

REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT
AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**INQUIRY INTO CRITICAL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE
SUPPORTING THE WESTERN SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
AND WESTERN SYDNEY AEROTROPOLIS**

At Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney, on Monday 29 July 2024

The Committee met at 14:00.

PRESENT

Ms Lynda Voltz (Chair)

Ms Judy Hannan

PRESENT VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Mr Warren Kirby

Mr Nathan Hagarty (Deputy Chair)

Mr Ray Williams

Legislative Assembly

The CHAIR: Before we start, I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet here at Parliament. I also pay my respects to Elders past and present of the Eora nation, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are present or who are viewing the proceedings online.

Welcome to the third hearing of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure inquiry into critical transport infrastructure, supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis. I am Lynda Voltz, Chair of the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure. I am joined by my colleagues Nathan Hagarty, member for Leppington and Deputy Chair online; Judy Hannan, member for Wollondilly; Warren Kirby, member for Riverstone online; and Ray Williams, member for Kellyville, who is also online. We want to thank the witnesses who are appearing before the Committee today and the many stakeholders who have made written submissions. We appreciate your input to this inquiry. I declare the hearing open.

Ms EMMA FINNERTY, Director Capital Strategy, Projects and Reporting, NSW Treasury, sworn and examined

Ms CASSANDRA WILKINSON, Executive Director, Transport Infrastructure and Investment, NSW Treasury, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure today to give evidence. Can you please confirm that you have been issued with the Committee's terms of reference and information about the standing orders that relate to the examination of witnesses?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes, we have.

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions regarding this information? No, good. Would you like to make opening statements before we begin questions?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We thought it might be a better use of your time if we don't. We have some general notes but we thought you'd probably have general notes.

The CHAIR: Okay, that's fine. We'll move onto questions from the Committee. Before we begin the questions, I wish to inform you that you may wish to take a question on notice and provide the Committee with an answer in writing within 14 days after receiving that question. The New South Wales Government's submission states that the aerotropolis is forecast to create more than 100,000 new jobs by 2056. Can you tell us more about these jobs and where exactly they will be employed?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: The short answer is that Emma and I can't. We're happy to get further information. But the jobs estimates would be taken from business case work that's been done in terms of the future use of the sites. There will be forecasts and estimates. We can seek an answer for you and get one back in writing to the Committee.

The CHAIR: If you're taking that on notice, could you also take on notice how many jobs will actually be at the airport and what assumptions was that forecast based on?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We can do that.

The CHAIR: What are the Treasury's estimates for the impact on the New South Wales economy from the airport and aerotropolis?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: In the various business cases for the metro and the roads and other investments there, there would be estimates as to the economic benefits for New South Wales. But I don't have an aggregated figure, so I'm happy to take that on notice and see if we can get you an estimate of what the aggregate might be.

The CHAIR: Right. I'll move to other questions.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Just on those forecast jobs, can you unpack that a bit? What industries? Also, how has that changed over the course of the project at the airport? I think it was announced in 2015 or 2016. We've had COVID. We've had a series of other things happen. How has that forecast changed? Do you have a breakdown within industry and sort of where these jobs will be coming from?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We don't have an aggregate of all of that at the moment. As you say, the investment cases for each of the major projects were done in different years. Some of the impacts—as you say, COVID—might have had an impact on that. At each point in time when the agencies—so, roads or rail, predominantly—prepared those business cases they would have used whole-of-economy estimates. But we will get you an answer to that in writing. Because each of those business cases was prepared by agencies that are not us, so we don't necessarily own the forecasting that they did. But we will get you an answer.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: The question I have is what is Treasury's estimate on how much freight will pass through the airport after the first year?

EMMA FINNERTY: Again, that is a question that we will take on notice. I think it might have been covered off in a previous question, but we'll get back to you with the Treasury response.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: This is specifically freight, not overarching.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes, and the challenge will be, there will be Southern Sydney Freight Line business cases, and particularly the M12 and M7. The forecasts would have been prepared by Transport for each of those, so we'll contact them and see what their most—so you're looking for the estimates that drove the investment, or where we are right now in terms of our current expectations?

