

Question on Notice

No. 925

Asked on 31 August 2021

MRS L GERBER ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the extension of light rail from Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta via the Gold Coast Airport—

Will the Minister (a) provide a list of current government planning documents that include this project and (b) advise how they will address community concerns about the loss of existing mature vegetation between Golden Four Drive and the Gold Coast Highway and disruption to pedestrian movements around Tugun Village?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Currumbin for the question.

With reference to the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 (Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta), I am pleased to provide the following information.

- a) The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) completed the Gold Coast Highway (Burleigh Heads to Tugun) Multi-modal Corridor Study in 2020. The aim of the study was to review all previous planning and develop an updated transport strategy for this corridor that considers all modes of transport including walking, cycling, public transport and private vehicles.

The study identified that the Gold Coast Highway route from Burleigh Heads to Tugun has the greatest potential for a shift to public transport as it is close to where people already live, and provides the potential to transform the Gold Coast Highway into the Gold Coast Boulevard through careful design and treatment. The study investigated alternate routes, finding a light rail extension down the Gold Coast Highway was the most direct and efficient route.

Gold Coast Light Rail has been included in many transport infrastructure strategies and studies for more than 20 years including the *Integrated Regional Transport Plan—South East Queensland, Connecting SEQ 2031*, *ShapingSEQ: South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017*, *SEQ Regional Transport Plans 2021* and the *Gold Coast Southern and Central Area Transport Study 2012*.

- b) TMR undertook community consultation from 12 July 2021 until 17 September 2021 on the Burleigh Heads to Tugun section of the proposed concept design of Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4, and feedback received throughout this consultation will assist in progressing the design as part of the Preliminary Business Case. Retention of mature vegetation will be taken into consideration as the design is further progressed.

As shown in the fly-through video, concept design maps and the 360-degree panorama images, the current concept maintains the majority of the existing vegetation between Golden Four Drive and the Gold Coast Highway at Tugun.

Proposed changes to intersections in Tugun as part of the project are designed to make pedestrian movements safer and more efficient due to a reduction in the number of traffic signal phases, fewer conflict points, improved sight lines, and the reduction of vehicle queuing through the township. These proposed changes provide an opportunity to reconfigure the area into a shared space to improve the road safety and vibrancy of local roads within the Tugun township.

TMR values community input on planning for the project and all feedback received will be considered when developing the preliminary business case.