Letter to the Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald

There is absolutely no truth to the suggestion of delays within the NSW Department of Planning regarding Sydney’s light rail extension project (“Good news on light rail buried under bureaucracy”, SMH – 28/8/10).

In fact, the Department has progressed the application more swiftly than statutory timeframes require.

On 20 July this year, Transport NSW lodged its preliminary application with the Department and requested the project’s environmental assessment requirements.

On 11 August, 7 days ahead of its statutory timeframe, the Department issued these requirements.

The Department now awaits the formal environmental assessment report for the project which will then be placed on public exhibition. The Department is targeting an approval in coming months, subject to the timely receipt of this report.

It should be noted that the Department also declared the light rail extension as critical infrastructure, to improve legal certainty in the planning process.

As such, the Department has shown a clear commitment to delivering a streamlined planning assessment process for this important project.

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD PEARSON
Deputy Director-General
NSW Department of Planning