Mr WARREN KIRBY: The question stems from we've asked a number of witnesses over the course of this inquiry about how many aircraft they are expecting to move through the airport, bearing in mind that it is going to ramp up after the first year. Not a single witness has been able to say to us what is the expectation of aircraft movements or what the split will be between passenger and freight.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: There are probably a range of reasons for that. But we will see if we can get you an answer and get back in writing to the Committee.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: My question is to either one of the officials. In regards to the \$300-odd million in budget that is allocated for buses to provide transport to the airport, what's the breakdown between potential purchasing of buses, whether they be electric or hybrids? Also, is there any provision built into that funding for specific bus priority lanes? If there are, which lanes would be prioritised on what roads first?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Our understanding is that there is a mix of infrastructure and fleet involved in that funding, but we would be very happy to get you the latest estimates of what the breakdown is between the two.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: And the specific roads, if I could, as well, and where those initial bus priority lanes are going to be located, and when.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Okay. I can't say if all of that detail exists, but we'll certainly get you the information that's available. The incoming government made commitments around investing in rapid bus connections for the airport. I don't know the level of maturity of Transport's planning for the specific places where the infrastructure will be. But we'll seek an answer from our colleagues at Transport and get back in writing to the Committee.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: Perhaps the question should have been could you break down what that budget allocation is of \$320-odd million. That would be great.

The CHAIR: Just following up on that, Ray, you wouldn't be able to tell us if any funding has been allocated for infrastructure that would support the rapid bus to the airport, such as bus lanes, from that \$241 million that's in the budget?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: There is an allocation to Transport to develop the rapid bus service. From where Treasury sits, we don't have a line-by-line breakdown of the expenditure that will achieve that outcome. So we're happy to get some breakdown for you and come back.

The CHAIR: But we'd normally have line items in a budget, wouldn't we, for infrastructure?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Not at that level of detail. Generally, program level funding will go out in a bucket, and the specific expenditure items will be a matter for the portfolio Minister and their department. But we can seek some answers for you.

The CHAIR: How much of that funding, that \$241 million, is going to be delivered before 2026?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Again, we'll get some advice from Transport and come back to you on that.

The CHAIR: But wouldn't that be a Treasury allocation of the funds? You have \$241 million in the last budget that's going to be allocated. Is it all going to come within this financial year, or is it over the next two or three years?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I think that bus funding is over the forward estimates.

EMMA FINNERTY: It's over the four years to 2027-28.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: That's right.

The CHAIR: The \$241 million will be delivered by 2028, so you wouldn't expect the program to have been rolled out by that point—until 2028—if it's going that long.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I expect Transport to do their best to roll it out. We only know that they have been given four years of funding to go and achieve those outcomes. The extent to which they are currently confident to deliver will be a matter for them.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I have a couple of questions. With the funding you are looking at—I know we have talked about rail and bus funding—is active transport funding being looked at?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I can't think of a specific line item for active transport in the area, but we can double-check and make sure to get back to you with an answer.

The CHAIR: I would have thought, seeing as we're doing a new airport, that we'd be looking at biking and active transport. Have you looked at the effect of the Inland Rail on freight? Would that reduce the freight? Is that going to have an effect?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I would assume that the impact of the Inland Rail would have been a factor in forecasting freight volumes when the Southern Sydney Freight Line business case was done, and the truck volumes. But, again, we can confirm with Transport and make sure.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: When was that study done in relation to the partial delivery of Inland Rail? Do you know when that study was done?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We're not in the Transport department. We will see a business case when there's a case for funding to be made. But the detailed forecasting and modelling of things like the volumes of freight traffic on roads and things will all be information that's held by Transport, so we will need to get back to you.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Is there any funding for transport coming from the western side of the airport for workers, freight or anything else, or is it all coming east in?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I don't know the answer to that. You mean connections coming from inland New South Wales to the airport?

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: Yes, or roads such as in the Silverdale area and those coming in the back way to the airport. For all the roads I read about, all the funding's coming from the east. But there are obviously residents and people who live out west. Are there any proposals or is there funding for looking at people coming from the other side? There are people who live out there.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Understood. I'm assuming that the fact that it connects to the M9 and the rest of the motorway and highway network is probably a factor in whether those connections are well serviced. But we can certainly double-check.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Further to Judy's question, has modelling been done around where you expect employees to be coming from? I know you don't have breakdowns in terms of where the jobs are coming from, but do you have a breakdown as to where the workers will be coming from or where they are expected to be coming from? That, in turn, should inform the decisions around investment in transport.

EMMA FINNERTY: I think we'd look to dig into that as part of the response to the earlier question that you just referred to. We'll just include that as well, to see what assumptions have been factored in.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: So an industry breakdown and where we expect those workers.

