

16 December 2022

Director Transport Assessments
Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Submitted via Portal

Re: Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 Environmental Impact Statement - Support

Business Western Sydney is pleased to write in broad support of the proposal to construct Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 (PLR2). We wish to take this opportunity to highlight some comments and issues that have been raised by our members and key stakeholders along the proposed route for consideration in the finalisation of the Environmental Impact Statement.

Business Western Sydney is a not-for-profit business organisation representing approximately 130 of the region's largest organisations in business, industry, government, and community. Our advocacy priorities are to support private and public sector investments that will make Greater Western Sydney a better place to live, work, play and learn.

Our organisation, on behalf of our members and key stakeholders, has been a vocal advocate for PLR2 for several years. We have made the case over that period that PLR2 will unlock the potential of the communities along the Parramatta River by supporting more housing and employment opportunities. The analysis undertaken by SGS (2017) highlights that the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) region will see an increase in 170,000 new residents and 102,500 more jobs by 2041. This growth must be supported by a high-quality mass transit system.

PLR2 will also connect high density communities such as Melrose Park and Wentworth Point to the new metro station at Sydney Olympic Park. PLR2 will ensure that the multi-billion investment in Sydney Metro West can be properly leveraged to maximise the benefits of this game-changing project between the Parramatta and Sydney CBDs by feeding commuters in the surrounding communities to the Sydney Olympic Park and Parramatta metro stations.

Business Western Sydney supports the goals that are outlined in the EIS to improve connectivity across GPOP by providing:

- two additional public and active transport river crossings to connect north and south of Parramatta River
- frequent and reliable light rail services within the Central River City
- new active transport links and connections to existing routes
- integration with other transport facilities and modes, including Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1, Sydney Metro West, train, ferry and bus routes.

We note that a survey of 1,194 people undertaken for PLR2 confirmed 80% support from community and stakeholders for the project.

Options to fast-track PLR2

We note that the former Minister for Transport was reported as stating that construction of PLR2 was anticipated to commence by the end of 2020. We are disappointed that this critical project for the GPOP region has been delayed with the EIS indicating that construction will likely start in 2025.

We would encourage TfNSW and the NSW Government to investigate all opportunities to commence construction of PLR2 as soon as possible and examine how the project can be sequenced during the build to reduce the overall construction period.

Royal Agricultural Society & The Sydney Royal Easter Show

The Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) is a major stakeholder in the Sydney Olympic Park precinct. As the custodians of one of Sydney's premier annual events, The Sydney Royal Easter Show, and the operator on the long-term lease of Sydney Showground it is imperative to the success of PLR2 that the RAS be a key partner in the delivery of the Australia Avenue corridor along the proposed route.

The relocation of the Sydney Royal Easter Show Carnival from the current site of the P6a car park and Australia Avenue

Business Western Sydney understands that the Carnival is a significant economic contributor to the Sydney Royal Easter Show and needs to be managed with finesse to ensure it can be successfully relocated to an alternative site to clear the route for PLR2. We are also advised that the RAS has a 40-day license arrangement that sits alongside its Head Lease for access to Australia Avenue and the P6a car park that would currently preclude the operation of PL2 for the same period through the site each year if this issue is not resolved. Business Western Sydney understands that the RAS is a strong supporter of PLR2 and is willing to negotiate the relocation of the carnival in good faith. We strongly encourage both parties to enter a dialogue to support a mutually beneficial outcome that supports the relocation of the Carnival and the uninterrupted operation of PLR2 along Australia Avenue.

Right turn into and out of Sydney Showground to and from Australia Avenue

Business Western Sydney supports full freight access to Sydney Showground being maintained from both directions along Australia Avenue. Sydney Showground Gate 13 is the loading dock access for all Sydney Showground events and exhibitions and often requires multiple stacking of articulated heavy vehicles along the Eastern side of Australia Avenue in readiness to turn right into the loading dock. Full access to this loading dock needs to be maintained and reflected in the EIS.

Catenary-free section along Australia Avenue and Dawn Fraser Avenue

Business Western Sydney encourages the implementation of catenary free sections of PLR2 along Australia Avenue and Dawn Fraser Avenue to support stronger place making outcomes through the Sydney Olympic Park town centre and to ensure the avoidance of potential obstacles for access to the Sydney Showground site for freight vehicles. This would be similar to the catenary free section that has been delivered through the Parramatta CBD as part of Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1.

Proposed future stop at Grand Parade & Australia Avenue, Sydney Olympic Park

Business Western Sydney supports the inclusion of the proposed Tram Stop adjacent to the Grand Parade & Australia Avenue intersection in Sydney Olympic Park to be delivered during the construction of PLR2.

The addition of this Tram Stop would enable travellers leaving such venues as Accor Stadium, Qudos Bank Arena and Giants Stadium to access the light rail at the Grand Parade Tram Stop rather than the Dawn Fraser Avenue Tram Stop. This would help disperse crowds after major events to an extra light rail stop, alongside the Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro Stations and help reduce potential congestion.

Expanded Green Tracks

Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 has been a pioneer in Sydney for the inclusion of “green tracks” along sections of its route (Cumberland Hospital and Robin Thomas Reserve). We would encourage the inclusion of green track sections along key sections of Parramatta Light Rail that resonate with the adjacent natural environment such as Ken Newman Park, Archer Park, Hill Road, and Sydney Olympic Park Precinct.

Preserving future extension(s) of PL2 from Carter Street Terminus

We encourage the Carter Street terminus for PLR2 to support possible future expansions of the route.

Car Parking

Business Western Sydney recognises the importance of local car parking for businesses and residents. We encourage any opportunities to be explored and seized to reduce the impact of PLR2 on existing car parking spaces and support alternative parking nearby if loss of spaces is unavoidable.

Silverwater Bridge Option

Business Western Sydney supports Option 4 (preferred) which would combine the light rail bridge with a five-metre-wide active transport link on the southern side of the bridge. The existing pedestrian bridge will be removed.

Ken Newman Park Bridge Options & "Green Tracks"

Business Western Sydney supports at grade solution and would encourage the investigation of "green tracks" to enhance the natural outcome for the light rail tracks that will be constructed through the middle of the park.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide our feedback on Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2. We look forward to a positive planning determination for the project.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Borger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and the last name "Borger" clearly legible.

David Borger
Executive Director