



# Barry O'Farrell MP Premier of NSW Minister for Western Sydney

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **\$8.3 BILLION NORTH WEST RAIL LINK TO OPEN IN LATE 2019**

The NSW Government today announced the North West Rail Link will cost \$8.3 billion and be open to customers by the end of 2019 – delivering reliable high capacity public transport to Sydney's North West for the first time.

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell, Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian and Treasurer Mike Baird today visited the North West Rail Link information centre at Castle Hill, opposite the new construction site for what will be the Castle Hill Station, along with local MPs.

Australia's biggest public transport infrastructure project will deliver more than \$35 billion in benefits to the NSW economy over several decades.

"The North West Rail Link is on track and on budget – the first of the tunnel boring machines will be in the ground next year, as scheduled," Mr O'Farrell said.

"The \$8.3 billion project budget includes the cost of delivering Sydney's new rapid transit trains – with this year's State Budget confirming the future funding path for this critical transport infrastructure project.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is getting on with the job of delivering this project – in 2013-14 alone, \$806 million will be invested in the North West Rail Link, part of a \$4 billion investment over the next four years."

Ms Berejiklian said the NSW Government had released 28 major tenders and 47 key contracts had been awarded on the project.

"We originally estimated the project would cost between \$7.5 billion and \$8.5 billion plus rolling stock – and as we've moved down the contract path we can confirm the project cost will be \$8.3 billion including Sydney's new generation of single deck trains.

"Unlike NSW Labor, we've done our homework and we can now present a fully-funded project which will forever change the face of the North West.

"Over the next year, the NSW Government's massive infrastructure investment on the North West Rail Link includes awarding the tunnelling contract and buying and delivering the tunnel boring machines which will build Australia's longest rail tunnels – 15km of twin tunnels between Epping and Bella Vista."

The NSW Government is working hard to have the rail line open to customers by the end of 2019. The finalisation of the contract procurement process over the next 18 months will confirm the opening time.

Mr Baird said the infrastructure investment also includes excavating the stations along the tunnel corridor, building a pre-cast concrete factory at Bella Vista and site preparation work for the 4km skytrain section.

“Other construction activity over the next year includes final acquisition of properties required for the project as well as ongoing early work along the corridor to ensure major construction can start on time.

“Through the prioritisation of funding, this year’s Budget provides certainty to the people of NSW that this critical project will be delivered,” Mr Baird said.

The \$8.3 billion project budget covers the entire cost of building the North West Rail Link including the three major contracts, property acquisition required for the project, the early construction work currently taking place, planning approvals and the initial design and engineering of the rail link.

The project also includes eight new railway stations, 4,000 commuter car parking spaces and a train at least every five minutes in the peak, with room for future growth.

The three major contracts are all out to market:

- The tunnelling contract is expected to be awarded in coming months;
- The skytrain and surface construction contract is out to tender and is expected to be awarded before the end of this year; and,
- Formal tender documents have been issued to the two shortlisted consortia competing to operate the North West Rail Link, with the contract expected to be awarded before the end of 2014. This contract will be a Public Private Partnership, subject to value for money criteria being met.

The project recently got the planning green light with the approval of the second Environmental Impact Statement and has officially moved into the construction stage.

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