

REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**INQUIRY INTO COMMUTER CAR PARKING IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

At Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney, on Monday 16 October 2017

The Committee met at 9:50

PRESENT

Ms E. Petinos (Chair)

Ms J. McKay

Mr B. Notley-Smith

Mr G. Warren

The CHAIR: Good morning and thank you for attending this public hearing of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure Inquiry into Commuter Car Parking in New South Wales. In June this year the Committee resolved to commence an inquiry into commuter car parking in New South Wales. The Committee received a large number of submissions and today we are conducting a public hearing to explore in more detail some of the issues raised by inquiry participants.

The Committee will hear from witnesses from the NRMA and PeopleTrans. The Committee will then break for morning tea, after which it will hear from witnesses from Uber and BusNSW. Following this the Committee will be hearing from witnesses from the NSW Taxi Council and Parking Australia. The Committee will then break for afternoon tea and will conclude by hearing from witnesses from Transport for NSW. I thank the witnesses for appearing today and making themselves available. I remind everyone to switch off their mobile phones as they can interfere with the Hansard recording equipment.

For the benefit of the gallery, I note that the Committee has resolved to authorise the media to broadcast sound and video excerpts of its public proceedings. Copies of the guidelines governing coverage of proceedings are available. Please note that any filming is to be as unobtrusive as possible and should not disrupt Committee proceedings or focus on Committee documents. In addition, filming of individuals in the public gallery should be avoided. I now declare the hearing open.

CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR, Manager—External Relations and Partnership, NRMA, affirmed and examined
MATTHEW GIJSELMAN, General Manager—Public Affairs, NRMA, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: Would either of you like to make a brief opening statement?

Mr GIJSELMAN: We are happy for our submission to stand without making a statement today.

The CHAIR: Thank you for your submission, it was very succinct, clear and easy to read. I am interested in some of the comments you have made about park and ride policy for future transport projects, including the light rail and the Sydney Metro West. Do you have any views specifically on the upcoming park and ride facilities for the Metro Northwest and the northern beaches B-Line that you would like to expand on?

Mr TAYLOR: Nothing to say but obviously we are very supportive of the policy continuing to deliver commuter car parking around new and significant pieces of transport infrastructure. Obviously the Government has made provision for the inclusion of commuter car parking on the North West Rail Link along with the B-Line that is expected to open later this year. Other than our ongoing support for encouraging public transport use, the NRMA is a strong advocate of public transport's role in reducing congestion in our city. Other than that, that is our position.

The CHAIR: You mention the city, do you think that there is scope for different car parking strategies between the cities and regional and rural areas?

Mr TAYLOR: Certainly there is space for the Government to look at doing some more work in this area. I notice a number of submissions call for the Government to look at a parking strategy and I think the NRMA would certainly be supportive of more work being done in that space, which would include looking at Sydney, the outer suburbs, Parramatta, Newcastle, Wollongong, and the Central Coast as a big commuter car parking area. We would certainly like to see some more work done to make sure that the policy setting is right to maximise the use of public transport.

The CHAIR: During the many surveys that you conduct of your members and the data that you collect, have you collected any data specifically on how many people use their cars to drive and park at train stations?

Mr GIJSELMAN: I think we will have to take that on notice in terms of specifics. We have a large membership base, over 2.5 million members. We frequently survey and engage in some insights with those members. I think to the point that Mr Taylor is making, there are really two key issues that we would encourage the Committee to consider in this context. One is, how the Government is looking at that whole commuter piece. Obviously there are individual pieces around the Northwest Metro, for example. But if you take the entirety of the Sydney drawing population, which definitely includes the Central Coast and south to Wollongong, we would encourage the Government to take a holistic look at how they are putting together a parking strategy. Part of that, I think to your point, comes back to the availability of data and what is actually happening with these parking spaces.

I will take on notice your specific question about whether or not we have an idea of the mix of what consumers are doing in terms of using the commuter parking, but there is a lack of data. There are I think 36,000 spots available for commuters. What proportion of those are being used by commuters, what proportion of those are being used by local shoppers, that is the big issue in this debate that we would see. There is a big lack of data and there are also technology options that can be used to maximise the positions that are available.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Could you explain what those technology options might be?

Mr GIJSELMAN: We are an investor in a start-up called Divvy. But that is indicative of our position, rather than leading our position, if I could put it that way. As the technology available improves there is a much greater capacity for car spacing holders, which includes the New South Wales Government but not only the New South Wales Government, to ensure that those positions are being maximised and being directed towards specific outcomes. For example, if the decision is that local parking facilities are funded by local councils for local journeys or local shopping, you can set up the policy position and the incentives to ensure they are used by locals. That would be things like pricing mechanisms that allow people to have 15 minutes of free parking.

In terms of commuter parking facilities, our understanding is that they are managed primarily by Transport for NSW from the policy setting perspective. It is entirely possible for the Government to establish and to drive policy outcomes that ensure those spaces are used mostly by commuters, and that is something the NRMA would support. There is no technological reason that we could not have a swipe-and-park situation with the Opal card. If you are at a commuter car park and you need to use your Opal card to get on the train, the

Government could drive behaviour by allowing preferential arrangements for you as a commuter. Commuters could swipe their Opal card to get into the car park, and that might be free or cost very little. If someone is using the parking area for local journeys or local shopping, there could be a different arrangement.

