

Question on Notice

No. 401

Asked on 28 March 2006

MS CLARK asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (MR LUCAS)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the 'Airport Link' announcement by the Premier and the Lord Mayor—
What benefits will the project give to residents and, in part, will he confirm the timetable of the disposal of the 'Northern Transport Corridor' in the electorate of Clayfield, as per my ongoing advocacy on this issue?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for her question.

On 13 March 2006, the Premier and the Lord Mayor jointly announced the preliminary concept designs for the Airport Link and Northern Busway proposals. Detailed evaluation of these proposals is being conducted concurrently to maximise integrated transport outcomes.

The State Government has provided \$16m towards the likely \$21m cost of the detailed feasibility study. The Study will conclude with a decision on the viability of the proposed Airport Link, to be considered by government and Brisbane City Council (BCC) following the submission of a Business Case and the public display of the Environmental Impact Statement later this year.

The *South East Queensland Regional Plan* predicts that by 2016, the population in south-east Queensland is expected to grow by 27 per cent, with a 37 per cent increase in expected vehicle travel.

The projected growth in population and the standard of living in south-east Queensland will increase passenger trips well beyond the capacity of the existing surface road network, resulting in increased congestion.

Airport Link is one part of a wider plan of the State and BCC to cope with this increase. Constructed primarily in tunnel, should Airport Link proceed, it is expected to:

- significantly reduce traffic congestion in the northern suburbs on Sandgate Road, Lutwyche Road and routes to the Airport
- allow motorists to avoid 16 sets of traffic lights between Bowen Hills and Kedron and 14 sets of lights between Bowen Hills and Toombul
- cut cross-town travel times by about 45% between the Gympie and Rode Road intersection and the Story Bridge
- free up surface road space for bus or transit lanes
- result in much less community disruption than a new surface road

- provide a high standard link from Stafford Road to the East-West Arterial thereby significantly reducing traffic use of local streets
- reduce arterial road traffic by up to 30% on Lutwyche Road and up to 40% on Sandgate Road
- reduce through traffic on local streets by up to 35% in Rose Street, Woolloowin and 25% in Junction Road, Clayfield.

Airport Link would create the opportunity for urban regeneration to improve liveability in the vicinity of the project, through:

- enhanced pedestrian and cycle links
- opportunities for enhanced public transport services
- the use of land adjacent to the project for community benefit
- opportunities to revitalise local streets and public areas
- planning for a better mix of residential, commercial and community land use.

In terms of the Northern Transportation Corridor, Main Roads owns 206 properties along the corridor. They broadly follow the alignment of what was the central option for Airport Link.

On 23 October 2005 the Premier and Lord Mayor jointly announced that a "western corridor", would be investigated as the preferred route for the Airport Link proposal. This corridor would, among other things, allow for better connection and incorporation of the planned Northern Busway in the same corridor.

The land preserved by Main Roads in the past for the proposed Airport Motorway (and later the Northern Transport Corridor) will be retained until a firm decision has been made on the viability of proceeding with Airport Link in the western corridor announced by the Premier and the Lord Mayor. When this is resolved the land not required will be available for sale.

A decision on Airport Link can only be made after completion and consideration of the Business Case and Environmental Impact Statement. This is expected to occur later this year, with the construction of Airport Link, if approved, then expected to commence in 2008.