



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

2023-24

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

No. 405

WEDNESDAY 18 DECEMBER 2024

(The Questions and Answers Paper published on Monday to Friday of each week will contain, by number and title, all questions to which answers have been received the previous day and any new questions asked that day. Consequently, the full text of any question will be printed only twice: when notice is given; and, when answered.)

Notice given on date shown.

Publication of Questions	Answer to be lodged by
Q & A No. 390 (Including Question Nos 3020 to 3025)	18 December 2024
Q & A No. 391 (Including Question Nos 3026 to 3029)	19 December 2024
Q & A No. 392 (Including Question Nos 3030 to 3053)	20 December 2024
Q & A No. 393 (Including Question Nos 3054 to 3058)	6 January 2025
Q & A No. 394 (Including Question Nos 3061 to 3061)	7 January 2025
Q & A No. 395 (Including Question Nos 3066 to 3069)	8 January 2025
Q & A No. 396 (Including Question Nos 3070 to 3075)	9 January 2025
Q & A No. 397 (Including Question Nos 3076 to 3080)	10 January 2025
Q & A No. 398 (Including Question Nos 3082 to 3110)	13 January 2025
Q & A No. 399 (Including Question Nos 3112 to 3119)	14 January 2025
Q & A No. 400 (Including Question Nos 3120 to 3122)	15 January 2025
Q & A No. 401 (Including Question Nos 3123 to 3127)	16 January 2025
Q & A No. 402 (Including Question Nos 3128 to 3131)	17 January 2025
Q & A No. 403 (Including Question Nos 3133 to 3152)	20 January 2025
Q & A No. 404 (Including Question Nos 3153 to 3156)	21 January 2025
Q & A No. 405 (Including Question Nos 3157 to 3161)	22 January 2025

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(Paper No. 390)

* 3020 REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS—FUTURE USE OF THE GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY LINE—The Hon. Aileen MacDonald to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism representing the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads—

- (1) Can you clarify the Government's position on the future of the Great Northern Railway line beyond Armidale?
- (2) Does the Government have any current plans, funding allocations, or strategic priorities to restore train services on the Great Northern Railway Line north of Armidale?
- (3) If no plans exist to return rail services, will the Government issue a public statement to confirm this, providing clear and definitive guidance to regional communities about the future use of the rail corridor?
- (4) Are you aware that this issue has caused significant division within local communities due to conflicting messages and unsubstantiated claims from some advocacy groups suggesting a return of rail services?
- (5) Will you make a public and unequivocal statement to help provide clarity to the community?
- (6) Will you make a public and unequivocal statement to help alleviate unnecessary division and misinformation?
- (7) Will you make a public and unequivocal statement to help support alternative uses of the rail corridor, such as the proposed New England Rail Trail, which has the potential to bring economic, social and heritage benefits to the region?
- (8) Do you understand the importance of making the Government's position clear given concerns about local misinformation and its impact on community unity?

Answer—

I am advised

Transport for NSW is not currently undertaking a feasibility study into reopening the rail line from Armidale to the Queensland border and does not have any current plans, funding allocations, nor strategic priorities to restore train services on the Great Northern Railway Line north of Armidale.

The government has committed to delivering Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plans. These plans will reflect the needs of regional communities and will include detailed evaluations of the community's transport needs now and into the future. They will include actions and initiatives that are costed to enable funding decisions to be made based on priorities.

* 3021 SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE—LOCAL SMALL COMMITMENTS ALLOCATION PROGRAM PAPERS—The Hon. Chris Rath to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism—

- (1) In relation to the papers that you tabled on 20 November 2024, "Premier's Department: Local Small Commitments Allocation Program: Proactive release of documents" dated 11 November 2024, on what website were these papers or pieces of information published?
- (a) What was the reason or reasons for proactive release?

Answer—

- (1) The documents are published on the Premier's Department Disclosure Log - <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/premiers-department/access-to-information/local-small-commitments-allocation-advice-and-decisions>.
- (a) On March 20 2024, in response to a Question Without Notice on the Local Small Commitments Allocation, I said:

I commit to the House- in the same way that I have done with the other projects- that I am very comfortable releasing the approval paperwork for those projects to the House at the appropriate moment so that members can see for themselves the basis on which a decision was made.

Consistent with that commitment, I arranged to have the approval paperwork and associated briefs published once all projects had been assessed.

