

**Submission
No 86**

COMMUTER CAR PARKING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Western Sydney Public Transport Users Group

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Submission to Committee inquiry – Commuter car parking – NSW

Author: Sue Day – WSPTU – Western Sydney Public Transport Users Group – 4th Aug 2017

The layout of this submission focuses on particular areas of interest, and comments on issues that affects local level transport and their linkage to commuter car parking.

- Effectiveness of current state government policies and programs covering commuter car parking.
- Processes for selecting the location of commuter car parks
- The potential for restricted access or user pays commuter car parks
- Consideration of alternative modes of first mile/last mile travel, including point to point transport, active transport and on demand buses
- Any other related matters.

Background

The WSPTU began in 2009. It was coordinated by a number of people who had been working on local transport issues in their local groups.

The creation of WSPTU was to support the work of local groups and to coordinate the issues that the groups have in common. Currently there are people and groups working on local issues in Liverpool, Bankstown, Fairfield, Blue Mountains, Penrith, Mt Druitt, Riverstone, North Parramatta and the Hills.

Recommendations

Effectiveness of current state government policies and programs covering commuter car parking.

Change the policy, whereby, any changes to parking within 1km of a railway stations has to meet the approval of Roads & Maritime Services not the local council.

All local decisions on parking within 1km should be managed by Local Council's and not the RMS. Local Councils are more aware of the specific issues in their area, they need to have the responsibility in finding solutions for their local community.

Effective communication strategy needs to be developed and implemented. Any Government policy must have proposed planned and completion dates for all types of infrastructure improvement programs. Currently, the Transport Access program has six planned station upgrades with no indication of which year these will be started, let alone completed.

Annually updated Transport Master Plan around improvements and any amended plans should be available on line. Currently the last update on the NSW Transport master plan is dated 2014.

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Processes for selecting the location of commuter car parks

The popularity for parking at train stations is apparent, there needs to be emphasis on using existing local infrastructure. Any process in selecting the location of commuter car parks should include collaborating with private organisations including outer suburbs shopping centres, and community groups that own existing car parks close to public transport hubs, this infrastructure supported by 15 minute express bus services (from community and private operators) would allow more commuters to access free parking during the week.

The potential for restricted access or user pays commuter car parks

Existing park and ride facilities such as the Olympic Parks site accompanied with bus rapid transit lanes to and from the city would be an ideal opportunity for a potential restricted access or user pay commuter car park. It provides people an alternative option that is fast and efficient, especially, if commuters are able to use their Opal cards to enter the area.

Consideration of alternative modes of first mile/last mile travel, including point to point transport, active transport and on demand buses.

The use of taxis, hire cars and community transport as part of the public transport mix should be included at a local level. (not all journeys are to and from work).

There needs to be a strategy to improve and encourage carpooling and ride-sharing services, which includes behavior-change programs and infrastructure support (such as using existing sporting field car parking spaces during the week, with ride-sharing signage sections clearly identified).

To encourage active transport, there needs to be suitable infrastructure included. Infrastructure such as secure bike lockers to avoid theft, damage and vandalism. In fact, bike lockers should be an integral part of all public spaces.

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Any other related matters.

Communication and Connections - Encourage the creation of a process that engages local people and commuters in an ongoing way, either through Councils or local organisations to harvest local knowledge about transport usage – Commuter car parking facilities are intrinsically linked to local transport connections.

Funding – Parking policies to charge for parking may work in urban areas, but they must be developed in conjunctions with strong social inclusions that includes alternatives, such as 15 minute express services from outer suburbs to major transport hubs, allowing commuters to utilize park and ride facilities on the fringe of city centers. (along the lines of the Wollongong shuttle bus service).

Infrastructure Funding – Commuter car parking should not be planned in isolation, commuters need a range of options. Including point-to-point transport, so we are taking the opportunity to suggest how to fund and progress the rollout of high quality bus stop facilities beyond the implementation of the DDA commitments.

There should be a consideration for a Transport NSW project proposal to Infrastructure Australia for block funding. The funding to be used for bus stop infrastructure in NSW. The funding model could utilize one third, Commonwealth, one-third State and one-third Local Government funding. By including local Bus transport as part of the commuter car parking strategy, it will help develop strong linkages for local employment areas.

High Demand Intervals - Utilise Buses in high demand areas from outer suburbs areas to the local Train Station. Using Express bus services (private and community operators) at 15-minute intervals during peak times, along with better integration between the rail and bus networks will reduce the heavy demand on the limited commuter car parks.

Conclusion

Better car parking and local transport works in tandem, having both will allow Western Sydney cities to be more livable.

The majority of recommendations listed have been derived from commuter's feedback and stories.

Commuters in Western Sydney suburbs need to have access to interconnected fast and efficient transport networks, so reliance on cars is greatly reduced.

End of Document

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