EMMA FINNERTY: Yes.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: What are Treasury's estimates for the impact to the New South Wales economy from the airport, the aerotropolis? What estimates have you created for what we can expect as an economic lift out of the airport?

EMMA FINNERTY: That's definitely covered in the business case. Again, we'll take that and respond in writing, just for the purposes of completeness and accuracy.

The CHAIR: It may be covered in the business case, but there must be some figure that the Government is expecting to come out. We don't have a copy of the business case—unless you'd like to provide us with the business case.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We're not entitled to give you Cabinet-in-confidence documents, but we can certainly check some of the statistics and the data that's in those papers and make sure with the relevant agencies, if they are comfortable for us to share them.

The CHAIR: But NSW Treasury, who has the funding model, must have some idea of its ROI in terms of this project. That's the point.

EMMA FINNERTY: I think we start to push into revenue forecasts. Again, that will be what's set out in the budget papers and won't be something that we can share.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I think it's also worth saying we don't select all of the investments that the Government makes in the economy and services in New South Wales. The proposing Minister's department will prepare a case for investment. The business case and cost-benefit analysis that they use is what we base our advice on. If it's a very large, complex project like a metro, then the Treasury economics team will validate the forecasting and modelling in the department's business case, but it's always the department that prepares the

information on which the investment is made. Our colleagues may have a look at the robustness of their spreadsheets and some of their datasets and evidence, but Treasury doesn't prepare the investment analysis for those decisions.

The CHAIR: No, Treasury doesn't prepare them, but the Treasurer sits on the ERC and they're part of a process where a business plan is put, as the executive of government, to make a decision on where the investment of public funds will go. The question we're asking is what is the expected outcome of the investment of public funds? Surely Treasury would have had that business case before it when it analysed where the money should be invested.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We do have those business cases. As you're aware, those business cases are Cabinet in confidence, so we'll need to check with the submitting agency what information we're able to share with you.

The CHAIR: You would expect a committee that is looking into the transport needs to want to understand the answer to those questions, wouldn't you?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I do. I'm also aware that only the Premier's Department can give permission for you to have access to those documents. I would be in breach of my obligations if I gave them to you. That's why we need to check first before giving advice to the Committee.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: So we can't say how many jobs we're going to get and we can't say if there's any economic benefit to it. Can we give an estimated cost of the project?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We don't do estimated costs because, generally, you only know the cost of something when you've finished it. What we can say is how much has been allocated, and you can see those figures in the budget papers. Those standalone sections on the aerotropolis provided in this year's budget papers, which set out the investments in the M12, the M7 and the metro railway—you can see all the investments there and you can see the Government's anticipated benefits associated with that investment. Those are all published. The specific final cost of a project can't be known at this stage, which is why we only publish what's been allocated in the forward estimates and planning years in the budget papers.

The CHAIR: But the budget papers aren't giving us line items. For example, the \$241 million—we can't ascertain from that whether that includes infrastructure costs. Surely that's the kind of information we would expect to get from Treasury.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I think it's information we can seek on your behalf, which we've undertaken to do.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: You can understand our confusion. We're trying to seek information from Treasury, but so far we can't get any information on how much money this is going to generate, we can't get information on how many jobs it's going to generate and we can't get information on how much the thing is going to cost.

EMMA FINNERTY: Can I just clarify that we are taking back all these questions. It's really in the interests of completeness and our commitment to accuracy that we're taking questions on notice. We will definitely be looking to get you robust answers to the questions that are being raised.

The CHAIR: Okay, but we're sort of getting the impression that we're getting every question taken back on notice. These would be questions that we would assume that Treasury would—that's why Treasury was invited here: to give evidence. Some of this is pretty basic information that I wouldn't have thought—

EMMA FINNERTY: With apologies for causing disappointment, it's interesting because at the beginning I was actually going to flag that it was likely we would be taking a lot on notice for exactly that reason, just so we've got the comfort and confidence because we've consulted with our department to get you the accurate information, rather than answering on the spot. I hope you can understand.

The CHAIR: No, I don't quite understand that. I think people, particularly Treasury, are fairly experienced in what parliamentary committees are expecting in terms of information. We're not asking anything here that you also wouldn't expect to be asked in an estimates committee hearing. It's the same process. It's similar. It is to do with the money that's being allocated. It's the Parliament's job to hold the Government accountable on the spending of public funds.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Just as in estimates, there are public documents that you have. The budget papers lay out quite clearly what's been allocated and what the Government expects the benefits to be of those investments. When you're asking for more detailed information about the underlying assumptions behind

forecasts that are sitting in business cases, we have an obligation to make sure both that the answers we give you are accurate and that we're entitled to share the information with you, given much of it is confidential.

