



Light Rail Stage 2B

Environmental Impact Statement community engagement

SEPTEMBER 2024

REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

Light Rail Stage 2B Commonwealth Park to Woden (Stage 2B) will extend Canberra's light rail network to complete a north-south public transport link from Gungahlin, through the City Centre and on to Woden. Extending light rail further south will give more people more transport options, help reduce traffic congestion and support Canberra's transition to a zero emissions future.

Careful and considerate planning will help preserve the city's cultural and heritage significance and ensure Canberrans have access to reliable and convenient transport options for decades to come.

This complex project requires several Australian and ACT Government environmental and planning approvals.

The ACT Government is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to progress the project through both Australian and Territory government approvals. The EIS will look at potential impacts of the project and consider any required management or mitigation measures.

THE CONVERSATION

Community engagement

Between 7 May 2024 and 30 June 2024, Major Projects Canberra (MPC) sought community feedback on Stage 2B via a survey on the YourSay Conversations website and via a series of online and in-person events. The engagement focussed on five geographic precincts along the proposed alignment.

Six online surveys (one per precinct and one whole of alignment survey) asked community members for their feedback on the project's design principles and potential benefits and impacts.

Community members were also able to have their say by commenting on an interactive map on the Light Rail to Woden website, or in-person by attending online and face-to-face engagement events. These included community pop-ups (14) and drop-in information sessions (five) in each precinct. These events provided opportunities for the community to find out more about the EIS and the project design. At these events, participants showed high levels of interest and asked questions about a broad range of topics.

Targeted stakeholder engagement

In addition to the community engagement, MPC conducted a program of targeted stakeholder engagement to inform the EIS. Between February and July 2024, MPC met with more than 100 organisations and residences, including Federal Government departments, Diplomatic Estates (Embassies and High Commissions), cultural institutions, peak bodies, professional and medical services and businesses.



WHO WE ENGAGED

Stage 2B is being designed to sensitively integrate with its surrounding environment across five precincts. By taking a precinct-based approach, each precinct's unique features and character is being considered in the EIS.

The five precincts are Commonwealth Avenue, Parliament House, Inner South, Yarra Glen and Woden.

To capture feedback, the engagement targeted people with connections to each of the precincts, including those who live, work, study or access services along the alignment. Key stakeholders included community organisations and peak bodies, ensuring the engagement was representative of diverse community interests.

KEY INSIGHTS

Design principles

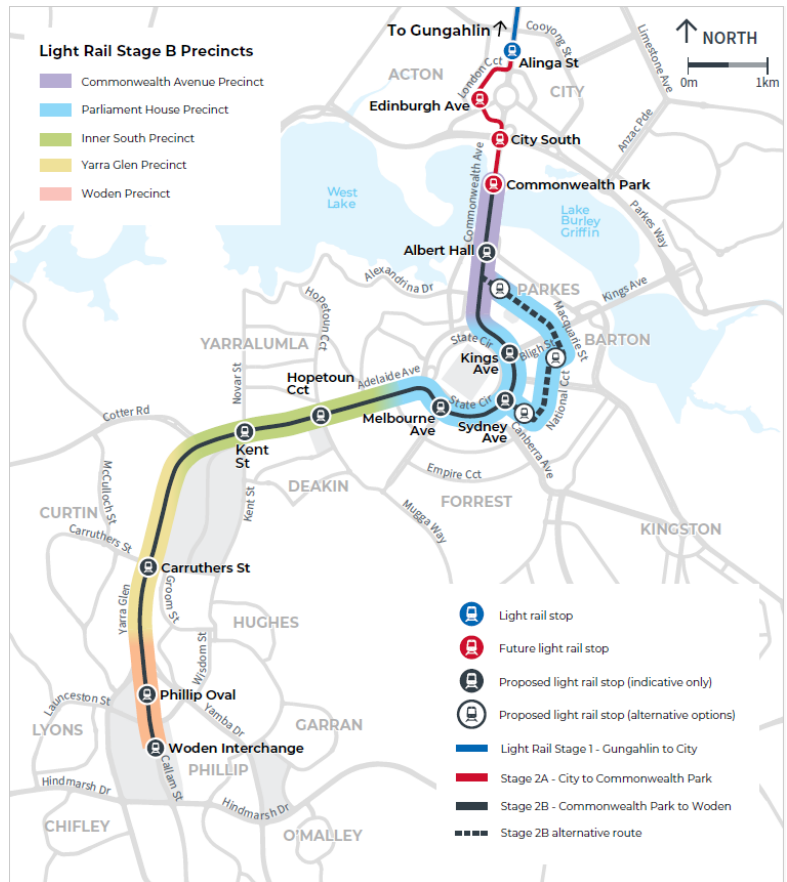
Design principles for Stage 2B are supporting decision-making about key features, benefits, impacts and important aspects of the light rail design. In each online survey, respondents were asked to select three design principles they thought were most important to Stage 2B.

