



## CLIMATE CHANGE

### ■ TRANSPORT

# Bus depot gears up for gas

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LEICHHARDT'S transport depot will become clean and green under a \$34 million plan to make it home to Australia's first environmentally friendly, mostly gas-powered bus fleet.

State Transit wants to expand and convert the historic depot - which began life as a tram storage depot - into a base for 200 gas buses, which are quieter and less polluting than diesel.

The chief executive of State Transit, John Lee, said the change would save just under 3 million kilograms of carbon dioxide a year.

"In terms of our own business, that's more than a 20 per cent reduction in emissions."

The upgrade will more than

double the number of buses that can be kept at the depot. It will also involve restoring historic sections such as the tram shed, cable store and office buildings. A 100,000-litre rainwater tank will supply the water for washing buses and irrigating gardens.

Mr Lee said the upgrade was a blueprint for the future of Sydney Buses.

But it was hard to have a completely gas powered fleet, he said, because the vehicles needed high-pressure pipelines, which did not exist in some parts of Sydney.

□ An industry analysis has found that natural gas is the obvious alternative to coal-fired or nuclear power stations but has been ignored as a

preferable energy source.

A report commissioned by the Australian Pipeline Industry Association says if greenhouse emissions are to be a priority, natural gas and renewable energies will have to be used as the least damaging to the environment. Natural gas is the sensible alternative in the short to medium term, the report says, with greenhouse emissions from natural gas about half those from brown coal power generators.

The report, by a greenhouse energy consultant, Derek Sullens, questions the worth in the medium term of proposals for underground sequestration of carbon dioxide from coal generators.