Ms JODI McKAY: How does Divvy factor into commuter car parking? Is that parking used by commuters now?

Mr TAYLOR: Not to my knowledge.

Ms JODI McKAY: At the moment, it is prohibitive for commuter car parking. Is that because of the cost or because no model has been developed for commuter car parking? Obviously I am aware of how Divvy works; we have discussed this a number of times. What is prohibiting the use of Divvy for commuter car parking? Is it a cost issue, or has the Government not provided a platform on which Divvy can operate? I am not talking only about current commuter car parks; I am also talking about car parks that Divvy may manage now.

Mr TAYLOR: Divvy is still growing its inventory; it is still early days in terms of its supply side. In terms of commuter car parking, the Government has announced that it is looking at introducing a mechanism on the B-Line.

Ms JODI McKAY: It is looking at Divvy for B-Line?

Mr TAYLOR: No. It has put out a tender requesting a solution to allow Opal-enabled access to car parking. That is where it currently stands.

Ms JODI McKAY: The cost you are proposing would be on top of an Opal fare for transport. There is always a tension between cost and revenue and encouraging people to use public transport.

Mr GIJSELMAN: Absolutely.

Ms JODI McKAY: Have you given any consideration to how that would be worked out or what commuters would pay if you charged them through Opal?

Mr GIJSELMAN: That should definitely be considered in the broader context of the strategy. We are encouraging the Government to look at that in terms of how it can draw upon the entirety of the commuting population. Our view would definitely be that if there were a charge for commuters, it should be nominal. I believe it is \$2 in Canberra.

Mr TAYLOR: It is about \$2 in other jurisdictions, and I think it should be less.

Ms JODI McKAY: If revenue were generated, should that go to the Government or ideally be reinvested in commuter car parks?

Mr GIJSELMAN: Ideally it would be an opportunity to focus that revenue on better mobility solutions. That may include commuter car parking or other issues.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: What is the NRMA's view on public-private partnerships to increase the supply of commuter parking?

Mr GIJSELMAN: There is no doubt that the Government cannot do everything. There is a need for better and more commuter parking. The NRMA is not philosophically against the Government partnering with non-government providers if that delivers the best value for commuters and the wider community.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Should there be dedicated spaces for point-to-point transport in commuter car parks in New South Wales?

Mr GIJSELMAN: The point-to-point revolution—for want a of a better word—is interesting in the context of how you put together not only parking providers but also wider mobility solutions. In terms of whether there should be dedicated parking for point-to-point transport, our understanding of the situation is that it will alleviate the need for it to a certain extent. Of course, you need to have set-down and drop-off areas, but that is a wider infrastructure challenge. The Government certainly needs to be aware of that, and it is, and it is considering it in that context.

To the point you made a moment ago, collecting a nominal fee from commuters might be an option. However, you need to future fit all of these commuter car parks for a much wider shift in mobility. We released report a few months about future car ownership that speaks to this issue. There are significant changes coming down to the line in terms of mobility and car ownership. We think the time frames are generally shorter than most people understand. There will be connected vehicles, automated vehicles, electric vehicles and so on. How the Government looks at that issue from an infrastructure point of view is something that will definitely fit into the point-to-point issue. However, the Government needs to conduct a much broader discussion.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: The technology for tracking and documenting parking for point-to-point operators is limitless. A point-to-point operator, for example—

Mr GIJSELMAN: Let us call it an Uber driver.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Yes, an Uber driver. That driver might pick up and deliver five or 10 people to a commuter hub and then want to catch a train themselves. By having point-to-point operators you are reducing the demand for dedicated spots.

Mr GIJSELMAN: Absolutely.

Mr TAYLOR: With the technology we have seen developed you can encourage carpooling in a range of ways. A driver could pick up one or a couple of people who are all heading to the train station and they might have access to a pre-booked space. There are endless variations of how you can maximise the use of the spaces by encouraging more people to use their vehicles more effectively, and point-to-point transport is part of that.

The CHAIR: You touched on the changes happening across the industry with fewer people taking up car ownership and driver licences. Some submissions provided statistics about the decrease happening in the under-30s age group. The statistics were more indicative of changes in Victoria than in New South Wales. If that is an example of the trend in younger generations, we are talking about point-to-point and on-demand transport. Are commuter car parks the best way to move forward in terms of dollar value for the Government, or should there be a broader investment in other areas of the transport network?

Mr GIJSELMAN: We are certainly aware of the trends and agree with what you have said. There are two issues that correlate in this space. Less car ownership and fewer driver licences do not necessarily mean fewer car journeys.

