

supercomputer will have the real-time capability of analysing very important medical imaging research that is being undertaken in the imaging beamline that I have previously talked to the chamber about. It has a very exciting capability. Three trillion computations will be able to be undertaken, and that is more words than I can put into a minute! That is a quite extraordinary capability. This will be undertaken at the synchrotron, and it is something that this community can be extremely proud of into the future.

the question and is also seeking to overtly criticise the opposition rather than responding to the question.

The PRESIDENT — Order! The Deputy President is correct in his statements about overt criticism and debating. Unfortunately I was distracted whilst talking to the Clerk about another matter, but also the minister has form in this regard, and I ask him to be conscious of that and continue his answer in the normal fashion.

Hon. J. M. MADDEN — That is about the only time there has been a comment about me having any form at all in my life, so I thank the President very much.

Before I go back to where I started, and without contradicting anything the President said, can I say that statement of planning policy no. 8, which the member referred to, was prepared in 1975 as a regional strategy. Mr Guy was still wearing shorts to school in 1975, but he wants to take us back there. I am not even sure Abba had released their hits in 1975.

Mr Jennings — *Waterloo* was out then.

Hon. J. M. MADDEN — That is right; *Waterloo* might have been. I could go on to list all of the Abba hits, but I will not. I will do justice to the question. I am trying to keep my answer concise.

What the opposition is asking for in this regard was developed in 1975, so basically what opposition members are asking us to do is to go back 30 years — and their form across that 30 years has not been that flash. We know that the Maclellanesque policies of old failed considerably. That was a regional statement, and during that 30 years councils were sacked, commissioners were appointed, and councils were amalgamated. Of course, now the strategies of the respective councils are more holistic and broader.

The key drivers of this are very much the strategies of local government, not necessarily a policy from 30 years ago. What I say to the opposition is that if they want to take the retrograde step of going back to policy of 30 years ago, good luck to them because it might be the first bit of policy we get out of the opposition on anything other than a pipeline across Victoria.

Supplementary question

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — Minister Madden may not care about protecting the Macedon Ranges, but I do. Can the Minister for Planning explain to me whether under his government's state planning policies, Macedon Ranges has a landscape character —

12:27

Planning: Macedon Ranges

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — My question without notice is for the Minister for Planning. Prior to 2000, Macedon Ranges had included in its local municipal strategic statement, statement planning policy no. 8, which offered a level of protection to the Macedon Ranges. I ask Minister Madden whether he will undertake to finally give the Macedon Ranges the planning protection afforded to the Shire of Yarra Ranges and the Mornington Peninsula; protection which has been eroded by his government's one-size-fits-all planning scheme.

Hon. J. M. MADDEN (Minister for Planning) — I welcome the question from the backbench of the opposition, because I know that members on the front bench of the opposition would be embarrassed about asking that question. I know why they would be embarrassed, because I have in my hand a press release from the Shire of Macedon Ranges mayor, Cr Noel Harvey, criticising the comments of the opposition. I will read some of it out.

Honourable members interjecting.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Mr Guy is warned. I am on my feet and I expect him to respect that. The house will come to order.

Hon. J. M. MADDEN — I will read the press release out because it is pretty accurate. I make the comment that in no way has the government had any input to this press release at all. I will read it out because Mr Guy has also made comments in relation to this.

An honourable member interjected.

Hon. J. M. MADDEN — I think at the moment I am the only one without glasses in this chamber.

Mr Atkinson — On a point of order, President, I draw your attention to the fact that the minister in using the material he is referring to at the moment is debating

more like the Yarra Ranges, or more similar to metropolitan Melbourne?

Hon. J. M. MADDEN (Minister for Planning) — We have done more than any other government in the history of this state in relation to giving protection to rural and urban amenity. Had members opposite understood planning policy and the mechanisms of the way the planning system operates, they would have understood that you do not just solve all the problems with one statement, you have got to back it up with a whole lot of things, and I refer back to the press release I hold in my hand.

The strategic planning is important, but it is protected by significant overlays — vegetation protection overlays, significant landscape overlays, wildfire management overlays and consistent work in this area. That reflects the comments of the mayor, who also is quoted in this press release as saying:

Mr Guy is suggesting we should retain a planning policy that is 30 years old and is no longer strong enough to protect the sensitive environment that the council is committed to protecting.

Unprompted by the government the council is making comments which reflect that our mechanism, our policy, our plan will help protect those areas. We are committed to protecting the urban and the rural amenity of communities. We are committed to working with communities, but we know the record of the opposition across 30 years.

Let us go back 30 years to the Maclellanesque days of old. Let us call everything in and make ham-fisted decisions like the opposition did because it could not get policies or programs right in the first place. We know that the opposition would want to take us back there.

12:35

Gippsland Lakes: algal bloom

Mr HALL (Eastern Victoria) — My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. I refer the minister to the algal blooms in the Gippsland Lakes that have had a severe impact on water quality and subsequently tourism earlier this year. I raised this matter in this house, in this forum, on 5 February this year. Will the minister now advise the house what action he has taken since then to minimise the chance of further algal blooms this summer?

Mr JENNINGS (Minister for Environment and Climate Change) — I thank Mr Hall for his question and his ongoing concern about this matter, because I

know he quite sincerely raised it in the context of his concern about resource allocation, on which there had been significant undertakings by our government to provide support through the Gippsland Lakes coordinating council, but also through other agencies such as the local catchment management authority, to provide a variety of interventions and indeed to support those in the Macalister Irrigation District to make sure that we account for the nutrient flow into the Gippsland Lakes.

In fact, in my answer, as Mr Hall will well and truly remember, I talked about the cumulative efforts of management regimes within the lakes themselves and indeed within the catchment. He acknowledged, I think, by the body language at the time, probably because he understands land management issues, that in fact many of the works that need to be undertaken occur higher up the catchments to make sure that we do not actually have nutrient flows continuing within the lakes.

I have continued to work with the both the catchment management authority and indeed the Gippsland Lakes coordinating council to try to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of those programs. Indeed it is my intention in the very near future — it probably will not come as a great surprise to Mr Hall as to when — to engage with the local community on those matters and work with the coordinating council about taking that work further.

We have actually talked about the business case to go forward in terms of ongoing works that may be required, and we are keen to continue the strategy that has been very successful, within the limitations that the natural environment has created for us — that is, the combination of fires and floods that have actually led to the nutrient load and the algal bloom — to mitigate against those in the future.

Supplementary question

Mr HALL (Eastern Victoria) — The minister and I concur on the importance of nutrient management for the health of the Gippsland Lakes, so I ask: can the minister confirm that the state government funding for that nutrient management program expires early next year and that no further funding is committed; and if this is correct, I suggest to the minister it would be entirely appropriate for him to commit to a new funding round when he arrives in Lakes Entrance next week.

Mr JENNINGS (Minister for Environment and Climate Change) — President, I think you and I note that suggestion that Mr Hall has given me. I thank him for the suggestion.