

## **INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**Organisation:** Port Stephens Council  
**Name:** Mr Joseph Gleeson  
**Position:** Traffic Engineer  
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# **NSW Parliamentary inquiry into inter-regional public transport**

## **Port Stephens Council submission - May 2012**

Port Stephens Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the parliamentary inquiry into inter-regional transport.

Port Stephens Council has contributed to several regional transport plans over many years which are still relevant and are referenced in the following response.

### **How can inter-regional public transport better serve the needs of regional New South Wales?**

*Sustainable Transport in Lower Hunter Vol 1 & 2 – 2003*

#### *3.14 Transport Interchanges*

##### *3.14.1 Design Principles*

*Transport interchanges are the means by which modal integration is achieved. Hence the design and location of interchanges is critical to the success of the transport network.*

*The design of interchanges should include features that are essential to offset the inconvenience and disincentive of passengers having to change vehicles, such as:*

- All buses travelling in the same direction use the same bus stand*
- Where it is necessary to cross a road, pedestrian facilities are provided*
- All passenger waiting and transfer areas are covered and protected from the weather*
- The area is well lit at all times*
- Conspicuous security and surveillance is provided*
- The walking distance between buses and trains, and between buses and ferries, is minimised.*

### **Existing CountryLink Stop**

The existing CountryLink bus stop at Raymond Terrace is inadequate and does nothing to encourage greater use of public transport. The southbound stop has no shelter and is not DDA compliant. The existing CountryLink bus stop has only minimal integration with local and regional passenger route services.

There is opportunity for the state government to work with Port Stephens Council to achieve a quality transport interchange in this area that could utilise Council owned property to achieve the design principles outlined above which would greatly improve the attractiveness of public transport services generally.

### **Additional bus stops**

An additional stop or stops further to the north along the Pacific Highway could also improve access to CountryLink services for Port Stephens residents. Existing rest stops on the Pacific Highway at 12 Mile Creek could be utilised to

provide an off-road bus stop to better serve patrons from the Medowie area and would also be less travel for Tomaree and Tilligerry peninsula residents.

### **Other issues**

The following public transport issues were identified in the Port Stephens Council submission to the NSW Long term Transport Master Plan and apply equally to this inquiry:

#### **Transport Infrastructure Issues**

(LTTMP 3.2)

- Funding of infrastructure for public transport in New South Wales should be a State responsibility to support the increase in public transport usage required as part of NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan - (LTTMP-3.2.2)
- Funding is required for bus shelters and DDA compliant infrastructure when routes are relocated or redirected away from existing bus stops and must include path connectivity and lighting (LTTMP- 3.1.2)
- Attractive and safe mode change for elderly residents is needed to encourage less driving over longer distances. (LTTMP- 3.1.2)
- Low floor access buses with storage for luggage or freight must be explored to make transport a viable option for all users regardless of route (LTTMP-3.1.1)
- Rail and aviation links are critical infrastructure planning requirements for our future transport corridors to be defined (LTTMP - 6.5 & 6.6)

#### **Public Transport**

Bus Travel is a priority in Port Stephens LGA with no rail options within the local government boundaries. Bus travel as part of road infrastructure planning has wider implications when taken in consideration with the geographical layout of Port Stephens, as most river crossings and peninsula access points have major intersections with single access roads.

Newcastle based trips form the majority of existing destination and interchange requirements until future route and infrastructure improvements make other destinations more attractive.

Public transport connections from Newcastle Airport to Newcastle, Raymond Terrace, Maitland and Nelson Bay require constant review and upgrade to accommodate growth in air travel, residential and employment areas.

Joe Gleeson



**Traffic Engineer - Port Stephens Council**