



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Official Committee Hansard

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

**Reference: St Lucia, Queensland - CSIRO/University of Queensland
joint building project**

TUESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 1999

BRISBANE

BY AUTHORITY OF THE PARLIAMENT

INTERNET

The Proof and Official Hansard transcripts of Senate committee hearings, some House of Representatives committee hearings and some joint committee hearings are available on the Internet. Some House of Representatives committees and some joint committees make available only Official Hansard transcripts.

The Internet address is: **<http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard>**

To search the parliamentary database, go to: **<http://search.aph.gov.au>**

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Tuesday, 16 November 1999

Members: Mrs Moylan (*Chair*), Mrs Crosio (*Vice-Chair*), Senators Calvert, Ferguson and Murphy and Mr Forrest, Mr Hollis, Mr Lindsay and Mr Ripoll

Senators and members in attendance: Mr Forrest, Mr Hollis and Mrs Moylan

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

St Lucia, Queensland - CSIRO/University of Queensland joint building project

WITNESSES

HAY, Professor John, Vice Chancellor, University of Queensland	287
HEIJ, Dr Elizabeth, Chief of Division of Tropical Agriculture, Long Pocket Laboratories	287
JACKSON, Mr Daryl, Principal, Daryl Jackson Pty Ltd	287
McCLINTOCK, Mr Alasdair, Director, Property and Facilities Division, University of Queensland	287
MOODY, Mr Trevor, Assistant General Manager, CSIRO Corporate Property ...	287
SANDLAND, Dr Ronald, Deputy Chief Executive, Information Technology, Infrastructure and Services and Manufacturing	287
TAKATS, Mr John, Project Manager, CSIRO Corporate Property	287
TAYLOR, Dr Ian, Deputy Director, Institute for Molecular Bioscience, University of Queensland	287
WINTER, Dr William, Manager, Infrastructure and Services, CSIRO Division of Tropical Agriculture	287

Committee met at 9.30 a.m.

HAY, Professor John, Vice Chancellor, University of Queensland

HEIJ, Dr Elizabeth, Chief of Division of Tropical Agriculture, Long Pocket Laboratories

JACKSON, Mr Daryl, Principal, Daryl Jackson Pty Ltd

McCLINTOCK, Mr Alasdair, Director, Property and Facilities Division, University of Queensland

MOODY, Mr Trevor, Assistant General Manager, CSIRO Corporate Property

SANDLAND, Dr Ronald, Deputy Chief Executive, Information Technology, Infrastructure and Services and Manufacturing

TAKATS, Mr John, Project Manager, CSIRO Corporate Property

TAYLOR, Dr Ian, Deputy Director, Institute for Molecular Bioscience, University of Queensland

WINTER, Dr William, Manager, Infrastructure and Services, CSIRO Division of Tropical Agriculture

CHAIR—I would like to open this hearing, which continues the earlier hearing conducted on 27 October. The committee is examining the proposed CSIRO university of Queensland joint building project at St Lucia and has already conducted two extensive inspections of the development and the surrounding residential area. The hearing today provides an opportunity to recall witnesses representing the CSIRO and the University of Queensland to address issues raised at the previous hearing and to clear up any outstanding matters prior to the preparation of the committee's report to the proposal. As you may recall, we allowed quite a lot of time in the last hearing for witnesses to appear, and that left us short to recall the CSIRO and the University of Queensland. So today is a follow on from that.

I welcome the witnesses at the table. The committee has received your written response to questions raised at the earlier hearing. It is now proposed to incorporate the written responses dated 12 November 1999 in the transcript of evidence of today's hearings. Do members have any objection? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The document read as follows—

CHAIR—Would one of your representatives like to make some opening remarks of not more than about five minutes duration, after which we will proceed to questions.

Dr Sandland—Madam Chair, I will begin, but I would also like to invite Professor Hay to join me in these opening remarks. I think what we have with this development is an opportunity to build something in Queensland here at St Lucia that is very well aligned with the objectives of the federal government, the state government, CSIRO and the University of Queensland. I will ask Professor Hay to make a few remarks about just how the University of Queensland's structure is being altered to develop such an opportunity. In fact, I am reminded of the best international centres. This has the opportunity to be a true centre of excellence, developing research in areas that are going to be of crucial importance to the Australian economy.

In our submission we have addressed a number of the concerns which we understand and have heard from the local residents. In our submission we have addressed issues in terms of location and siting, local authority approval, the size, scale and visual impact of the building, the management of biological hazards—where we have been at pains to point out the very rigorous framework of standards and committee structures that will ensure that the risks associated with such a building are absolutely reduced—reduced to effectively zero. There are issues related to the impact of construction activities—no more than would be the case than with a development of this magnitude elsewhere. We would point out that it is very much in our own interests, because of our own developments close by, to ensure that that impact is kept to an absolute minimum from our perspective as well as that of the local residents. We will take every care to ensure that that impact is reduced to an absolute minimum. We have addressed the issue of community consultation in our submission, as we have addressed the issue of campus population, traffic and parking.

I think the exciting thing from the point of view of those who are coming together in this development is that we have here the opportunity to build something that is absolutely world class, that really depends very strongly on the collaboration between the two parties and needs to be integrated into a single structure to ensure that the value of that collaboration is realised. They are my opening remarks, Madam Chair, but I would also like to invite professor Hay to supplement those remarks from the University of Queensland's perspective.

Prof. Hay—Is that acceptable, Chair?

CHAIR—Certainly.

Prof. Hay—Over the past four years, the University of Queensland has been seeking to strategically position itself in a way that major research intensive universities and major government bodies around the world have been doing. For about 11 years, the University of Queensland has been developing major facilities in the broad area now described as molecular biosciences, and also in supercomputing.

The university has a variety of centres in this area which would have been described at the earlier hearing by Professor Mattick. The strength of the academic reputation of these groups led this university to become one of the two lead sites in Australia and the managing lead site of the human genome project. The area of molecular biosciences is one of the most

fundamentally and important far-reaching scientific revolutions in recorded history. We are the lead Australian player in this field right now.

The university does not, however, see molecular bioscience as merely attaching to the research centres or even to CSIRO. It has been restructuring its whole faculty organisation and many of its syllabuses to take account of areas of conspicuous strength as well as moving out of areas of competitive disadvantage. For example, the faculty of science has now been split into two faculties—the faculty of engineering, physical sciences and architecture, which takes computing as its core paradigm, and the faculty of biological and chemical sciences, which takes molecular bioscience as its core paradigm.

