

Chris Steel MLA

Minister for Transport and City Services

Minister for Skills

Special Minister of State

Member for Murrumbidgee

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Questions on Notice Paper No 19

10 June 2022

Question No. 850

MS CLAY: To ask the Minister for Transport and City Services—

- (1) What consultation was conducted for the second stage of Belconnen Bikeway.
- (2) Was consultation done on the final alignment of the second stage of the Belconnen Bikeway.
- (3) Was a detailed alignment diagram, which included the off-road design and number of trees requiring removal, provided during any consultative process for the project.
- (4) How did Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) inform residents that significant tree removals would be undertaken as part of this project.
- (5) Were residents, directly adjacent to the project on Baudinette Circuit, pro-actively consulted at any stage.
- (6) Why was a development application not required for this project.
- (7) Was consideration made by TCCS to remove a lane on Battye Street to accommodate the second stage of the bikeway without the need for tree removals.
- (8) What factors does TCCS consider when deciding whether or not to build paths by removing on-road parking or car lanes.
- (9) Why was the decision made to retain four lanes of car traffic on Battye Street, given low ordinary traffic volumes on this street and the Government's commitment to building a Civic stadium to replace Bruce stadium by the end of the decade.

MR STEEL MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) The second stage of the Belconnen Bikeway currently under construction brings together delivery of two separate pieces of design work:
 - the final section of the Belconnen Bikeway along Haydon Drive, from College Street towards Purdie Street, and
 - the Battye Street link, addressing the missing link in the C3 City to Belconnen Principal Community Route (PCR) with a separated cycleway along Battye Street connecting into

the existing trunk path along Masterman Street, which continues under the Gungahlin Drive Extension to O'Connor.

Consultation on the Belconnen Bikeway first occurred in 2017-2018 with internal stakeholders and community organisations including Pedal Power, Belconnen Community Council, Heart Foundation, COTA (Council of the Ageing), Blind Society, University of Canberra and AIS. This process consulted on the bikeway alignment from Joynton Smith Drive through the Town Centre to Purdie Street on Haydon Drive. It included consultation on the missing link along Battye Street as an important future connection to complete the C3 City to Belconnen Principal Community Route.

Consultation with the broader community was then undertaken on the Belconnen Bikeway concept design in 2018 through YourSay, community information sessions and email. This consultation focused on the Belconnen Bikeway only and did not include the Battye Street link. The community was broadly supportive of the proposal through this process. Since that time targeted consultation has occurred through each stage of the project. Feedback has largely been focused on the safety of cyclists, pedestrians and motorists.

Further targeted consultation was undertaken on the Belconnen Bikeway and the Battye Street link in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. This consultation was with internal stakeholders and targeted community stakeholders such as Pedal Power and the Australian Institute of Sport.

- (2) Targeted consultation was undertaken on the Belconnen Bikeway and the Battye Street alignment in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, including on the final alignment. As noted above, this consultation was with internal stakeholders and targeted community stakeholders including Pedal Power and the Australian Institute of Sport.
- (3) In July through to September of 2021 detailed consultation with internal stakeholders and community organisations was undertaken on the final alignment of the Belconnen Bikeway stage 2, including the Battye Street section. This process included landscape plans showing the proposed tree removal and tree replacement plan.

A tree assessment was undertaken during design that considered the health, maturity and quality of the trees on site to inform the design process and finalisation of the alignment. As a principle, mature trees rated as high quality and in good health were maintained where possible. In the area adjacent to Baudinette Circuit, above the existing retaining wall, a number of trees were rated as low quality and in poor health. The replacement trees and shrubs in this area and landscape design took into consideration visual amenity, screening and species selection to support a quality urban outcome and the growth of healthy, mature trees and shrubs appropriate for the conditions. Direct consultation was not undertaken with the residents of Baudinette Circuit on the detailed plans.

- (4) Signs were placed on trees that required removal at least two weeks prior to removal in accordance with TCCS procedures. In May 2022 residents of Baudinette Circuit and the surrounding area were also contacted by letterbox drop to advise that works were due to commence.
- (5) The residents of Baudinette Circuit and surrounding streets were notified in May 2022 of the upcoming commencement of construction. The City Services website has been regularly updated

on the progression of the project.

- (6) The works are exempt development under the *Planning and Development Act 2007*.
- (7) Yes, TCCS did consider the removal of a lane on Battye Street to accommodate the bikeway. Refer to the response under question 9.
- (8) Considerations for removing on-road parking or car lanes include numerous factors such as traffic volumes, parking demand and capacity, above and below ground services, existing pavements levels, existing site conditions, existing infrastructure (such as trees, paths, stormwater assets, streetlights), land ownership, cost, user amenity and the safety of pedestrian, cyclists and vehicle drivers.
- (9) TCCS undertook a feasibility study that investigated options for the alignment of the bikeway along Battye Street. The current alignment of the bikeway was chosen through careful consideration to minimise the number of trees removed, accommodate the complex system of below and above ground services, manage grade/ level changes, retain streetlight and stormwater assets, and ensure the safety of cyclist and pedestrians, particularly during events when large volumes of traffic will be within a short distance of both cyclists and pedestrians.

When events are held at the AIS stadium or GIO stadium, Battye Street accommodates the entry and exit of very large volumes of traffic. Removal of traffic lanes along Battye Street was considered as an option. However, this was found to have a significant impact on access during events. A partial lane closure arrangement was also considered where the outside vehicle lane would be used for the bikeway outside of events and reopened for traffic during events. This option was not found to be feasible and did not achieve a safe and workable outcome for cyclists, pedestrians and road traffic. In addition, this option would limit the opportunity for active travel access to events.

The current stadium site may still be used for large events even with provision of a new stadium in the city. This is expected to create an ongoing need for clearance of large volumes of traffic at times.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Transport and City Services

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This response required 4 hrs 30 mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$395.75.