- * 3022 CUSTOMER SERVICE AND DIGITAL GOVERNMENT—COVID-19 MICRO BUSINESS GRANTS—The Hon. Damien Tudehope to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism representing the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice—

- (1) How many audits of COVID-19 micro business grants have been conducted between March 2023 and November 2024?
 - (a) Of these audits, how many have resulted in the requirement for the grant, or some portion of it, to be repaid?

Answer—

I am advised that:

- (1) Between November 2022 and November 2024, Service NSW conducted 19,771 COVID-19 micro business grant audits, including 1,500 pilot audits conducted prior to 1 March 2023.
 - (a) 2,295, noting data limitations means this includes data relating to the pilot audits.

- * 3023 LOCAL GOVERNMENT—CITY OF SYDNEY COUNCIL DONATIONS—The Hon. Chris Rath to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Western New South Wales representing the Minister for Local Government—

- (1) Is it appropriate that local councils, such as the City of Sydney, donate ratepayer funds to Rising Tide?

Answer—

I am advised:

It is a matter for council to determine how it spends ratepayers' funds.

I made my views on the decision by the City of Sydney to support Rising Tide known in a media article in the Daily Telegraph dated November 26, 2024.

- * 3024 PREMIER—CITY OF SYDNEY COUNCIL DONATIONS—The Hon. Chris Rath to ask the Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage representing the Premier—

- (1) Is it appropriate that local councils, such as the City of Sydney, donate ratepayer funds to Rising Tide?

Answer—

I am advised:

This question should be directed to the Minister for Local Government.

- * 3025 PREMIER—SOLAR PRODUCTION IN THE ENERGY MARKET—The Hon. Rod Roberts to ask the Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage representing the Premier—

- (1) Speaking on the risk of blackouts to Sydneysiders on Wednesday 27 November 2024, you were quoted by the Sydney Morning Herald as stating: "Wherever possible, wherever it's safe, consider not using energy-intensive appliances between the hours of 3pm and 8pm this afternoon," and "The reason for that is that solar production in the energy market starts to come off from 3pm at exactly

the same time as people return home from work. So, if you can not run your pool filter, not run your dishwasher, not run your washing machine this afternoon between 3pm and 8pm, you'll help the grid." Did you say these words or similar?

- (a) What did you mean by "solar production in the energy market starts to come off from 3pm"?
- (b) Noting that you stated that solar production "starts to come off from 3pm", between what hours does solar production provide its peak output of energy to the New South Wales electrical grid?

Answer—

I am advised;

Solar energy production is dependent on the level of sunlight reaching solar panels. This can be impacted by clouds, dust and other obstacles. It also naturally is impacted by the position of the sun in the sky. As the sun gets lower in the sky, the level of sunlight reaching panels begins to reduce and production is noticeably impacted by 3pm.

Generally, the peak times for rooftop solar generation are when the sun is highest in the sky, between 12pm and 1pm. Utility solar farms are designed to track the sun and can stay at peak output between about 10am and 3pm, or even longer.

18 DECEMBER 2024

(Paper No. 405)

3157 PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACES—INGHAM PROPERTY GROUP MASTERPLAN AT BADGERYS CREEK—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage representing the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces—

- (1) Will you reject the draft Ingham Property Group Masterplan for an industrial estate adjoining Badgerys Creek Airport on the basis it is unintelligible, using nonsense concepts outside the New South Wales planning laws by breaking the land area into Wind Country, Kin Country, Deep Country, Water Country, Sky Country and Move With Country?
- (2) How could the public respond accurately to the Masterplan's public exhibition when the terms in (1) have no currency in civil society?
- (3) As the Masterplan has been prepared by non-Indigenous planning consultants seeking Government favour by virtue signalling on supposedly Aboriginal concepts they have invented to gain approval for a large industrial estate, does the Masterplan report represent cultural appropriation?

3158 SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE—ICAC OPERATION ECLIPSE RECOMMENDATIONS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism—

- (1) Which of the 29 recommendations of ICAC's Operation Eclipse (June 2021) will the Government implement?
 - (a) When will this occur?
- (2) Will the Government ensure that entities operating as 'associations', 'alliances', 'dialogues' and similar bodies representing and advocating for commercial interests are classified as lobbyists, and thereby required to comply with New South Wales laws governing the activities of lobbyists?