The splitting of the faculties has enabled the university to concentrate on particular areas of strategic importance for the future. The decision in relation to the molecular biosciences led the then Borbidge government in 1996 to contribute \$15 million towards the construction of the proposed institute of molecular bioscience, a decision subsequently ratified by the Beattie government when it assumed office. The federal government contributed another \$15 million towards the same project, and \$10 million was provided in untied funds for the development of the IMB physical project itself. The university's contribution of \$15 million towards the building adds to the much greater contribution of all the staff salaries, research centres and the like in this broad area, and joined with CSIRO in bringing together arguably one of the most significant if not the most significant piece of intellectual, physical infrastructure certainly ever in an Australian university.

The Beattie government subsequently added another \$78.6 million for core supplementary running expenses for the next decade. The importance of this development is reflected in federal decisions, it is reflected in the Wills report, it is reflected in the award of strategic research centres—two of them recently were awarded in this area. It is tied in with recent state grant of \$10 million to the university which will enable us to approach the federal government in the supercomputing developments linking a number of universities.

This happens at the St Lucia campus because it brings together the most considerable critical mass of closely related scientific facilities and staff anywhere in the country. It ramifies simply beyond the physical and biological sciences to the medical sciences, health sciences and social sciences as well. The capacity for the fullest exploration and exploitation of this facility is made possible by the contiguity.

The IMB itself, the joint UQ/CSIRO project, brings together these players in a world best practice facility with world best practice health and safety guarantees, and is built in a way that enhances that campus. One might only look at the facility over there to see how derelict and disreputable it is and how important that it be significantly enhanced.

This is the facility which, of all the facilities in Australia based at a university in collaboration with CSIRO, has received support from all the major political parties—the coalition, the Labor Party and jurisdictionally at federal, at state and at city levels. The city level jurisdictional commitment is reflected in the fact that the IMB is adduced as a key element in the Brisbane cities smart city planning, is adduced as a key illustration of the future of the city of Brisbane and is identified as a key element in the economic planning of

the city of Brisbane. For that reason, I was appointed by the city council as a member of all of those committees speaking for the university in that regard.

The supercomputing facility and the infrastructure will indeed come together. One indeed facilitates the other. Without the IMB, the supercomputing could not be maximally taken advantage of, and the supercomputing facility itself provides a visualisation capacity upon which the maximal advantage of the IMB project can be taken.

Beyond that, I think all I would say is that the building itself chose an architect from a rigorous competition, with very stringent guidelines, chaired by an external committee with an external international member. I chaired the committee. The aim was to build a facility of world-class standard scientifically, and design it such a way that it enhanced the amenity of this campus—relating to core icon buildings such as the great court, maintaining the park-like structures and generally doing what the university has been at pains to do in recent years—to enhance the amenity of this extraordinary campus. Chair, that is as brief as I can make it.

CHAIR—Thank you very much. I think I speak on behalf of committee members when I say that we are well aware of the importance of this particular project. I think the committee's concerns rest with a couple of issues that have been raised in the public hearings, and I would like to perhaps ask some further questions about those. One is in relation to the planning requirements of the Brisbane City Council. I do understand that under the Integrated Planning Act of 1997 the university is exempted from the local planning scheme at the present time. What would be the situation if the university were not exempt in terms of the building footprint and its proximity to Carmody Road, for example. We have just been down there this morning and had a look at that. We note the buildings are quite close to Carmody Road now and probably would contravene current planning regulations, but the new building proposes to be even closer to that boundary. Would somebody like to comment on that?

Prof. Hay—I am prepared to comment on those parts where I know what I am saying is absolutely accurate.

CHAIR—I thought Mr Jackson might want to also contribute.

Prof. Hay—He would be far more expertly placed than I. In relation to dealings with the Brisbane City Council, we are having close and continuing negotiations with the Brisbane City Council. Everything you said, Chair, was—until we touched on the issue of the proximity to the boundary—absolutely uncontentious and accurate. The university, with the Brisbane City Council, is concurrently seeking development approval, and for designation as a community infrastructure. So, with the support of the Brisbane City Council, we are proceeding down both tracks. That is what we think is the appropriate thing to do.

CHAIR—Yes, except the question I am asking is: if the university were not exempt under the Integration Planning Act 1997, what would be the situation with building so close to the boundary? Would you or would you not get permission to do that?

Prof. Hay—It is a hypothetical question. It is a difficult one to answer.

CHAIR—It is not hypothetical in that there would be other organisations or other companies in Brisbane who would perhaps not be able to build such buildings.

Prof. Hay—Daryl Jackson may be able to answer this more briefly than I, but the zoning which we presently enjoy permits special purposes, special uses, and this is one of them.

CHAIR—So it permits you to go outside what would be considered the normal guideline for building distance from boundaries?

Prof. Hay—Mr Jackson could comment on that.

Mr Moody—The closest we get to the property boundary is six metres, which from my understanding meets Brisbane City Council guidelines. That is the closest we get to the boundary. At the Hawken Drive intersection, the setback runs to 40 metres, which is quite significant, allowing us to retain the existing landscaping that you would have observed as you walked around the site this morning and two weeks ago.

CHAIR—But normally the setbacks increase as you go up; is that correct? What would be the norm if you were not building in this precinct? What would be the normal setback for a building of this height?

Mr Jackson—I can answer that. It would be half the height of the building itself.

CHAIR—Which in this case is what?

Mr Jackson—In this case it varies, because the land slope varies. So you get a building which is seven floors high—

CHAIR—At this particular point?

Mr Jackson—At 27 metres, let's say, is at this point less than that because it is in the ground. So the setback would be 13 metres if you took—

CHAIR—And it is actually six.

Mr Jackson—It is six at one point only and, because of the splay of the building itself and the turning point of Carmody Road, it swings immediately away from that point. It is an incident point rather than a planar point. It is not en face with the road itself. So it intercepts at one point only, and that is apparent from the model. Then the face of the building swings away quite strongly, for the reasons that people are discussing, in order not to make a significant impact on the site and on the residents opposite, and in order to hold for the remainder of the boundary in excess of the 13 metres that is required by way of trees that are kept. In fact, as Mr Moody has just said, it varies between six metres and up to 40 metres as the building swings away and as Carmody Road swings away in the opposite form.

There are three very important trees further up towards the turning circle at the arrival point into the university, and Carmody Road itself, as it drops down into the valley, would be enhanced with further trees. There are some images on the panels to your left, Chair,

which show three views. One is from the end of Dell Street, which is where two houses are the closest houses to the particular corner in question. Each house is 35 metres away from that corner—that is shown I think in the left hand of the upper panel. The right-hand panel shows a view coming from the east in Carmody Road looking up towards the building, showing new trees planted on the left-hand side where there is a car park building, and where the building itself is in excess of 60 metres away from Carmody Road.

As the model shows, there are three components of the building. It is a large building, as everybody acknowledges, split into three major components. The first of those on the northern most boundary is of course well away from Carmody Road. There is a middle block, which is really an office section which is away from Carmody Road by the setback and as the road swings around by an enhanced setback. Then the building closest to the south, heading up towards the university proper towards the east, has that point of six metres that you mention.