The CHAIR: But I wouldn't have thought that line items that were capital works were confidential information.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I think we might be talking about two different things. We have certainly said to you that we will get back to you with breakdowns, if we can. Again, we don't have those. Those budgets are allocated to Transport, so we'll need to get information from Transport about the specific allocations of the program funding they've been given.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You can't give us costs and how much you are supposed to benefit and jobs and all that, but are you able to say, in terms of a business case ratio, whether some projects stack up and some don't? I get that the aerotropolis is a multitude of different projects, from your perspective. There would be discrete funding requests for each of these projects. But are you able to say, in terms of those projects, which ones stacked up in terms of business case ratio and which ones didn't and would you be able to supply us with that?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: No, probably not. When Ministers seek an investment decision from Cabinet, the advice we provide on their proposals to Cabinet is confidential. That will cover quite a lot of what we are not at liberty to discuss and what the public service rules prevent us from providing back in the answers. But we'll certainly provide you everything we legally are allowed to.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Just so I'm getting this correct, potentially, there are projects that have been funded by either this Government or maybe the previous Government, given how long this project has been going on, where a business case was done and the conclusion of that business case was that the project didn't give New South Wales taxpayers bang for buck yet the Minister has still gone ahead with it.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Is that a question about a specific project?

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: That is a question, yes. Has that happened?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I can't discuss that sort of speculation and I wouldn't have access to that information. The only people who are—

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: The concern is that throughout these hearings we've had witnesses and submissions where people have been perplexed, particularly about the metro from the airport to St Marys and whether that was a wise decision. We've seen plenty of submissions and evidence suggesting that perhaps an extension of the Leppington line was a much better spend of taxpayer money. There is a scenario where the business case for that project didn't stack up yet the Minister still went ahead with it. If that was the case, you wouldn't be able to tell us that.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: If it were ever the case that Treasury gave advice about the quality of a business case, we would not be able to discuss that advice with you.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: And the taxpayers of New South Wales.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Those are questions for Ministers, who are absolutely able to discuss that with you.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: In regard to the \$105 million that has been allocated in the current budget for a business case to evaluate the benefits of the north rail link or the South West Rail Link, are you able to provide any details into what is actually in that business case allocation? It a pretty hefty sum for a business case and I just wondered if you could break that down. What's the estimated completion date for that business case?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Generally the larger costs in a transport business case will be for engineering studies. The amount of money being paid for economists and financial people to do analysis will be very small and the amount of money being done on geotechnical studies will be a large amount of the money because you're having to look at whether certain locations are appropriate for tunnelling. A lot of it will be about planning studies. There'll be heritage and environmental advice that will need to be sought as well. It's not much money for people writing a theoretical case for investment. Most of it will be specialist inputs that have a bearing on the engineering choices that will be made if and when the project goes ahead. So the specific breakdown of how that money's being spent for the rail extensions, we'll have to get advice from Transport on. How long it will take them to do that, again, will be a matter for Transport but we're very happy to take that on notice.

The CHAIR: That's it? You don't want to ask a follow-up, Ray?

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: I guess, Madam Chair, I'm sensing everyone's frustration. With the greatest respect to the lady, your titles would indicate that you specialise in specific areas of Transport—capital strategic

projects et cetera. Could I be so bold as to say—and as a former Minister who is well versed in the processes of being grilled at budget estimates and certainly our chairman was certainly not backward in coming forward whenever I was sitting in the hot seat. It's fair to say that I think you've come to this particular committee a little bit unarmed in terms of your research. The Committee has been acting now for quite some time, and the questions and the answers that we've been seeking ultimately are well and truly out there for the public to look at. Yet, as already has been raised, we're seeing every question taken back. Without being too rude, your titles would suggest that you would know a little bit more about this project and, ultimately, the information that we are receiving today.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: If I might say, as a former Minister I'm sure that you're aware that the advice that Treasury gives to Cabinet is confidential to Cabinet and every government would expect that Treasury would respect those confidences and be very careful about sharing information which we have obligations to protect. In terms of whether or not we're expert on every line of detail, the transport team in Treasury is about eight people; the infrastructure budget team is about six people. Our job is to be budget partners for the agencies. We don't run the Transport portfolio. We don't prepare their business cases. We worked—last year's budget, Treasury officials reviewed 2½ thousand budget proposals. It's not our job to be the line-by-line experts on Transport investment cases.

