



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2023-2024

Mr Mark Parton MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Mr Mark Parton MLA: To ask the Minister for Transport and City Services

[Ref: Light Rail]

Hearing Date: 18 July 2023

In relation to: Light Rail Stage 2B

The Budget Outlook makes reference to Light Rail Stage 2B in a number of places. Given the recent commentary from the Head of the NCA regarding difficulties with the proposed route for 2B:

(1) How many years will it take to sort all this out before the Government will be allowed to begin construction?

(a) How long will construction take beginning with a new section of Commonwealth Avenue Bridge?

(b) The last public suggestion that the Minister made about light rail arriving in Woden was by or around 2030. Given the delays gaining NCA approval for Stage 2A, does the Government stand by that date of 2030?

MR CHRIS STEEL MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

- (1) Light rail to Woden is the biggest and one of the most complex infrastructure projects ever planned for the ACT.

The project will require several planning and environmental approvals, including approval from both Houses of Parliament. It also involves many technical challenges, for example crossing Lake Burley Griffin and extending through the National Triangle, while respecting the heritage, cultural and environmental values of the area.

To support the approval process, the project will be drafting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) over the next 18 months to assess potential impacts including heritage and cultural values, traffic and transport, biodiversity and socioeconomic impacts.

Because of the complexity of the parliamentary zone, the Stage 2 project was split into two parts for approval purposes, Light Rail 2A City to Commonwealth Park and Light Rail Stage 2B Commonwealth Park to Woden.

The ACT Government will progress the EIS and design and technical studies to gain a detailed understanding of what technical challenges exist and how they may be addressed, the scope and cost of the options to implement them.

- (a) This is subject to planning and design approvals processes for Light Rail Stage 2B, which is being progressed following funding in the Budget, and is subject to the timeframes of third parties.
- (b) The Government has consistently said that we expect stage 2B to be delivered this decade and that the project timing is subject to planning and approval processes by third parties.

National Capital Authority Works Approval for Light Rail Stage 2A was received in accordance with project timeframes, though this was for a less complex project. Following the receipt of the Light Rail Stage 2A Works Approval, the ACT Government is shifting its focus onto the progression of early design and planning activities for Light Rail Stage 2B. The Government has consistently said that Stage 2B is more complex because it moves through the national capital area and this subject to more complex set of planning approvals. However we are determined to work milestone by milestone to bring light rail to Woden.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2023-2024

Signature:



Date:

31/7/23

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Chris Steel MLA