CHAIR—The other question that I wanted to ask was in relation to the community consultations. Clearly, this is a bone of contention. It is an issue that this committee faces constantly and it is an issue which cannot really be ignored. I notice in your synopsis in your response to the last hearing on community liaison and information activities—in fact, it comes under the heading of ‘Community consultation’—that the first announcement about this development was made in 1996 in December. It seems that for quite a lengthy period of time the so-called community consultation or the liaison information activities were done by press release and that it was not until August that there was really any significant community consultation done.

I also note in your submission that you say, under ‘Community Liaison Committee’ on page 10 of your submission, that the establishment of a community liaison committee is under consideration. The committee generally feels that community consultation is a pretty important part of any development. Obviously, people in the area are affected. How strong are your commitments to developing a community liaison committee? What measures are you going to take to ensure that the community is kept clearly and properly informed of the construction and the development as it moves forward?

Prof. Hay—I am happy to take that question, Chair. The summary and the written response to the questions details, focuses upon, the press releases. Since December 1996, this has not been the only mode of dissemination of this information. In the first few years at this university, I averaged over 200 public speeches a year in relation to campus discussions on all of the media. In the preponderant majority of those, the issue and development of the IMB project was a focus. I had to address a wide community—the whole of the state and the city—as well as the federal funding authorities. I saw the inclusion of the local community as part of that particular consultative and discussion process. I discussed this at rotary groups, at public meetings, at civic meetings and so forth. To a certain extent I have been criticised for harping on this particular issue over the first three years, particularly within the institution.

To address your precise question, the university will set up a community liaison committee. It is our intention—and I have said this to the public meeting and I have said it to the lord Mayor and to the Premier—that we are concerned, during the construction phase

in particular, not only to set up a hotline but to address as a good citizen all of those issues of noise, safety and traffic.

There are two communities involved here. Adjacent to the IMB site are not only houses on the other side of Carmody Road and elsewhere and St Lucia but adjacent is a residential college, Cromwell College. I am authorised by the head of Cromwell College to say that positive and constructive negotiations between the college and the university, which are independent, have been going on. We are mindful of the concerns of the students working and living there. On the other side is a very large set of university buildings—the therapies buildings and anatomical sciences. Those buildings include expensive and sensitive data, necessarily dust-free areas. On the site itself is CSIRO's controlled climate building, which is an enormously fragile piece of infrastructure. So we have a level of concern not only for the residents on the other side of the street and would be mindful of issues of noise, dust, light, sound, traffic, safety; we have also responsibility to larger and more expensive infrastructure and larger and potentially more disadvantaged people right adjacent to the site.

Frequently in this university, as in other universities, we erect new complex, large buildings—some as high as 12 storeys on this campus—in the middle of precincts of expensive equipment and densely populated labs where large numbers of people are working and living. That is something we have developed some expertise in. So the community consultation is a real one. The need to set up the liaison committee is established. It is being proselytised.

In the past we have comprehensively informed everyone who wished to listen and have offered invitations to discuss to anyone who wished to discuss this matter with us. The public exposition of the winning architectural entry was the beginning of a much more intense period of consultation. The only public meeting which I was invited to attend had 43 members and was convened by Denver Beanland. A number of my colleagues and colleagues from CSIRO and I went there and gave guarantees to be mindful of all the issues that may have arisen.

I am keeping it brief, Chair; I am mindful of the necessities here. But that I think canvasses not only what we have done—the fact that the location of the building has been known for some 16 months—but our intentions in the future and our responsibilities to the neighbourhood and to the members of the university—both students and staff working and living adjacent to this development.

CHAIR—Do I understand that, further to your response to us on 12 November, rather than having community liaison committee under consideration, you will actually set it up.

Prof. Hay—I have it set up here, and I would be prepared to table this if you would receive it, Chair.

CHAIR—Thank you.

Prof. Hay—This is the community liaison plan, the first edition. It fulfils an undertaking I gave at a public meeting and to the Lord Mayor and to the Premier.

Mr FORREST—I have a few questions. I would like to go to the nature of the building. I still have concerns about public consultation—we might come back to that. I would like you to run through why this building is the shape and character it is. It is a bit odd. It is three pieces of a building extended where you could have got much better efficiency with all sorts of airconditioning and accommodation with one building. Three separate buildings have forced you to go closer to the boundary, which has raised all the other issues the community is concerned about. Could somebody please run through why we have such an unusual building of separate components?

Mr Jackson—I will attempt to answer that, Mr Forrest. A building of this size, as everyone acknowledges, is rather large. We sought to build it as close as we could to the footprint of the existing building site. We did some studies, for instance, of a five-storey building which occupied the whole of the land space. We did this study which pushed the components of the building into three elements—mainly to maintain a sense of scale for such a building with other associated buildings already on the university site. It creates good efficiencies in terms of the operation of the units. It provides good natural light to the building envelope within, and it provides essential connected services from the service road to both those elements.

Scientists working in these buildings require good natural light as well as a very flexible floor plate. These are large floor plates, as everyone acknowledges. Had we made it just one building, it would have been even larger. The mass of the building would have occupied a greater site area. What might appear to you to be an arrangement which is not efficient is indeed efficient from the point of view of the operation of the building itself.

Mr FORREST—Why wouldn't you have the emphasis of the taller buildings closer to the service road at the rear? It is constrained by the fact that there is an auditorium there. It has a low roof, but also the controlled environment facility. Having lower roof heights, why wouldn't they be at the front?

Mr Jackson—That is indeed the case within the constraints of the site. The tallest building, which is seven storeys high, is on Services Road, which is really on the northern side of the site. Then there is a middle block in the centre between the two laboratory buildings, which is an office building. That takes the management team, that takes shared elements between two groupings of scientists. Then the building that is on the south side occupies the footprint of the existing Cunningham laboratories and moves further east away from residents into the centre of the university itself. You can see on your site plan that you would have had this morning showing that overlap just how closely the new building fits across the Cunningham laboratory footprint.

The reason for splitting the two buildings and facing one to the west and the other to the east is to sustain good quality natural light for those working within it. The floor plates themselves are some 24 metres to 25 metres deep. That is a very deep floor plate. It is required really to have scientists working on the outer edges of it with support space in the centre. That is the reasoning behind the planning of the building. It is really to sustain natural light within and, as I have said, to try to keep the majority of the major heart of the building away from the residential precinct to the south. Where the building is on the south side, it goes into the ground two levels. So it is effectively 4½ floors out of the ground up at

Chancellors Place and 5½ floors out of the ground at the point of intersection with Carmody Road.

