.

Mrs TAYLOR - You use social media quite a bit?

Ms BESHARA - Yes, definitely.

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Mr RICHARDSON - On top of that, to exceed the expectation we would add some master classes. We would have someone talk about the single malts or different peats in whisky.

Mr FINCH - On that same night?

Ms BESHARA - Yes, in a different area - a secret location. We take them across to the Magistrates Court and they do it over there. The only time they get to see that court is if they do the master class.

Mr DEAN - What is your relationship with Heritage Victoria?

Ms BESHARA - Very well.

Mr RICHARDSON - We do lots of work with the buildings. For instance, I mentioned earlier that the toilets were revamped at the Old Melbourne Gaol. That was an interesting experience because as part of that we found some bones, which turned out to be dog bones. We are working hand in hand with Heritage Victoria to make sure it's right. You start something like that and you have to follow all the way through.

Ms BESHARA - Our conservation team stands up for the rights of trying to protect the heritage of properties. Although that's not something Steve and I know a lot about, we know a team that sits a couple of doors up from us that are in court helping to keep properties the way they should be.

Mr DEAN - One of the things that has come up during our inquiries is the need for suitable funds to maintain our National Trust buildings and heritage buildings right across the board. There are not the funds here or back home. There are a lot of things we've looked at. The suggestion has been made about a lottery maybe, about any visitor coming to Tasmania making a payment of \$1 perhaps on lodgings, and/or ratepayers paying an extra dollar on their rates. A lot of things have been suggested to us. You have told us about your membership base and trying to expand that into the younger age groups and so on, but are there any other strategies that you have looked at in relation to suitable funding?

Mr RICHARDSON - That is actually why our team is overseas now. They are looking to see across the broader spectrum of the world, particularly England, for other ways, things we are not doing that we could be doing, so we are very proactive on trying to stay abreast of it.

Mrs TAYLOR - You are looking at using the properties to make money, rather than outside funding or someone giving you money?

Mr RICHARDSON - It needs both. A good example is Como House. We've put a little cafe in there and it's more like a destination café. Most of our cafes are just a service if you're in the building - sure, call by and have a coffee and it's great because it's there. A destination cafe is really about making an effort to go to that building because of the quality of the cafe. That is a different approach to something like the Old Melbourne Goal where you might have a little pop-up cafe every now and then.

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Ms BESHARA - We put that out to tender and selected the best caterer to go in to create that cafe that then pays rent to that property.

Mr DEAN - The group that has gone away, who is in that group?

Ms BESHARA - The CEO, and all our senior managers.

Mr FINCH - Would Tasmania have sent a representative?

Mr RICHARDSON - I would hope so because that is what it is about.

Mr DEAN - When they come back it would be very good to find out what has gone on, what they have come up with and suggestions made. An interesting place to go to is Prague, where they have more heritage buildings than any other city in the world. They have a good system in place and say they have the funds.

Mr RICHARDSON - Using the buildings is a good way to preserve the buildings because you have ongoing maintenance. If you can work clever ways of engaging the community and using the buildings in some way it helps restore the buildings.

Mr FINCH - You only have to shut a building up to see how quickly it deteriorates.

Mrs TAYLOR - Also you have the maintenance money, the cost and no income.

Ms BESHARA - That's right.

Mrs TAYLOR - This is about National Trust but it's also about people who own buildings privately and it's one of the things we are concerned about. There are a lot of privately owned heritage buildings, and you have them here too, that have the same problem. Unless they can put them to some kind of use that brings in interest and money then it is just a constant drain.

Mr RICHARDSON - That's right. A clever way is to have an umbrella company and you are guiding the managers in some of the site as to how to use them. It could be as simple as growing a different variety of apples, or looking after different sheep in some of these rural properties. We will explore many avenues of how to engage and use those buildings in some way.

Mrs TAYLOR - Have you done that in Victoria with National Trust buildings that are out in the bush?

Mr RICHARDSON - If you look at Ripponlea, for instance, Ben Shewry, who is a famous chef in Melbourne, uses some of the veggie patch there, and we grow vegetables for him and that sort of thing. Again, it is using the grounds in another way.

Ms BESHARA - At Gulf Station, which is a farm out in Yarra Glen, we did a corn maze, a metre high corn maze to try to attract visitors in summer.

Mrs TAYLOR - A maize maze.