We have access to—as you do—the general figures, and those are all in the public domain already. The estimated jobs and growth and the estimated costs of those projects—you have access to all of the budget papers and that covers most of the information that we have. Once you get into the case of what is in the business case behind the investment choice, and most of your questions have been about the business case inputs, it's not a lack of knowledge but it's our deep respect for the rules under which the Government operates that prevents us from sharing that information without checking first with our general counsel and our Transport colleagues.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: I would have thought when that money has been allocated within the budget that you'd have a greater idea of the expansiveness of what that actual budget allocation is for and that you would be able to present some information in relation to what's been asked. Anyway, that's my mistake.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I'm sure we will want to know what time frame is expected for those business cases, but we have got this funding for business cases for rail, in particular. How prepared is Treasury, once these business cases are completed, to be able to fund the actual delivery?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Treasury doesn't fund anything. What will happen is when the business case is completed, if the Minister chooses to bring a proposal through the budget process, then the Ministers on the Expenditure Review Committee will consider the priority of that request, and they will prioritise that through the 2025-26 budget process, if that's when it's ready.

The CHAIR: But you don't have a date for when the business case will be ready?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: That's a matter for Transport. They're the ones conducting the work, and they will bring that to Cabinet when they have completed their work and when they are ready to seek an investment decision.

The CHAIR: Are these business cases a line item in the budget?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I think it's mentioned—

EMMA FINNERTY: Are we talking about the—

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Planning for the railway extensions?

EMMA FINNERTY: Yes, correct.

The CHAIR: Normally the budget would also have a completion date and its line item.

EMMA FINNERTY: It will have spending years.

The CHAIR: So what is the spending years in the budget on that line item?

EMMA FINNERTY: I suspect it's going to be to 2027-28.

The CHAIR: So if we've got business cases of \$65 million and \$40 million that are allocated over a four-year project, we won't see them before the ERC by 2025-26. Would that be correct?

EMMA FINNERTY: No.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Not necessarily. That's a matter for Transport. Transport do many business cases. They have teams working on different investments, and they sometimes spread their resources.

Agencies and Ministers from time to time will reprioritise between years and project, depending on the progress they're making or the urgency of the works. Ultimately, that's what they have been allocated, but it will be a matter for them whether they complete the work quicker or slower than they first intended.

The CHAIR: Is the allocation all provided in the first year?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: The allocations have been made.

The CHAIR: And they're expected to be expended over a four-year period, yes?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: That's what they have available to them to do, yes.

The CHAIR: And you've had no indication from Transport on when they would expect it to be completed by?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: No, not at this point.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN: I'm just curious. You've come in today and we've all attended today. I know you didn't make a presentation, because you said it would be useful for us to ask the questions, and we've got questions that you can take back. But what would you expect that you would be able to tell us that would be helpful for this Committee in making our decisions? What do you think you could tell us that would be helpful for us to do our reporting?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: The Government shares what it has decided to present to the public in the budget papers. It's really not appropriate for Treasury officials to choose to share more than the Treasurer has already decided to share through the publication of the budget papers. But for any additional request that you have, which you've made today, we'll certainly see what we can get in addition to that.

The CHAIR: Was that the view that the Treasurer relayed to you?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I haven't spoken to the Treasurer. I don't know what his views are.

The CHAIR: I don't think that the Treasurer would say, "I only expect people to come before a parliamentary committee and present what is in the budget papers", when we're asking—

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I don't think that's what I implied. I just said that the Government has chosen to share this information, so we as public servants don't decide what is in the public realm.

The CHAIR: No, you said that you've come here—and we've had plenty of public servants come before us here. You said that Treasury has decided, "This is the information that we're going to share." We've made it pretty clear, and I think that you've been around long enough to understand that committees have often—this isn't the first time you've been before a committee. I'm correct, am I?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: That's correct.

The CHAIR: You've been around long enough to understand that a committee will always be asking for more than what is released in the budget papers on budget days, because they want detail.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I understand that. But the question was put to me what would I proactively recommend to you that you have, and I'm simply saying that, as a public servant, that's not my prerogative.

The CHAIR: That's actually not correct, is it? We've just gone through that. There's a reason the Government has approved for you, as a public servant, to come before this Committee. They are well versed in what parliamentary committees are asking. They're not saying, "Just go to the Committee," are they? They're not just saying, "Go to the Committee and say, 'You can only have the information that's available in the budget documents'".