Prof. Hay—Chair, could I make a comment? Just to focus what Mr Jackson has said—and it is more appropriate that I say it than he: this building was chosen as a result of an architectural competition. On that committee were Dr Malcolm McIntosh, the head of CSIRO, and I—neither of us architects. Advising the committee was Professor Michael Keniger, the first architect to be appointed as a state architect in Queensland, and he has that title, as well as Professor Daryl Le Grew, perhaps this country's most outstanding academic architect, who has been on some of the major public constructions in Victoria and elsewhere.

The competition attracted a number of entries, and this was the unanimous and clear winner. It best handled the brief. It best addressed the issues of the CSIRO group, the UQ group and common facilities. It maintained best the existing controlled temperature environment, and fundamentally handled better than any of them two things: one, the essential importance of maximal natural light—all buildings in this domain require that; second, it integrated well with the rest of the campus, paying particular attention to visual and pedestrian access to the great court and, in terms of material, size and everything like that, it conformed best. So the committee was unanimous in choosing this building. All the scientific advice from the subcommittees that evaluated parts of it were equally unambiguous. It may appear vain for Daryl Jackson to say that. It is easier for me to say it as chair of the committee.

Mr FORREST—That still does not explain to me why part of the buildings that only have single storeys—like the auditorium and the controlled environment facility—could not have been constructed closer to Carmody Road and all the other things you are aspiring to achieve could still not be accommodated. Most of the objection from surroundings residents is the height of the building so close to Carmody Road. Why couldn't the auditorium and the controlled environment facility be put at the front—you are calling the Services Road the front, but in a different location, closer to Carmody Road, one storey instead of six?

Prof. Hay—The simple fact is that the intervening of the lower building between the two higher buildings maximises the light advantage. Mr Jackson can further comment.

Mr FORREST—Is this light advantage to do with other nearby buildings as well, is it?

Mr Jackson—Indeed it is, but it is also to do with the fact that the low building that exists there is the CSF building, in which case it is an impossible building to move, as I understand it. It would have created much more expense to move it. The adjacencies that attach to that building are best done with facilities that do not involve scientific work—in other words, it has to be free of vibration, it has to be free of excessive loads around it, and therefore the university lecture theatre that is part of this brief and some of the seminar rooms that are attached along the side of that building when you look at the plans closely are amenities that can go alongside there in what is a narrow footprint.

They also are located into Chancellors Place so, for efficient use, those facilities can be used by people outside the scientific inquiry centre itself—in other words, other users within

the university can logically come to that point and use the lecture theatre, use the conference centre and not invade the security sections of the laboratory facility itself.

Mr Moody—It must be remembered that the controlled environment facility is an existing building; it is a constraint to development. It was built approximately five years ago by CSIRO, and it has been in continual use. The last thing we want is the activities in that building to be disrupted due to this building. There is obviously a replacement cost but there is also the cost of finding alternative facilities elsewhere during any construction of that facility. So it is a constraint to development. I think the architects, in providing a lower scale building in that area, have tried to scale it to meet the demands of that controlled environment facility without disrupting the activities going on within that facility.

Mr FORREST—If we are stuck with the corner of that building so close to Carmody Road, I asked at the last hearing for some photo mosaics to be prepared to show just how obtrusive it might be or might not be. Have you been able to prepare some photo mosaics that show what it looks like?

Mr Moody—Certainly we have. You will see on the screens to your left three sketches which indicate views from various points. We also have photo montages.

Mr FORREST—For the *Hansard*, are those plans numbered? Can you number them somehow so they can be referred to?

Mr Moody—Unfortunately they are not numbered. I can describe them by the titles underneath. On my left-hand side, the top one is a view that is taken from Dell Road, within Dell Road at approximately the crest in the road, which I think coincides with No. 11. That sketch is a reflection of a photo montage that we also could make available to the committee. We have sets of that, but with limitation of space we could not put everything up on the wall. I personally believe it is a reasonable reflection of the existing conditions with the building superimposed. We are more than happy to show the photo montage to demonstrate the trees and so on within the area that physically appear along those lines.

Mr FORREST—A number of objectors who have given evidence live in Dell Road. Could you indicate, in the photo mosaic and in the sketch that you referred to, what position in Dell Road that that is viewing from?

Mr Moody—It is approximately adjacent to No. 11—if you walk down Dell Road, it is where there is a crest in the road and the road falls away down towards Picardy Street. It is the view that people in that area would see from the street or from their front gardens.

Mr FORREST—I notice there have been a number of meetings with local residents since our last inquiry—the 4th, 5th and 12 November. Have residents been able to have access to those photo mosaics or montages?

Mr Moody—No, they were produced at your request from the last hearing. They were only completed at the end of last week. We have not been in a position to make those available. They are here for public display, and we are more than happy to make both the sketches and the photo montages available for anyone to view.

Mr FORREST—How many have you prepared? Have you done some from the Hawken Drive roundabout?

Mr Moody—Yes, the one which is partially obscured from my view, which is the lower right-hand corner, is taken adjacent to the Hawken Drive roundabout, which shows the existing hoop pines and trees that will be shown as understorey planting in that area. As you can see, the appearance of the hoop pines is such that the building, I believe, sits quite comfortably behind them. Those trees will be retained as part of this project, and that is within the area of the 40-metre setback that I mentioned earlier.

The third view that you can see, which is the upper right-hand corner, my right-hand corner, is a view taken from Carmody Road. On the left-hand side of that drawing is the car park, which you can see projecting from the ground. My recollection is that it projects approximately six metres from the ground at the point adjacent to Cromwell College and tapers down to almost zero as it proceeds along Carmody Road. Our intention is to provide landscaping adjacent to that area so that the view of that structure is virtually obscured. In the distant view you can see the three major buildings that comprise this facility.

Mr FORREST—Getting back to the building again, has any consideration been given to reducing the height of the building, in a similar way that the car park is being built, by locating it an extra storey or so underground?

Mr Moody—That has been considered. There is a balance between cost of excavation and duration of excavation compared with building above ground. We already have two levels below ground. There is obviously an additional cost impediment in going further underground and, as I indicated before, an increased duration of construction.

Mr Jackson—To add to that, if I may, there are only a certain number of facilities that logically belong in the ground in a building of this type. That logic has been extended in placing those elements there at present. I suppose much is made of the setbacks in the conversation we are having. But, in effect, in answer to your earlier question about what would happen with a local government in their jurisdiction, there would be a balancing effect given to the way in which setbacks are debated and discussed, particularly where there is a road in place and particularly where, on a site such as this, it is a special use zone and a university. So there is planning law that takes account of the nature of its use and its designation. Secondly, I made the point about the way in which the setbacks vary tremendously—to hold a great deal of landscape in place that is highly valued by everybody and, secondly, to sustain an open space across the roof of the car park—in answer to Mr Forrest's question—because that is the valley form that runs through the landscape itself. So we are trying to hold the buildings to the higher ground as far away as one can from the neighbourhood and to hold that view and valley line that connects through that zone with the college, with the small park that is at the bottom of the hill further down and not to put height into that spot.

