

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/it-should-be-knocked-down-metro-developmentjeopardises-heritage-listed-power-station-20201118-p56ft4.html>

Black day for White Bay if Perrottet gets his way

19 November, 2020 Tom Rabel



Power play: Gladys Berejiklian, Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Transport Minister Andrew Constance marked the start of work on the Metro West project. Photo: Rhett Wyman

Construction of a new metro station and development at White Bay has cast doubt over the future of the nearby heritage listed power station, with the state's Treasurer suggesting it should be knocked down.

A day after committing to a \$107 billion infrastructure pipeline in the state budget, the government yesterday officially began work on the largest transport project in Australian history: Metro West.

Transport Minister Andrew Constance said the first four tunnelling machines would be in the ground by 2022, and indicated he was working with the

Planning Minister on options for the White Bay precinct.

Mr Constance indicated the century-old coal-fired plant might not be part of the area's future, having first joked it could be converted into a "rave cave".

"That site no one is able to do anything with so ultimately we've got to make some change," he said. "It's full of asbestos, it's a highly contaminated site, it really adds no value ... but we've got to work through a process in terms of the decision of government."

The government indicated in 2016 that the White Bay Power Station was being considered by major tech companies, including Google, though by 2017 the plan had fallen through.

In question time yesterday Treasurer Dominic Perrottet suggested it be demolished. "What's that building that's behind it, the rave cave. Shocking building, it should be knocked down," he said.

The longest-serving power station in Sydney, it was built between 1912-17 to supply power to the railway and tramway system. It shut down in 1984.

The 24-kilometre Metro West rail line linking Parramatta to the CBD in about 20 minutes is set to open by 2030, including stations at White Bay, Five Dock, Sydney Olympic Park and Westmead. Mr Constance said a decision on a potential Pyrmont Metro station was "imminent," while the government is still yet to decide where the CBD station will be situated.

"We have an idea where we're going to put the station in the city but I'm not going to disclose [it] yet," Mr Constance said.

While the government celebrated the beginning of one massive infrastructure project, questions were being raised as to whether another might soon be cancelled after the Northern Beaches Link received no mention in Tuesday's budget.

The government had blamed a "typographical error" in the budget for the road tunnel not being referenced and said an environmental impact statement on the multi-million dollar project was due to be completed in coming weeks.

Opposition roads spokesman John Graham said the project dropping out of the budget suggested it could be cancelled.

"Andrew Constance is suggesting no-one proof read the budget. That can't be true," Mr Graham said. "Treasury is doing its job. The Minister is yet to convince them the Beaches Link project stacks up, especially as travel patterns change due to the pandemic."

He said the opposition would imminently move to establish an upper house inquiry into the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link Project.