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Mr DEAN - In Tasmania there is a strong connection between our heritage, our National Trust buildings and tourism. Many people who come to Tasmania come there for that purpose, although I'm not saying it is the only reason. Statistics going back a number of years show that approximately 60 per cent of all people coming to Tasmania had an interest in or looked at our heritage sites and National Trust buildings. In Victoria you may not have that similar connection to tourism because they come here for many other reasons. That is why we have to be very careful of the way we manage our properties and the way we sell it. How well do you work with your tourism side in this state to sell your National Trust properties and value the benefit to tourists coming into the state and this city?

Mr RICHARDSON - We are often at meeting with Destination Melbourne, EMCB and those sorts of establishments. They are long-term events that are out but you're in tune with those things happening in the community. It might be two years out but you need to get spin-offs from those.

Ms BESHARA - And in-bound operators - cruise ships, bus lines - making sure they know what is going on at the properties and trying to cross-promote all the properties as well. People don't understand who we are or the properties we own. They might know about the jail but they wouldn't necessarily know about Rippon Lea.

Mrs TAYLOR - How do you do that? Do you have brochures?

Ms BESHARA - We do a number of things, but we definitely have a brochure. It's a fold-out map that gives you all the properties on the one map. Our website has all the properties on there and a 'what's on' section which is updated each month as to what you can do at our properties.

Mr DEAN - Do you have a position on the tourism board?

Mr RICHARDSON - I don't think we have a position on it but we're actively involved in some of the meetings that take place.

CHAIR - No strategy meetings and things like that with tourism?

Mr RICHARDSON - No. We do with the education department because we are forever trying to hit at different age groups.

Ms BESHARA - We're finely stretched, too, with staff - paid staff and volunteers. In the ideal world we would. Our marketing department will go to particular meetings with particular agents to update us as to what is going on, but that is it.

CHAIR - What about with the council? Do you interact with the council a lot, as opposed to the state government?

Mr RICHARDSON - I answered an email yesterday from the council. They want to do a Christmas thing involving lighting up buildings in red and green, so we emailed them straight back. The council was involved in the AIDS tour across Melbourne where we lit up some of our properties in red. Wherever we can we are part of the community. Last weekend was the 180th anniversary for Melbourne so we had a discount at some of the

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key properties: the *Polly Woodside* down at Docklands and the Old Melbourne Gaol in the inner-city were discounted for Melbourne's birthday and that was publicised through the Melbourne City Council, so it was being part of the community for that weekend.

CHAIR - How old is that vessel?

Mr RICHARDSON - In November it will be 130 years old.

CHAIR - Are you only engaged with older buildings, Victorian and perhaps Georgian buildings, within Victoria, or do you also have some of the more modern heritage - 1950s or 1960s buildings and art deco buildings? Do they come under the aegis of the National Trust?

Mr RICHARDSON - There probably are but I couldn't tell you. Because we're involved in the commercial element of trying to bring additional income through the group we're mainly dealing with the commercial properties. There are other properties in the portfolio but I couldn't tell you what they all were.

Ms BESHARA - All the ones in Melbourne we deal with are older-style buildings. Even when we bought Labassa in the 1970s, that is still a very old building.

Mr FINCH - Back on tourism, do you get many cruise ships coming into Melbourne?

Ms BESHARA - Not as many as we would like, but it is building slowly.

Mr FINCH - Any idea how many you would get - 20, 15?

Mr RICHARDSON - Usually our interaction with cruise ships is associated with *Polly* because we will get some of the flow-on. People on cruise ships are interested in ships, so we do get a follow-through with *Polly*. I must admit that the last time I was in Tassie, when those big cruise ships come in, because they're right in the harbour they really affect Tassie. It would be a great bit of marketing to tap into that, because you see them just go up to MONA or however they cruise. To be part of the other areas of Tassie would be a fantastic thing.

Ms BESHARA - I would probably say 20.

Mr FINCH - Generally people want to pick up on the history and heritage of the local area, don't they? We target tours for them and they have options.

CHAIR - They come into Port Arthur now. They go into Burnie.

Mr FINCH - I just didn't know whether that was part of what you do with the National Trust where you target those cruise ships to try and get them into your properties.

Mr RICHARDSON - We do target different markets though. Over Fashion Week we will target something at Ripponlea to do with fashion on display, whereas if the cricket or the rugby come in, we might target a little bit of the Old Melbourne Gaol. We will track a market and head towards it because we know we will get visitation from that.

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Ms BESHARA - It is something that we want to build. We have recently put on a tourism sales development manager so there is someone out there liaising with the right agents about tourism products and what we do to try to build that side of the business. That person has only been there for three months. That is a new part of the growth we see that we need.