Prof. Hay—In relation to the point made about further excavation, the present building sits above the flood line. A further excavation may raise difficulties in terms of building above the Q100 flood line. That is always an issue on this campus. There are large areas of the campus which are subject to flooding. We are above the Q100 flood line in this building.

To go down another storey, in addition to the disadvantage summarised by Mr Jackson, this issue would also then arise.

Mr FORREST—What sorts of excavations are you anticipating? What are the ground conditions there? I have not seen any geotechnical information.

Mr Moody—The ground conditions are based on geotechnical information that has been carried out—the survey that has been carried out to date indicates gravelly clay material which ultimately extends into rock. There is extensive fill in the south-western corner of the site, I understand, which was fill that was introduced over a creek of some years ago. But we do anticipate rock excavation once we get down to levels, I think, of the order of six metres and beyond.

Mr FORREST—Will it need explosives or can it be ripped?

Mr Moody—We are looking at methods of removal for the rock. The indications are that it can be ripped—some of it can be ripped—but we need to carry out further testing on the rock to determine how best to excavate it. Two alternatives would be available. If it is solid rock, one would be using rock breaking tools or the alternative would be explosives. But we have to consider the consequences of either action in making that decision.

Mr FORREST—Nearby residents have grave concerns about the use of explosives—dynamite, they called it.

Mr Moody—I do not think dynamite is used very extensively these days for blasting but, if it were done—and I would say it is fairly remote—it would be controlled blasting. Obviously you would have licensed contractors that can carry out that work to minimise the impact of any explosives.

Mr FORREST—Most of that will be required at the car park excavation, which seems to be the one that is below ground.

Mr Jackson—I am not so sure about that, Mr Forrest. I think most of it will be required at the eastern end closest to the university proper, where the building on the south side is the furthest into the ground.

Mr Moody—As I indicated before, the south-western corner of the site is where there is extensive fill over an existing creek. That is where we anticipate that the excavation will be easy.

Mr FORREST—I have a few more questions, but Mr Hollis might be champing at the bit.

Mr HOLLIS—I only had one question. It is more or less the same question that I asked at the original hearing. Many people have said they are not objecting to the work that goes on there. I recall at the first hearing that much was made about this being the future. I repeat what I said then: if it is the future, if this is the way to go, why put that on a site here which is restricted in many respects? If it is as exciting as you are saying, it will need expansion at

some time. Why not bite the bullet now, so to speak, and go to a greenfield site? Surely that would attract other work and other research. I appreciate what you have said before about how you have to have that interaction on the university campus—I understand that. But surely if you had a greenfield site you would get that interaction and you would get other work there.

Prof. Hay—Mr Hollis, the reality is that you would not get that interaction. The only reason it is possible to contemplate the IMB project is the existence on this university, on this St Lucia campus site, of major interrelated research facilities, research centres, other facilities—some of them, for example, are hugely expensive in their own right. There are issues like the supercomputing, to which I have already alluded, which has to occur on this campus. That is the advice of expert committees. So it builds on to the supercomputing facilities we already have. To do it afresh is simply financially infeasible and in any case it would fragment the symbiosis, the working together of the staff. Other facilities such as the centre for molecular resonance and the centre for microscopy and microanalysis are just small examples of hugely expensive infrastructure—expensive in terms of the equipment and the staff. There is no capacity to contemplate this project on a greenfield site. The staff would not go there and we could never replicate that range of interrelated facilities on a greenfield site. This has been the case right around the world when projects like this have been considered. They wind up—usually when they are contemplated on a campus—in a very small number of campuses where there is a broad range of interrelated staff and facilities exist. It is simply not feasible.

Dr Sandland—The only way you could contemplate this would be to essentially replicate these additional facilities. I might just make this point about supercomputing: in order to understand how the bioactive molecules in this kind of situation actually work, it requires phenomenal computing power to really model and visualise those molecules. Indeed, that was the basis of the discovery of the drug Relenza—it was based on this type of molecular modelling. So you do need that kind of intellectual input. You simply could not replicate that on another site. You could not contemplate doing it within, I would think, an order of magnitude of the cost associated with this building.

Prof. Hay—The only other site in Australia where you might contemplate an activity like this is on the Parkville campus of the University of Melbourne and they have fewer players and fewer facilities in this area than the University of Queensland at St Lucia.

Dr Winter—Having been a resident on this campus for 40 years, I think that history is very important as a projector of reference for the future. The interactions around the campus have not only been with molecular biology, which was not in existence then. The interactions of CSIRO are much more diverse than that and are much more mobile. In other words, they change from year to year. There has been tremendous value in the university, the CSIRO and the general community being able to move through the various faculties and departments around the university over time to meet community needs. We have been talking mainly about the molecular end of this building—that is molecular biology in its various forms and chemistry—but CSIRO in particular has a large group of people involved in the natural resource management aspects. They interact predominantly elsewhere within this campus—increasingly with the people like social scientists and geographers, where the information sciences and the social sciences are now coming together. This is the current

form, but we are building this building for the next 40 years. Who knows in the next 20 years what the next generation of sciences are, but you can bet your boots that they will be evident within this campus. That is why it is important for CSIRO to stay here, I believe.

CHAIR—There is one other question I would like to ask. It centres on the concern of the public, particularly nearby residents, about the types of material that will be handled in the laboratories. I just wonder whether you have done a risk profile. What are the activities that you are doing now and how will those activities change? Have you done a risk profile which identifies the hazards and procedures? What are the emergency procedures? What area do the emergency procedures cover?

Dr Sandland—I will make a preliminary answer to that question. I will also ask Dr Heij on my left to speak to that and then invite other members. Basically I think what we have indeed done in terms of the laboratory definitions is implicitly to define the risk profiles associated with this type of work. You will have seen in our submission that there is a very complex infrastructure in terms of standards—Australian standards for this type of work which fully take into account the risks associated with it. Furthermore, there are committees that operate in this area of biological risk. They are known very much for their rigour rather than for their slackness in this type of situation. That is true for both the university and for the CSIRO. So we are governed by this system of committees and standards which I believe really provides the most rigorous set of safeguards that one could imagine at the level that we are talking about. But I will ask initially Dr Heij and then maybe Professor Hay to comment on that as well.

