

Question on Notice

No. 1477

Asked on 16 November 2023

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the \$8m given by the Federal Government to fund a business case into extending the heavy rail south from Varsity Lakes to the Gold Coast Airport—

Will the Minister advise (a) when the Minister received the business case or a copy of the feasibility study and (b) why the Minister has not made the report public?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Currumbin for the question.

The Federal Government did not commit \$8 million to fund a business case for extending the heavy rail from Varsity Lakes to the Gold Coast Airport. The Federal Government, via its former National Faster Rail Agency, committed \$8 million for Brisbane to Gold Coast Faster Rail investigations.

Of this funding, \$4.75 million was allocated to undertake a business case for the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project to increase capacity between Kuraby and Beenleigh to allow more and faster services to operate between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail Business Case has been completed. Community engagement on the refined reference design is now underway. Further information about the status of this project is available on the Department of Transport and Main Roads' (TMR) website.

The remaining \$3.25 million was allocated to investigate further opportunities for delivering faster journeys between Brisbane and the Gold Coast beyond the delivery of the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project. These longer-term investigations are ongoing, noting any additional investment would be subject to consideration of the highest priorities across the transport network.

The future extension of the Gold Coast heavy rail corridor between Varsity Lakes and the Gold Coast Airport remains part of TMR's long-term vision and strategy for delivering improved public transport connectivity across the region. It is identified in the *South East Queensland Regional Transport Plans 2021* and *SEQ Rail Connect*. TMR has protected this corridor since 2009.

TMR is currently finalising a technical review of the corridor to ensure it remains suitable for the delivery of future heavy rail infrastructure and services. This will ensure a coordinated outcome is achieved with other closely related projects in the area, such as the Pacific Highway M1 upgrade between Varsity Lakes and Tugun, and future Gold Coast light rail extension.

Delivery of this project is subject to funding availability, statewide priorities and coordination with other investment on the South East Queensland rail network.