3159 GAMING AND RACING—IMPORTATION OF JOCKEYS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast—

- (1) Over the past three years how many new overseas apprentice and senior jockeys have been imported and licensed to ride in New South Wales?
- (2) Are you aware of how extensively overseas jockeys are taking Raceday and trackwork rides from local jockeys?
 - (a) If so, what action are you taking against this problem?
- (3) Given the Government's Made in NSW policy, why doesn't this apply to Racing NSW?
- (4) What funding is provided as part of the scheme in (1) above from the Australian and New South Wales Governments?
 - (a) Who is the funding recipient?

3160 ROADS—REPRESENTATIONS RELATING TO INGHAM PROPERTY GROUP MASTERPLAN—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism—

- (1) What representations from landowners or their lobbyists have you and Transport for NSW received regarding the draft Ingham Property Group Badgerys Creek Road Masterplan proposals to:
 - (a) change the alignment of the Eastern Ring Road to create an extra bend in the road by moving it south to suit the industrial and retail commercial interests of Ingham Property Group?
 - (b) change the alignment of the Bradfield Metro Link Road, formerly known as the Aerotropolis Connector, by moving it west to suit the commercial viability of Ingham Property Group retail shopping centre?
 - (c) move the location of the Eastern Ring Road and Bradfield Metro Link Road intersection?
 - (d) upgrade the Badgerys Creek Road and Eastern Ringroad intersection?
 - (e) upgrade the Eastern Ring Road and Bradfield Metro Link Road intersection?
- (2) What has Transport for NSW estimated as the additional costs involved for each of the proposals in (1) above?
- (3) For each of the proposals in (1) above, if approved by the Government, what cost-recovery arrangements will apply to Ingham Property Group?
- (4) Do you support, in principle, the planning proposition that Government should determine the routes of roads on Greenfield master-planned sites in the public interest, with the commercial interests of landowners not being allowed to override these independent, public interest decisions?
- (5) What assessment has Transport for NSW made of the disadvantage caused to adjoining property owners CSR and GDC by the proposals in (1)(a), (b) and (c) above?
 - (a) What are the details?
- (6) Given that the Premier met with Aldi, which proposes a distribution centre on the Ingham Property Group land, and the Ingham Property Group lobbyist Morris Iemma on 28 February 2024 concerning "road matters", what representations have you received from the Premier concerning the Ingham Property Group Masterplan?
- (7) For each of the proposals in (1) above, how has Transport for NSW responded to the Ingham Property Group Masterplan exhibition period which ended on 13 December 2024?

3161 PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACES—PLANNING ADVICE RELATING TO INGHAM PROPERTY GROUP MASTERPLAN—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage representing the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces—

- (1) What representations from landowners or their lobbyists have you and the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure received regarding the draft Ingham Property Group Badgerys Creek Road Masterplan proposals to:
 - (a) change the alignment of the Eastern Ring Road to create an extra bend in the road by moving it south to suit the industrial and retail commercial interests of Ingham Property Group?

- (b) change the alignment of the Bradfield Metro Link Road, formerly known as the Aerotropolis Connector, by moving it west to suit the commercial viability of the Ingham Property Group retail shopping centre?
 - (c) move the location of the Eastern Ring Road and Bradfield Metro Link Road intersection?
 - (d) upgrade the Badgerys Creek Road and Eastern Ringroad intersection?
 - (e) upgrade the Eastern Ring Road and Bradfield Metro Link Road intersection?
- (2) Do you support, in principle, the planning proposition that Governments should determine the routes of roads on Greenfield master-planned sites in the public interest, with the commercial interests of landowners not being allowed to override these independent, public interest decisions?
- (3) What assessment has the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure made of the disadvantage caused to adjoining property owners CSR and GDC by the proposals in (1)(a), (b) and (c) above?
- (a) What are the details?
- (4) Given that the Premier met with Aldi, which proposes a distribution centre on the Ingham Property Group land, and the Ingham Property Group lobbyist Morris Iemma on 28 February 2024 concerning "road matters", what representations have you received from the Premier concerning the Ingham Property Group Masterplan?
- (5) What advice have you received from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure concerning the planning changes proposed by Ingham Property Group following the end of the Ingham Property Group Masterplan exhibition period on 13 December 2024?
- (6) When do you expect a decision to be made finalising the Ingham Property Group Masterplan at 475 Badgerys Creek Road, Bradfield?

David Blunt AM
Clerk of the Parliaments