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I think we may be at cross-purposes.

The CHAIR: No, I don't think we are. I'm just asking, that's not what they're saying, is it? Was that what you were advised before you came down?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I think you're mischaracterising my remarks and it's probably not helpful to continue discussing them.

The CHAIR: Well, I'm asking, when you came down here, was that the advice—that only information available in the budget documents is what the Committee is entitled to?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: I didn't make that claim.

The CHAIR: Anyhow, we'll go back and have a look at the transcripts on it. Let's go through these questions because you're taking them on notice. What are Treasury's estimates for the impact on the New South Wales economy from the airport and aerotropolis?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: That question has been asked, but happy to take it on notice.

The CHAIR: Has the Treasury completed any modelling on where airport or aerotropolis workers will be travelling from to access the airport?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: No, because we're—

EMMA FINNERTY: This a recap of the questions.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Okay.

The CHAIR: Will you take that question on notice on behalf of the Government?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Certainly.

The CHAIR: What is Treasury's estimate on how much freight will pass through at the airport each day/week? Take that on notice?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes.

The CHAIR: I need you to respond that you'll take them on notice if you're not going to answer the questions. The budget allocates \$30 million for planning the Western Sydney freight line. Can you provide more details on what is included in this allocation? What is the estimated completion date for the business case?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes, we can take that on notice.

The CHAIR: The budget allocates \$241.4 million for buses for Western Sydney. Can you explain what will be delivered by this funding?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We can take that on notice.

The CHAIR: Is any funding allocated for infrastructure that would support rapid buses to the airport, such as bus lanes or bus priority signals?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes.

The CHAIR: You'll take it on notice?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes.

The CHAIR: How much of the bus funding will be delivered before the airport opens in 2026?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes.

The CHAIR: On notice?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Yes.

The CHAIR: The New South Wales Government's submission mentions \$50 million allocated in the previous 2023-24 budget to plan the Fifteenth Avenue transit corridor. Is this funding ongoing? When is the planning work estimated to be completed?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We can take that on notice.

The CHAIR: What progress has been made on upgrading roads surrounding the Western Sydney airport funded in the 2023-24 budget?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We can take that on notice.

The CHAIR: The New South Wales Government's submission mentions a strategic business case which identified seven prioritised road corridors. Was construction of all these corridors funded in the New South Wales budget?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We can take that on notice.

The CHAIR: The budget allocates \$249.5 million for stage one and \$500 million for stage two upgrades to Mamre Road. When are all upgrades expected to be completed?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: Okay, we can take that on notice.

The CHAIR: The budget allocates \$400 million to widen Elizabeth Drive to four lanes. When is this upgrade expected to be completed?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We'll take that on notice as well.

The CHAIR: Are you aware of any funding proposals for any other transport projects for Western Sydney international airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis outside of those already publicly announced?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: No.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Can I also add to that list of questions? What are the estimates of truck movements carrying fuel to and from the airport?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We'll take that on notice as well.

The CHAIR: Just for everyone, the "What is Treasury's estimate on how much freight will pass through each airport each day/week"—can we get that in the year that the airport opens and over a 10-year span?

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: If that information exists, we'll get you what we have.

The CHAIR: Anything else, guys?

EMMA FINNERTY: Just quickly, I'm conscious that that question on fuel—I think that's been raised previously and I notice that it was referred to Transport for NSW, so just flagging that we're likely to do that. The question on fuel and truck movements was previously directed to Transport for NSW. I'm just flagging that, potentially, we'll be replicating their answer because we'll be sourcing our information from them as well.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Literally nobody at this point has been able to provide even a modicum of answer towards how many truck movements they're expecting carrying fuel, because nobody can tell us how many aircraft there are. It's frustrating, to say the least, that we are investing hundreds of billions of dollars into something and we have no idea how many planes there are going to be. We have no idea what the economic uplift is going to be. We have no idea what the total expenditure is on this. I find it baffling that Treasury would be unable to give us these kind of figures. I find that astounding, to be honest.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's proceedings for corrections. The Committee staff will also email any questions taken on notice from today and any supplementary questions from the Committee. We kindly ask that you return these answers within 14 days.

CASSANDRA WILKINSON: We can do that.

The CHAIR: That concludes our public hearing for today. I again place on record my thanks to the witnesses who appeared today. In addition, I thank the Committee members, Committee staff, Hansard and the staff of the Department of Parliamentary Services for their assistance in the conduct of the hearing.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

The Committee adjourned at 14:40.