Prof. Hay—Chair, set out in the letter sent by CSIRO is a summary of the various bodies which govern our actions. These include the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service guidelines, the guidelines of small scale genetic manipulation work and so on. Some of these committees are within institution committees with lay members, absolutely independent ethics committees, safety committees—all universities have them and they are very important. Others are entirely independent of the university and CSIRO, and have been for years maintaining a very strict regimen. The activities undertaken in the IMB are already being undertaken at the St Lucia campus and have been for a number of years—in the biological precinct area of the university and in the CSIRO.

CHAIR—So what you are saying is that basically the activities are not going to change in nature?

Prof. Hay—These are not new activities, we are not originating new hazards. We are not, for example, looking at PC4 requirements. We go up to a very small number of PC3—

CHAIR—So you do that now?

Prof. Hay—We do it now in a very small level of areas. What we get with the new facility, both CSIRO and UQ, is a vastly enhanced efficiency and effectiveness and enhanced safety and security arrangements. So everything we are doing now will be more secure and more safe as a result of the new development than it is at present, and we are already complying absolutely with all the requirements put upon us.

CHAIR—What has been the procedure for dealing with accidents or mishaps under the current regime? Have there been any?

Prof. Hay—I don't believe we have had any at the University of Queensland.

Dr Taylor—I have had some discussion recently with the secretary of the IBC, the Institutional Biosafety Committee. I was informed that certainly in the last two years there have been no notifiable accidents of that nature. The procedure would be that, if there were any type of adverse event, it would be reported to that committee for further investigation.

Dr Heij—The same regulations apply absolutely to CSIRO. Certainly, when we have been working very closely with the Genetic Manipulation Advisory Committee in the design of the building, that council is about to become regulated by the new office of the gene technology regulator. The regulations, if anything, will become more strict, and compliance will now be statutory rather than voluntary, as it has been in the past. We are already working with that regulator in terms of the design of this building. We too are not doing anything new in this facility. You can see that the state of our current facilities makes it a very difficult ask for us to comply with all those safety regulations, but we are.

Mr FORREST—I would like to move to a bit of scrutiny of the Commonwealth's contribution to the project. I refer to the architect's plan of floor space and use of floor space. It is reference 315 C. It says that the percentage of University of Queensland use of floor space is 57.4 per cent, the CSIRO is 42.6 per cent—yet we are paying 50 per cent of the costs. In addition to that, we are paying for the car park completely. Thank you also for a copy of the building agreement, but I cannot find the answer there either.

Mr Moody—As we stated at the last hearing, the proportion of 42.6 to 57.4, which I think we rounded up and down at the last hearing, represents the floor area that will be occupied in laboratories by respectively CSIRO and the University of Queensland. As a result, in the main building, exclusive of the car park, we have proportioned the costs of building works in accordance with those proportions. The same has applied to the external site works, the servicing and so on of the site. The car park to accommodate 220 vehicles is CSIRO cost, because the car parking is being provided primarily for CSIRO, with limited use by the university. As a result, the principles are that CSIRO will pay for the cost of the car parking and, if the university uses—and I think we would allow them to use up to 20 bays—a cost will be paid by the university to CSIRO for the use of those bays.

Mr FORREST—So people from the university will not be prevented from using the car park. There will be a notional—

Prof. Hay—No, sorry, they will be prevented from using the car park. We will pay for that use we make of the car park. We understand this very clearly. The bulk of the university's car parking is on the other side of the university.

Mr FORREST—That is not in the agreement. I could not find it.

Prof. Hay—I am reading it in the *Hansard*. That is exactly what the university is intending to do. If the agreement has to be supplemented to make this clear, I am perfectly

prepared to do that. That is the undertaking we gave to CSIRO, and we have been mutually in accord on this matter.

Mr Moody—My recollection was that there was a statement in the agreement about that, but I am trying to find the appropriate page.

Mr FORREST—I must admit that I only had this morning to look for it—I did not have a copy to peruse over night. Could I ask a final question to do with the public consultation. Thank you, Professor Hay, for the document that is tabled. It is still not what I would expect to be a comprehensive community consultation—the kind of cuddly stuff you have to do to make sure those photo mosaics that have been prepared are taken to the home sites. I notice there has been a lot of that activity since our last hearing, probably stimulated by the hearing, but all that is proposed so far is a BBQ sausage sizzle on 4 December. Public consultation needs exactly that. It is supposed to be a two-way process where the community's concerns are heard and some kind of adjustments can be made. What I would like to know is: is this just a public relations exercise or a proper community consultation—where it is often regarded as two-way and some modifications can be achieved that will satisfy anybody that has concerns. What is it going to be?

Prof. Hay—I can address this one directly. I can repeat undertakings I gave at the public meeting to which I was invited that Mr Beanland convened some while ago and which I have made on previous occasions. During the construction period, the university is mindful of being a good neighbour. I undertook at that meeting that we would set up a hotline during construction, that we would undertake these further series of consultations with the community—of which the document I have given you represents the next phase—in order to be good neighbours. That range of activities, as I have suggested—noise, damage, safety, traffic and those sorts of things—has to be monitored continually. If we have to meet weekly, we will do that.

As I said, we are going to be under very considerable duress from the more immediate neighbours in anatomical sciences and therapies and Cromwell College as well as the residents on the other side of Carmody Road. I have said that publicly. I stand by it. It is university policy that we wish to have the closest possible two-way collaboration to identify issues where problems have arisen and need immediate solution and so on. It is a frank and clear commitment.

Mr FORREST—How accommodating can you be? For example, the residents say absolutely no construction traffic shall use Dell Road or Hawken Drive. How accommodating can you be?

Prof. Hay—The issue in relation to Dell Road and Hawken Drive would be issues that we would talk constructively with the residents and the city council about. If indeed an arrangement has to be made concerning traffic in Dell Road, we would do it. We already have buses there. We have buses going along Carmody and we have a lot of traffic up Hawken, but we will undertake whatever is necessary in this regard. I have given this undertaking to the Lord Mayor and I gave it at the public meeting.

CHAIR—The community liaison plan, and more specifically the committee that you have agreed to set up: will that be set up to discuss issues prior to the construction of the building?

Prof. Hay—I think that would be appropriate, Chair, because there are a number of issues that we could anticipate and seek to make planning in advance. Others may just occur quite unexpectedly, and we have to have that capacity—ergo, a hotline, ergo a committee that will meet as often as is necessary.

CHAIR—Do you have a date when this community liaison committee would commence or when it would be formed?

Prof. Hay—I think it is to be formed directly, Chair.

CHAIR—You might let us know.

Prof. Hay—I will let you know. I do not have an aide-memoire to say exactly what date, but I think it is directly.

CHAIR—Who would be invited to join this community liaison committee?

Prof. Hay—Concerned parties.

CHAIR—So it does not preclude anyone.

Prof. Hay—No. Chair, there would not be any point in our setting up such a committee that was characterised by exclusivity. We would then not hear the sorts of things that people felt were important to say.

