



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Transport

Redirected to: N/A

Reference: Uncorrected Hansard Transcript [Pages 38-39]

In relation to: Modelling undertaken in relation to viability of a busway along light rail corridor during construction.

Hearing Date: 05/08/2024

QTON lodgement date: 05/08/2024

Answer Due Date: 08/08/2024

MS ORR: Minister, just in the context of light rail stage 2, the city and the Woden leg, has the government investigated the viability of adding more dedicated ..(indistinct).. [10.56.32]

Mr Steel: Well, yes, when we undertook work as part of the disruption task force looking at what the disruption would be to the city as a result of major infrastructure projects, both public and private, we examined quite closely what impact there would be for the bus system, while that construction was underway and what measures might improve or indeed worsen the situation.

Of course, we have undertaken the ones that have improved the situation, some signalisation, at Corranderk Street roundabout being one of those, but also the signalisation of Vernon Circle to enable buses to move around on the alternative route on Constitution Avenue. But I will hand over to the team to talk a little bit about some of the issues that we actually found with providing a busway, particularly around Coronation Drive and the area around that does not currently have a bus lane, the Capital Circle as well.

THE CHAIR: One minute.

Mr McHugh: Thanks, Minister. So as the Minister said, we investigated the opportunity to provide bus priority along the corridor to support the construction activities and construction staging, particularly of raising London Circuit initially, but even looking forward into Commonwealth Avenue bridge construction activities and other works.

There are space constraints, particularly as you get close to Parliament House around lane widening, for example. So then you needed to look at lane use, and obviously, our modelling took into consideration all the impacts on both travel times for buses and for general traffic, and we will continue to look at those as construction staging for those future projects becomes more realistic. But we have definitely investigated

that.

Mr Steel: We can take a note of some of the specific modelling that was done in relation to that. It is one of the reasons why we have not committed to a busway that will not work around Capital Circle and Commonwealth Avenue and why light rail is so critical in providing a dedicated corridor for mass transit that would not interrupt the broader transport network because some of the solutions that we have been working on, particularly in relation to a cut and cover tunnel moving down from Commonwealth Avenue onto State Circle, do not affect traffic as much as removing lanes on a road.

In fact, that solution will still enable there to be an exit for general traffic from Commonwealth Avenue down onto State Circle, which means that traffic can continue to flow while we deal with mass transit.

MS ORR: I know the Minister wants two minutes. I am happy just to continue with my substantial.

THE CHAIR: Sure, good.

MS ORR: Finish what you want to say, and I will ask my next question.

Mr Steel: Thank you. I will take the modelling on notice in relation to that one.

Mr Chris Steel MLA : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) previously engaged independent consultants to investigate the potential benefits and impacts of providing bus priority lanes on key corridors during the construction of the Raising of London Circuit (RLC). Traffic modelling was used to simulate several bus lane configurations which were compared against a construction baseline scenario.

Overall, converting a general traffic lane to a bus lane was found to increase vehicle delays along the Commonwealth Avenue bridge in both northbound and southbound directions. The reduced capacity across Commonwealth Avenue bridge caused vehicles to seek alternative routes across the lake, including via Kings Avenue and Tuggeranong Parkway, increasing traffic volumes on other potentially congested corridors.

The majority of investigated configurations were found to provide minimal benefit to overall bus journey times, with most benefits to journey times in both directions offset by the increased congestion across the Commonwealth Avenue bridge.

One configuration, which considered a median bus lane on Commonwealth Avenue between Coronation Drive and Edinburgh Avenue, provided some improvement for northbound bus journey times for the Rapid 4. However, this was mostly due to the modelling scenario ceasing services to the Albert Hall bus stop, located on the opposite side of the road to the modelled bus lane, which was not recommended due to impacts on current public transport users.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature:



Date:

8/8/24

By the Minister for Transport, Chris Steel MLA