Mr FINCH - With the National Trust in Melbourne, is there a positivity about what you are doing here through the organisation? Are there ebbs and flows, ups and downs? Are there some negatives in the future or the progress you are making?

Mr RICHARDSON - I think we're making really good progress. For the small group of core staff that is on, I believe they punch well above their weight and -

Ms BESHARA - I think people are appreciating what we do.

Mr RICHARDSON - The feedback we get - so many thank-you letters come through and social media - stories written in the book of *Polly* -

CHAIR - It is good to get that feedback.

Mr RICHARDSON - It is fantastic. The volunteers get the community engagement out of it. Just to hear the stories and those thank-yous is fantastic.

Ms BESHARA - I suppose sometimes we find we have a following of people who want to see us using our properties as museum pieces only so you have to have a nice balance of how you deal with the property in bringing it into a commercial world. We do sometimes have to struggle a bit with that.

CHAIR - Do you have any active groups canvassing against you?

Ms BESHARA - No. It may be a member saying things like, 'A pop-up bar at the jail - what next?' because they don't want to see that side of it. It is more that they don't understand that we need that younger generation to come through to build for the future.

CHAIR - That is exactly right.

Ms BESHARA - It is really about educating people.

Mr RICHARDSON - That is how the toilets just got renovated. It is that income that comes through that we are using to upgrade the facilities.

Mr FINCH - You were talking before, Steve, about how you have a section of your operation involved in court cases. Is that against developers? Is that wanting to use sites that you probably consider heritage -

Mr RICHARDSON - The court cases are more to do with education.

Ms BESHARA - There are two prongs. There are the court cases at the old jail that are for the children's education, and then the conservation team will go to court to represent opposing development of historic -

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CHAIR - One is promotional and the other is -

Mr RICHARDSON - Educational.

Ms BESHARA - Yes, that is right.

CHAIR - Do you have any issues with development trying to crowd in on your buildings, taking up the curtilages of your buildings, or is that not an issue for you?

Mr RICHARDSON - Sometimes you inherit that issue. Look at something like Labassa. It has been sold out over time to keep the family in there, or the family owning it. Now we have purchased that and it is heavily built up around it, but the actual house itself is still intact. It is a beautiful thing, but time has happened.

Mrs TAYLOR - Not the property around it any more that there used to be.

Ms BESHARA - No. Most of ours on land, like Como, is massive land. Ripponlea -

Mr RICHARDSON - All good land.

Mr FINCH - How much do you people in Melbourne salute your origins from Launceston when the *Rebecca* sailed out of my electorate at Rosevears in 1835 and brought Batman and Fawkner to Melbourne to get you going? Have you forgotten about that?

Laughter.

Mr FINCH - Have you no sense of justice? Have you no sense of retribution? I thought you would be asking for rent so we could do up our heritage buildings. I got that out of my system. That is good. Now I can settle down.

About a decade ago there was some talk about developing that link between Launceston and Melbourne, to capitalise on that origin where we were able to contribute to the development of Melbourne. That was a good part of history.

Mr RICHARDSON - I think Barwon Park is even a part of that, with the sheep that came across from Tasmania.

Mr FINCH - That is a Tasmanian name is it not? Is Barwon in Tasmania?

Mr RICHARDSON - Barwon Park.

Mr FINCH - There is a lot of food for thought. We have not travelled all that well over the past decade or so. There have been some ructions. What you have experienced here is the changeover between the way things operated in the past, and now looking forward to the future and needing to change the profile of the people who are involved really.

Mr RICHARDSON - Engaging them in a more modern way.

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Mr FINCH - Yes, and people wanting to stay steeped in the past when it is not going to help as you work your way into the future. We have an element of that occurring. Things are not as stable and as well formed as you would like it to be. To see where you have progressed on to this particular section of events business and marketing, and doing these innovative things.

CHAIR - It doesn't mean that the fabric has to suffer.

Mr FINCH - No, that is right.

Ms BESHARA - No.

CHAIR - It is just a different way of approaching it.

Mr FINCH - How can we in Tasmania take people along on that journey to the future?

Mr RICHARDSON - A good example was the National Gallery. They had an exhibition for Dali. As the exhibition got underway they realised they had trouble getting everyone through. They started to activate 'by time' schedules, so you have to come in at a certain time. They had too many people wanting to come through so they opened -

Mrs TAYLOR - Really. That is a good problem to have.