Mr FORREST—Just to make it clear, though: this is a committee in which the community can participate to get you through the construction phase; it is not a committee that is designed to hear community concerns and modify the design.

CHAIR—No, I just asked that question, Mr Forrest, and Professor Hay said that it would start and address general concerns. Is my understanding correct?

Prof. Hay—Yes, that is so.

Mr FORREST—My concern is that such a community committee was not in operation before this design was put to our committee. It could have resolved a lot of the concern that we had to sit here and hear about the design of the building.

Prof. Hay—That may be so, Mr Forrest, but it is the case that—and it was summarised in the letter that was forwarded, the 3,500 letters, and in the widespread media coverage of this matter—the university indicated its willingness to attend any meeting. Professor Mattick in his submission made the same point: that he was publicly available to attend any invitation to discuss this matter. So there is a limit to how far one can go to imagine what questions might be raised when indeed responses to the information we put out were not

forthcoming. What we were doing predated the meeting. It has indeed been a matter of discussion in Queensland from every level from the Premier down since December 1966. It has been a constant theme of the present Premier. It was a powerful theme of the previous Premier. It has been regularly discussed by the city council and by the university. I am repeating something I have already said. We have been extremely forthcoming. Since the plan was revealed, we move into a different phase, but that committee which made the decision chose from a number of architects, major submissions, and was mindful of all sorts of issues—all the necessary issues were borne in mind in selecting Daryl Jackson Pty Ltd and this design.

Dr Sandland—Chair, might I just take up an earlier question of Mr Forrest's, because I do have the answer on this question of the agreement on the parking. In schedule 8, clause 3.2 it states:

CSIRO will confer on the university the irrevocable right to use 20 car parking bays, the licensed bays within the car parking complex. The university will pay to CSIRO on the commencement date of the lease the sum of \$250,000 for the use of the licensed bays.

CHAIR—Further to that, what access road will the UQ staff working in the new facility use?

Mr Moody—Access to the site, depending on whether you are talking about university staff, CSIRO staff or service vehicles—

CHAIR—I said University of Queensland staff specifically.

Mr McClintock—It is supposition, because the university is not prescriptive as to how people come to the campus. But for those who are coming by car, because they will not have access to the car park except for the 20 spots, it is likely that they will probably come along Schonell Drive and enter one of the multistorey car parks there and will walk along Services Road to the site. Those who come by bus will come to Chancellors Place, get off the bus on Chancellors Place and enter off Chancellors Place. Some who come by bicycle and avail of the changing facilities for cyclists that we are putting in this building may well come along Carmody Road. But those coming by cars I would have thought, if they are coming from the city side, will come along Schonell Drive. Indeed, those coming from Indooroopilly will obviously have to get around to those car parks, but they could go down Macgregor Drive, Coleridge Road or Carmody Road. It is a difficult question to answer, Chair.

CHAIR—One of the concerns in the public submissions centred on the increase in traffic and parking in the streets outside and adjacent to the facility. What capacity does the university have to work—I presume with the local authority, with the council—to direct staff not to park in the streets adjacent to and opposite the building?

Prof. Hay—In relation to parking in the suburbs, that is no longer possible in a lot of areas. The university agreed with the city council's initiatives to put significant restrictions upon parking in the adjacent suburbs. As a relative newcomer to Queensland, I have to say I was struck, when I first came here four years ago, by the banks of cars from university staff and students parked through the suburbs. That no longer obtains. The university's main

parking, as I said, is on the other side of the campus, and that is where people will mainly be parking. In relation to the hypothetical increase of people coming to the university as a result of this facility, it will re-house people working in other parts of the university as well as house existing CSIRO staff, with some scope for additional staff there—fewer students of course, because it is mainly research intensive, but research students would clearly be there. But the St Lucia campus is indeed reducing, not increasing its total student load and staff load. We are developing a campus at Ipswich. Its development has been delayed about choosing a site. We had some difficulties. Over the next couple of years we will be progressively reducing student and staff load at St Lucia and relocating that student load and staff load to the Ipswich campus, in accord with requirements by the federal government and state government insofar as funded load is concerned. So there will be a net reduction.

CHAIR—I notice that you made that comment on page 11 of your responses to the public hearings earlier, but you were not specific about it. If I may read from your response to the St Lucia campus population, clause 7, page 11 of your response states:

CSIRO has been advised by the university that there is likely to be a net decrease in population at St Lucia campus by the time this project is completed

The words are ‘likely to be a net’. It is not very specific.

Prof. Hay—I can say it will be a net. I do not know the exact figure. I could provide it. I think the present load at the Ipswich campus is about 500 equivalent full-time students and staff. It is moving up to in excess of 2,000. The bulk of those transferees will be from the St Lucia campus but I can provide the exact numbers, Chair.

Mr McClintock—Chair, may I just add something? I think it is important to point out that when we talk about effective full-time students they are not all arriving at the campus everyday. Indeed, in 1995, before we developed the site development plan, we did a count of all commuters to the campus—whether they were pedestrians or came on bicycles, by bus or by car or other means. The number of commuters coming to the site in 1995 when we did that count was 10,500. It should be pointed out that the university at this point in time provides 5,304 car spaces.

CHAIR—I would like to go back briefly to the risk profile, particularly emergency procedures and what area those emergency procedures cover in case of any accidents or incidents. Can someone comment on that? What is the situation now and what is it likely to be?

Dr Heij—I could take a first go at that one, Madam Chair. We answer to various committees and authorities on compliance with guidelines.

CHAIR—I noticed that in your submission.

Dr Heij—If we have a significant incident as judged by our Institutional Biosafety Committee—and a significant incident involving a breach of any of those guidelines—it must be reported to the relevant authorities.

CHAIR—The question I am really asking is about your emergency plans. What plans are there in case of an emergency, in case of an accident?

Dr Heij—Could you be specific about the type of accident because, if it is a biosafety accident, we would have one set of guidelines. We have various other types of emergency guidelines such as fire or other types of hazard in the laboratory.

CHAIR—You would know what the various hazards would be: do you have emergency plans in case of an accident, in terms of all of the risk areas?

Dr Heij—Yes, we do. They need to be lodged with those various authorities to assure them that we can have the accreditation to work under those conditions.

CHAIR—Thank you. That answers that question. What is the impact area? Has that been assessed in the risk profile of various types of accidents?

Dr Heij—In terms of a query on risk profile studies, has that—

Mr Moody—Well, it depends what you call an impact zone because we are talking containment laboratories. Obviously the impact zone should be within the laboratory itself.

CHAIR—It should be but is it?

Mr Moody—That is the nature of the GMAC accreditation of laboratories—to ensure that that does occur. Any so-called hazards should be limited to within the laboratory. I would expect that, under normal management procedures, they would be contained to laboratory areas.

