



Andrew Constance
Minister for Transport and Roads

MEDIA RELEASE

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EAT STREET LIGHT RAIL WORKS FAST-TRACKED

Major light rail construction on Parramatta's 'Eat Street' dining strip will be fast-tracked for completion in mid-2021, returning the precinct to sophisticated outdoor dining as quickly as possible.

Minister for Transport Andrew Constance said amending the construction schedule in response to COVID-19 would see work continue through a planned three month construction break, bringing forward the completion of major construction.

"Following engagement with local businesses, the feedback is clear – they want us to get on with the job. Due to the disruption of COVID-19, the foot-traffic is not there to sustain a long break in construction when we could be fast-tracking these infrastructure works," Mr Constance said.

"An early finish to major construction is the best way to rebuild 'Eat Street' as a popular destination after the devastating effects of the pandemic."

Transport for NSW consulted with the Parramatta Light Rail Business Reference Group and the Eat Street businesses on whether to postpone the grace period activation, which was scheduled to begin on November 1, and of those who voted, 90% were in favour of fast-tracking the work.

The activation, known as 'Eat Street Uncovered', will now take place from August 2021 before the second phase of light rail works, installation of light rail stops, testing and commissioning, begins.

Member for Parramatta Dr Geoff Lee said this is one of many ways Transport for NSW and the Parramatta Light Rail project are working together with local businesses to support them.

"It will be fantastic for the businesses and the community to have major construction finish early and activate Eat Street," Dr Lee said.

Parramatta Chamber of Commerce President Schon Condon said the local business community had made the choice to press ahead with major works and to postpone the three-month construction grace period until later in 2021.

"It has been a hard road for local businesses with the pandemic and it is heartening to see the light at the end of the tunnel for light rail. Everyone is looking forward to a rejuvenated Eat Street."

Infrastructure works to be completed on Church Street, also known as Eat Street, between George and Market Streets in the Parramatta CBD, this summer include the laying of light rail tracks and the powering of streetlights.

City of Parramatta Lord Mayor Cr Bob Dwyer said Council will continue to work with the State Government as they build Parramatta Light Rail through the popular dining precinct.

“We know that since March, COVID-19 has significantly impacted Eat Street, and the City of Parramatta is working with Transport for NSW to seek to deliver a wide range of initiatives to help these businesses move forward and be part of Parramatta CBD’s future,” Cr Dwyer said.

The Parramatta Light Rail will connect Westmead to Carlingford via the Parramatta CBD and Camellia and is expected to open in 2023.

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