Connecting people to places, design for growth, high quality urban design and innovation, and people first were consistently in the top four results for each of the precincts and whole of alignment. The exception for this was the Yarra Glen Precinct, where respondents valued *natural systems* over *design for growth*.

Project benefits

Across each of the precincts and whole of alignment, survey respondents said Stage 2B would benefit them in the following ways:

- Better connection between Canberra's north and south
- Encouragement to catch public transport more often
- Less traffic congestion on Canberra roads
- Better access to cultural institutions, events, and places of recreation, entertainment or social significance
- Better access to public transport near where I live and/or work.





Design considerations

Survey respondents were asked what they would like to see considered as part of the project. Four options appeared as the most selected for all six surveys. These were:

- *bus integration with light rail services,*
- *more tree plantings and landscape improvements,*
- *better bike and walking paths from the light rail line to your suburb, and*
- *green track (grass and groundcover along the alignment between stops).*

In addition to these selections, respondents found two additional considerations were more important than green track in the Woden Precinct. These were:

- *improvements on or around light rail stops to help me feel safer catching public transport, and*
- *new and upgraded public spaces or shops.*

Community members suggested including secure bike storage, park 'n' ride facilities, and improving areas surrounding stops such as lighting, path and cycleways.

Construction impacts

Across all precincts and whole of alignment, survey respondents considered *traffic and transport, noise and vibration, landscape character and visual amenity* and *biodiversity* to be the main impacts during construction of Stage 2B. The exception to this was the Parliament House Precinct, where respondents were more focused on *air quality* rather than *biodiversity*.

Traffic and transport was the most selected impact across each of the surveys, ranging between 66 per cent and 76 per cent of respondents selecting this option.

Socio-economic impacts (for example, impacts on local businesses or community activities) were also ranked highly in the Woden Precinct, with 30 per cent of respondents selecting this impact.

Respondents indicated they wanted to see landscaping features preserved or replaced. Others had concerns about potential impacts on traffic, parking and access, and visual amenity, particularly around areas of national significance.

Operational impacts

Similar to construction impacts, the top five results were consistent across each of the precincts and whole of alignment surveys. *Transport and traffic* was the most selected again, followed by (in varied order between precincts) *landscape character, land use and property, socio-economic* and *noise and vibration*.

There were also more selections of the *I don't know* option, which could indicate less certainty from respondents about the potential impacts of light rail when operational, as opposed to when under construction.

Conversations and written comments during the engagement supported these results. They indicated a strong community desire for preservation of green space, particularly around Yarra Glen.

Community members also expressed the need for light rail to integrate well into the broader active travel network. Stop locations in the Yarra Glen and Parliament House precincts were also of interest, citing usability and connections to surrounding areas. Route selection was also an area of interest, particularly the route in the Parliament House and Woden precincts, as was interest in future stages of light rail.



WHAT'S NEXT?

The discussions and feedback gathered will be used to inform the project's draft EIS and Concept Design. Feedback received will be considered alongside technical studies currently being undertaken. A detailed consultation report is in development and will be included in the draft EIS as a chapter. This will provide further detail on the project's engagement activities, analysis and outcomes. The draft EIS will be published and placed on public exhibition as part of the statutory environmental approvals process.

The community will continue to be kept informed on project updates across ACT Government channels including social media, [Built for CBR](#) and the [Light Rail to Woden website](#).

Alternatively, [subscribe for Light Rail to Woden project updates](#).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

1,497

Survey responses submitted

30,800

Postcards and project updates distributed to households and businesses along the alignment

100+

Targeted stakeholder meetings with businesses, residents and Federal Government departments.

580+

Businesses doorknocked

572

Conversations at community events

167,484

People reached on social media

12

Written responses

19

Community shops, cafes or venues visited for pop-ups and information sessions