

Mr DAVIS (Southern Metropolitan) — My matter for the adjournment tonight is for the attention of the Minister for Planning, and it concerns the preliminary works aspect of GC45. GC45 takes power to the Minister for Planning to control the process for planning permits and controls in relation to Melbourne Metro. Unfortunately, though, GC45, amongst many of its failings, lays out some arrangements which provide for carte blanche on preliminary works.

What it means is that parts of GC45 will require the project to comply with parts of the environment effects statement (EES) that have been accepted by the Minister for Planning. But he provides a blanket exemption for preliminary works, and that means a substantial lack of control and unrestrained destruction are a significant possibility. It means — and Ms Fitzherbert has been fighting very hard for the trees along St Kilda Road — that the preliminary works are not controlled in the way that other key aspects of this project are meant to be controlled. So the damage can be done — massive destruction — and significant works can occur under this carte blanche or open slather arrangement, which provides for an open permit, in effect, for these preliminary works.

What I am seeking from the minister is that he stop the preliminary works. He can ensure, thereby, that the preliminary works can meet the better requirements in the EES and comply with the EES requirements. He needs to make sure that we do not have tremendous destruction of those trees and other aspects, including the war memorials in that significant boulevard. The risk is that the weak controls that Heritage Victoria has — patently a very tardy and weak body all round — will not be able to protect what is a significant part of our heritage.

We have seen application to Heritage Victoria by 1600 people seeking the protection of the boulevard along St Kilda Road. I would have thought that is a clear demonstration of the significance that is attached by Victorians to this very significant boulevard and the very significant heritage aspects of it, but the idea that you would as part of GC45 provide that blanket exemption for preliminary works is a travesty.

What I seek from the minister is that he stop the preliminary works until proper protections are in place, that he re-examine this and put those protections in place.

Mr DAVIS (Southern Metropolitan) — My constituency question today relates to the Minister for Planning, and it concerns the Melbourne Metro project and the GC45 planning amendment, which he gazetted on 5 January. That amendment provides exemptions for preparatory or preliminary works, particularly along St Kilda Road, which Ms Fitzherbert has been seeking to protect along with many community groups and people who understand its heritage significance. There is a real risk that massive damage will occur. What I seek from the minister today is that he release all advice and assessments of the impact of these preliminary and preparatory works on which he relied to exempt these preliminary and preparatory works from the full environment effects statement requirements. Will he release those and make them public so that the community can judge his steps on these important projects? It is a huge risk to our heritage, and it is very important that that heritage be protected and that we see those assessments and advice.