Prof. Hay—We at the University of Queensland would certainly concur with that. The requirement is to contain these hazards within the lab. In any case, occupational health and safety officers of the university are constantly at our shoulder advising us of any implications of occupational health and safety requirements as well as the various committees to whom we have to report in terms of any scientific developments in the university. The more common issues relate to issues not involved in what the IMB is doing—fume cupboards and things like this. It is much more damaging to sit on a bus where someone is smoking than it is to work in molecular bioscience.

Mr McClintock—Chair, I might add that under the environmental protection act the university must have environmental management systems in place, and the system we have is quality accredited. So there are and there will be environmental management systems developed for any activity that takes place in this facility.

CHAIR—What is the volume of material that you would have stored that would be hazardous?

Mr Moody—We have had an environmental assessment report carried out by Dames and Moore. In that report, they have assessed the quantities of various types of chemicals that

will be used. A draft of that report was provided to the committee at that last hearing. There is a table in there but it is quite lengthy and perhaps it is best just to refer to that report.

CHAIR—What procedures are there to ensure the safety of those particular substances?

Mr Moody—Again, that is addressed in environmental management plans that relate to chemicals and waste products within the laboratory. There are procedures and regulatory requirements that we are obliged to meet in accordance with local guidelines, Australian standards and so on.

CHAIR—Where would the bulk of this material be stored in the new facility?

Mr Moody—There is a limit on how much one can store in a laboratory, and there are clear guidelines as to what quantities can be stored, depending on the classification of the laboratory. There is also a bulk store for waste associated with this facility which will be used as a safe storage for such materials.

CHAIR—And there is special protection for those materials being stored?

Mr Moody—Again, they have to meet Australian standard requirements. All of those requirements will be met at the design, construction and operation of this facility.

CHAIR—What happens if a fire breaks out? What procedures are in place?

Mr McClintock—Firstly, this facility will be connected through to the University of Queensland's security office, which has a direct contact with the fire brigade. So once an automatic alarm goes off, it is instantaneous in the alarm going through to our security section, which is resourced 24 hours everyday of the year. So in terms of actually contacting the fire brigade, it is very swift.

CHAIR—Is there likely to be an impact on residents and perhaps schools? I don't know what schools are around the area. If so, what procedures are in place to advise residents and others?

Mr McClintock—Maybe the architect, Daryl, can comment better on this. In terms of the positioning of the building and fire containment and in terms of the materials that this building has been built of, the dangers are much more likely to be to those who are carrying out the experiments at that point in time than to anybody else in the building or indeed in the vicinity. Mr Jackson might like to comment more.

Mr Jackson—In the planning of the building, Madam Chair, the delivery of materials comes from Service Road, not really from Carmody Road. It is on that part of the site furthest away from the neighbourhood. In that environment there is a properly designated storage delivery and supervisory position where somebody is monitoring materials in and materials out. Then there are two designated service lifts within the building, one for each block, and a below ground lateral connector that takes a product out from laboratories, brings a new product in and goes up in each of those two lifts. They are segregated lifts away from the public lifts that are there for members of staff, guests and other people visiting the

building. To that extent, the planning of the building has gone through a number of procedures to try to limit the crossover of one kind of material with another. That is the first point. In each laboratory there would be safe showers, there would be safety fire brigade appliances that are operated, and there would be a number of security drills that people would have to go through in order to operate within the building. So, apart from the fire brigade procedure that Mr McClintock has mentioned, there are a number of those other steps taken to see that essentially accidents are controlled at the face of the laboratory as much as possible.

Prof. Hay—The University of Queensland has physical infrastructures worth well in excess of a billion dollars. All of the activities, as we have mentioned before, that are going on in the new IMB complex are already going on. We are required to develop and have developed very stringent safety containment practices and regulations over a number of years, in common with all universities. The level of concern with this matter is of the highest order in Australian universities.

CHAIR—I guess what I am trying to pursue here to allay public fear is whether the emergency plan include neighbouring residents.

Prof. Hay—I don't know, but I am sure it will.

CHAIR—I think the public needs to have—

Prof. Hay—I think it is a perfectly proper question and I think the answer should be yes. I cannot say off the cuff.

CHAIR—In the normal course of events, a fire is probably concerning enough but, if there is material stored on there that could produce toxic gases and so on in the event of a fire, then I would like to be assured. I noticed when I asked the question originally there were some blank looks, I thought, from some of your people. I would think it is very appropriate that the university and the CSIRO take that matter and make sure that not only is the population within the university itself catered for but that, if there is a hazard to nearby residents, there is some kind of an emergency procedure for notifying residents or for evacuating or whatever has to be done. I don't know the level of the difficulty or problem that might arise here, but I think it is something that should be addressed.

Prof. Hay—I agree absolutely with your question. The blank looks may have been at least on my part and some of my more expert colleagues as to which set of regulations we could possibly speak to. But in relation to any risk to neighbours, whether within the campus or adjacent to the campus, we would have a public responsibility. We are a publicly funded organisation. We should seek to do it and we will do it.

CHAIR—Thank you.

Prof. Hay—We would and we will.

Mr FORREST—I have one final question on that Dames and Moore report, the environmental management report—a question about its status. A copy was provided to our

committee as a draft. I suppose the question is: when will it be finalised? When is it a public document?

Mr Moody—As I advised at the last hearing, I said it would take a month to finalise. We have a further draft, I suppose, which shows, as I indicated, that it is an ongoing development process to ensure all issues are addressed in the development of such a report. We are still anticipating that this report will be in its final form within a month of the last hearing, which puts it at the latter part of this month.

Mr FORREST—I suppose if a copy of its final version could be forwarded on at the appropriate time, then we would admit it as a document to be part of the evidence. At this stage, as it is a draft, we have not done that.

Mr Moody—We are certainly endeavouring to expedite the completion of that assessment report but, as the committee would appreciate, it is something that must be prepared in a thorough manner to address all the environmental issues. We are ensuring that happens as part of this report.

Mr FORREST—A month from the last hearing is within a couple of weeks.

Mr Moody—I think 27 October was the date that we said it would be available within the month and we anticipate achieving that time frame.

Prof. Hay—We may not undertake any research, any scientific inquiry, in the absence of appropriate regulations and safety and lines of reporting. In one sense, it is already addressed as an issue in all of the operations at CSIRO and UQ. It is not as though we are beginning ab initio to do any of this work. It has been going on for more than a decade in some instances.

CHAIR—I think the committee has concluded its questioning. I would like to thank the witnesses for appearing before us today.

Motion (by Mr Forrest) agreed to:

That, pursuant to the power conferred by subsection 2(2) of the Parliamentary Papers Act 1908, this sectional committee authorises publication of the evidence given before it this day.

Committee adjourned at 10.55 a.m.

