

**Submission
No 77**

COMMUTER CAR PARKING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation:

Name: Alison Woodbury

Position:

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The lack of commuter parking at Schofields train station is a big issue for local Schofields residents and other nearby residents who drive to this station. Local residents were told that one of the reasons the old Schofields train station must be moved was because the projected traffic figures showed the local streets clogged with traffic, unable to cope with the increasing population and small carpark. So the government built a new train station at Schofields, moving it further away from the established area of the suburb. This move resulted in many local residents now driving to the train station instead of walking to the station. On top of moving the new station further away, Schofields was launched as a major growth suburb as part of the government's North West Growth Centre. The government has released land for development which has brought so many new families to our area, and our suburb is unrecognisable to what it was 5 years ago. There is a worry that there is still a lot more development in Schofields and surrounding suburbs to come. One of the incentives for people moving to these new housing developments was that there would be more regular trains leaving from Schofields after the duplication of the train line from Quakers Hill through to Riverstone (which never happened). So we have people driving to the station who once used to walk, we have a huge increase in local population to our suburb, and we have people travelling from nearby suburbs to take advantage of the more regular trains. As a result if you don't get to the train station before 6.30am, then you simply won't get a parking spot. This is having a huge impact on commuters. Commuters are changing what trains they catch in order to be able to make sure that they can get a parking spot. The parking carparks are at capacity by 7am and the streets on both sides of the station are at capacity for hundreds of metres, affecting nearby residents who now have narrower streets to negotiate, due to cars parking on both sides of their previously quiet roads. For families who have to drop children to childcare (most don't open until 7am) and schools before making their way to work, then their commute via train gets so much more stressful because they know that they are not going to be able to park at the station carpark and they need to allow even more time in their journey in order to park streets away and then walk to the station. This is an additional stress that working families do not need. I know of a public transport commuter who has parked in a street and come back to their car later that day to discover that they have permanent marker drawn down the sides of their car when they park in a particular street (so some unknown local resident is really not happy that people are constantly parking in their street - and this has happened more than once). We urgently need more dedicated parking at Schofields train station, and the time to act is now before the nearby development is finished so that land can be secured by the government to extend the parking available. It also needs to be clarified as to who owns the train carparks. I phoned Sydney Trains about a year ago to complain about the lack of parking available when there was a number of car park spots on the south side of the train station blocked off from commuter use and being used by construction workers instead. Sydney Trains told me they had no control over this because the train car park land was not owned by them, but by Blacktown Council. When I contacted Blacktown Council they were not aware of this and referred me back to Sydney Trains. So can someone clarify which area of government controls the car parking areas of Schofields train station? Many commuters who cannot get a parking spot are forced into being dropped off at the station, but the kiss and drop zone at Schofields in peak hours is also beyond capacity, with traffic snarled outside onto the main road and clogging up the roundabout. This is not helped by a pedestrian crossing that is dangerously placed right next to a roundabout! We need a proper review of the whole traffic movement around Schofields train station, and we need it to happen now before a pedestrian is killed. There has to be some solutions to help local commuters and residents!