Mr RICHARDSON - It is a great problem. Then they opened some evenings and started to do Friday nights in the gallery. That helped alleviate that. They realised they could not extend the program and they were running out of time and they still had masses of people wanting to come and see it. Then they went 24 hours and it was extremely successful.

What they learnt from it was an audience they had never captured before. They went back and studied that, and so did the Melbourne Museum and some of those big event places, and they realised that by activating it in a different way there was a different audience coming in. They then put on some events. They went to bed with companies like 3JJJ, which was an audience they had never engaged with before, a totally young audience. They put some bands on the grass at the back, and put some little pop ups and a little barbecue station there, et cetera, engaged the community in a different way, and brought a new audience in. They are still following that footprint in a different way. You look at *Bowie*, the exhibition at ACMI now, and that is all on a time schedule -

CHAIR - It is a matter of finding the buttons, isn't it?

Mr RICHARDSON - Yes.

CHAIR - That is terrific. Thanks again for your time. I am sure we have all benefited from that. It gives us ideas as to what we might recommend to Government. We cannot tell Government what to do, but we can suggest. We can point to some of the gaps and point to the opportunities, which is really important. You have helped us to think that through. Thanks very much for coming today.

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Mr RICHARDSON - It is great to look at that audience and be as lateral thinking as possible, to look at what other ways we can engage the community and bring them in from a sideways point of view.

Mr FINCH - Our visitor numbers in Tasmania are increasing, 1.2 million visitors. We are targeting 1.5 million. When you get people coming to tour in Tasmania, whilst their stays have been getting a little shorter, when they come for that initial visit, they look around and say, "There is a lot more going on here than we expected." They come back again. It is places like the National Trust that we want to see as strong as possible, so they can capitalise, we have the maintenance of the buildings and the properties, and a generation of use - give it a purpose.

Mr RICHARDSON - You have such beautiful produce coming from there. You interact with the produce, buildings, and farmers. They become the local heroes. With them becoming the local heroes, then the properties can get engaged. There are other ways.

Mrs TAYLOR - You are right. A lot of our properties are out of the city in areas that are doing great produce.

Mr RICHARDSON - Some of those cool climate wines that are coming out of Tasmania and some of the seafood and some of the vegetables, it is fantastic.

CHAIR - The old apple isle image has taken a long time to die.

Mr DEAN - How often, or do you, meet up with the other National Trust bodies around the country?

Mr RICHARDSON - Martin is a very good advocate of that.

Ms BESHARA - They probably meet three or four times a year.

Mr RICHARDSON - Different sections of that would meet as well. Some would meet through education, some would meet through events, some would meet through properties.

CHAIR - They share their success stories and whatever.

Mr RICHARDSON - Yes.

Mr DEAN - Do we have a national board or a national body of the National Trusts?

Ms BESHARA - That would be Canberra?

Mr RICHARDSON - There isn't, because I know we are in brackets after Victoria. We are working on our independent websites, which are for our sites specific. Then we have a general base, which is Australia-wide. We all share the same network as far as that goes.

Ms BESHARA - I think the head is in Canberra.

Mrs TAYLOR - I think you might be a federation rather than members.

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION B COMMITTEE -
BUILT HERITAGE TOURISM IN TASMANIA, MELBOURNE 1/9/2015
(BESHARA/RICHARDSON)**

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Ms BESHARA - Yes, we are because we are individual members per state. We are a national body but we are Victoria.

Mr FINCH - How many full-time employees in Victoria? Melbourne?

Mrs TAYLOR - Do you distinguish between Melbourne and the rest of the state?

Ms BESHARA - With our volunteers, it was around 800.

Mr FINCH - I am thinking more your staff. How many are on the payroll?

Ms BESHARA - Paid staff, there would not be many.

Mr RICHARDSON - There is probably a dozen, 15 or 20.

Ms BESHARA - With some of the regional properties there might be 25 to 30.

Mr RICHARDSON - Some of those are doing casual. It would add up to that.

CHAIR - You would have part-timers?

Ms BESHARA - Yes. At head office I think there is about 20 full-timers.

Mr RICHARDSON - For the number of properties.

CHAIR - If there is anything extra that comes in, like what you find out in two weeks' time, perhaps we can have you send it to Natasha and she can distribute it for us.

Mr RICHARDSON - That would be worth following up, because that is the whole idea of expanding that umbrella and exploring more avenues of how that is coming together. Some of the events we have been on - we have had some recognition from different parts of the world that we have been pushing the boundaries, which is fantastic.

CHAIR - That is good. Thank you very much.

DISCUSSION CONCLUDED.