

**Submission  
No 96**

## **COMMUTER CAR PARKING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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1. I have been a NSW public servant for 40 years, and for all of that time I have been a regular weekly commuter on the trains to and from Sydney, firstly from Campbelltown and then for the last 15 years from North Wollongong. The State Governments been keen over recent years to encourage more people to use public transport, most particularly the trains, and this of course makes good sense.

2. What does not make good sense is that the Government has failed to recognise and take into consideration that commuter car parking facilities go hand in hand with encouraging the public to make more use of the trains. In addition, over the last few years in particular the number of commuters has increased substantially from places further afield, as the population moves further out for more affordable housing.

3. North Wollongong has seen a massive growth of population. I commenced living in North Wollongong, and commuting to and from Sydney five days a week for work, 15 years ago, so I can tell you that there clearly has been a huge increase in the number of train commuters from North Wollongong. Unfortunately, whilst train station facilities generally have improved over the years, and most noticeably in areas closer to Sydney than North Wollongong, North Wollongong has not had one cent spent on any commuter car parking facility.

4. There is only a very small number of spaces for car parking for commuters on the western side of the station, and all the local street parking surrounding that small facility are taken up by university students, and commuters by 6.30am.

5. On the eastern side of the station, in Railway Street, there is some street parking (not a commuter facility) for only about 20 cars. There is also a taxi area, where there are no taxis that sit and wait, so that's a waste of space. Taxis only come to North Wollongong if called to do so. They get their business from Wollongong station.

6. Whilst there has been the development of two big liquor stores adjacent to Railway Street, most recently the Dan Murphy store with its car park, which is shared by Rashays restaurant and a seafood shop, there has been no development for a commuters car park. However, that car park is private parking for patrons of those stores, and it has a two hour time limit. It is under utilised.

7. I notice there is some land adjacent to the Dan Murphy's car park in Railway Street which is vacant and I am unaware of who owns it, but I would ask that consideration be given to utilising this space for train commuters.

8. I mostly walk to and from the station, 15 minutes each way. However, I have suffered a few injuries over the last few years, such as a leg operation, back pain, and also sometimes it is pouring rain which makes it difficult to walk without getting absolutely drenched by the time I reach the station, and other days where we have to put up with gale force winds. Sometimes I need to go shopping on my way home from work. So there are times when I absolutely need to take my car and leave it at the station until my return from work at 7pm.

However, by 6.30am there is no street parking left on this eastern side of the railway line, in Railway Street. The Dan Murphy's carpark is the only available space, and on the rare occasions I have needed to take my car, I have parked there. However, they recently put stickers on my car indicating my vehicle registration number had been recorded and if I

parked there again over the 2 hr time limit, my car would be towed away. That is deplorable, as their car park is under utilised and I have nowhere else to park.

9 It should be noted that the Dan Murphy's car park is under utilised. Those patrons of the liquor store simply park, pick up what they require and leave. Same with the seafood shop. It is only the Rashays restaurant that may have patrons for 1 to 2 hour during lunch time. There is plenty of space for those patrons in the car park to share with train commuters.

10. My suggestion would be if a commuters car park facility cannot be provided in the near future, then the Government should look at leasing at least a dozen spots from the owners of the Dan Murphy's car park for long day train commuters only. That would make our lives much easier for the time being.

11. Since the new timetables over the last few years with a faster and more regular service from North Wollongong to Sydney and return, the dynamics of commuters utilising North Wollongong train station as their morning commuting station has dramatically increased. There is a clear need for urgent consideration of a commuters car park, understanding also that travelling to and from Sydney from North Wollongong would require long day parking.

In summary, the commuters of North Wollongong feel neglected, most particularly after timetable changes over the years which have required them to now drive to North Wollongong for a fast train to Sydney, and it is clear that we are now desperate to have a commuter long day car parking facility. I am also sure that this will also assist further patronage of the trains, most particularly by advertising such an improvement. Encouraging the public to utilise public transport must be promoted but can only be successful, in my view, if the commuter car parking facility problem is addressed.

Thank you for your time. I hope the Committee will give its earnest consideration to recommending that urgent action be taken to provide this facility for the commuters of North Wollongong, who spend many hours a day (4 hours per day, five days a week, for those like me) travelling to and from work.

Kind regards

Ms Sadie Spencer