You talked about the car pooling that Mr Taylor just mentioned—that has the potential to increase the numbers of journeys people are taking via car. That is quite an interesting policy issue to manage. Just because you do not have a car does not mean you are not going to get a lift in one. It remains to be seen how that flows out, which is probably the second point. We are at an interesting point in this evolution or revolution, but it is likely to be a long lead out until—to your point—investing in commuter parking or having commuter parking is a less effective economic investment, I would think. Even if you skip forward and we all access mobility as a service, no-one owns a car, they order over the phone and it is all very exciting, that is quite some time away from where we are, we would say. The transition is the interesting piece. To the point that Mr Notley-Smith was making, you are still going to need somewhere for set-downs and pick-ups. You can use pricing mechanisms to drive behaviour in car pooling but for quite some time you are still going to need somewhere to get to before you jump on a mass transit option.

Ms JODI McKAY: We have talked about point to point. Does that include a similar approach for autonomous vehicles?

Mr GIJSELMAN: In terms of how they will operate in terms of set-down and pick-up? Yes, absolutely.

Ms JODI McKAY: Will they not require commuter car parking?

Mr GIJSELMAN: They will still need to go somewhere, at the end of the day.

Ms JODI McKAY: Exactly. Where do they go? Is it a commuter car park? Where do autonomous vehicles go? What happens?

Mr GIJSELMAN: That is the point I was making. It is hard to know the way it is going to go. Let's be clear: No-one actually knows where it is going to go.

Ms JODI McKAY: For the foreseeable future, we need commuter car parking.

Mr GIJSELMAN: Yes, I believe that is the case. Until the point in time where no-one owns a car and they all just order them, which is some time away, personal car ownership will still be a thing, even though our expectation is that car pooling will increase. Those cars will still need to go somewhere before they jump on a mass transit option.

Mr GREG WARREN: In your submission you strongly support a holistic approach to matters, which I agree with. However, particularly with car usage, that would vary between regional New South Wales and outer suburban Sydney as opposed to the inner west and the central business district.

Mr GIJSELMAN: Absolutely.

Mr GREG WARREN: How would the NRMA propose to segregate or itemise those areas, given that you support that holistic approach?

Mr GIJSELMAN: We support the development of a strategy from the Government that covers the entire network or net area that commuters are moving in, which includes those inner city areas but certainly also areas around Campbelltown, down to Wollongong, up to the Central Coast and out west. To your point, how commuters use mass transit systems in those areas is quite different. If you are travelling from the Central Coast, you certainly need long-hour park and ride facilities. If you are in the inner west, for example, a different option is needed—shorter point-to-point availability. To your point, those are the issues that should be considered in a data-driven strategic approach as the Government considers how to move forward in terms of commuter parking.

Mr GREG WARREN: My second question is about Divvy. The NRMA is very encouraging of an Opal enabled access to commuter car parks. The trial up on the northern beaches with B-Line was for 18 hours per day or something like that, I think, for commuter car parks. I was not sure if that 18 hours was per day or per week. My question is around the relationship between Divvy or an Opal enabled use to access a commuter car park and actually being a commuter. For example, if someone goes to a commuter car park and uses their Opal card to get through the boom gate, they do one of two things: they get on a train, go to the city, go to work, come back, get in their car and go home; or they go to the shopping centre across the road, come back, put their groceries in the car and drive home. Does the NRMA have a view as to how the mechanics of that would work in terms of charges and rates or penalties, for want of a better word, in terms of someone who did not use the commuter car park to actually commute on public transport?

Mr GIJSELMAN: Let's not call them penalties; let's call them price signals, perhaps. We are an investor in Divvy, I think it is worth noting. I said that earlier to the Committee. We do not own Divvy, I think it is worth noting. We had an opportunity to step back and have a slightly more pure policy perspective rather than just as an operator of car park technology. Our view is that commuter car parking is best utilised by commuters, and local parking options provided either commercially or by local councils is best used for smaller journeys.

Mr GREG WARREN: I understand that, but from a fiscal perspective how does the system work out who is legitimately using that car park for commuting purposes or non-commuting purposes?

Mr TAYLOR: My understanding is that you would swipe in with your Opal card. When you then take a public transport trip there is a signal within the system that says you have gone on public transport recently or within the time period. Then when you swipe out with your Opal card, if you have not taken a public transport trip there would be another mechanism in place—some sort of charge to allow you to exit the parking lot.

Mr GIJSELMAN: You need to link the boom gate at the park with the swipe-on at the station.

Mr GREG WARREN: That is something that occurs with Divvy—I know it is not your system; it is an external party.

Mr TAYLOR: Yes, my understanding is that it has that capability. They have tested its ability to read an Opal card. There are technology solutions available which the Government is looking at in terms of the B-Line that it could implement that would detect whether a public transport trip has occurred within the time period they determine. If it is 18 hours, they would say, "Yes, this person has gone on a public transport trip. They can exit," or, "No, they haven't." Then there would be the fee mechanism put in place, whatever it might be, to discourage non-commuters from using those facilities or charging them the rate that they should be charged for using those spaces.

Ms JODI McKAY: Do you believe the current way the Government determines which commuter car parks to build and which not to build is largely politically motivated rather than evidence based? I think that is what you hint at in your submission.

Mr GIJSELMAN: I am just going to leave aside the view in relation to where they have been built previously, but certainly our view would be the population projections for Sydney are reasonably reliable. There are a range of experts—we are not them, but there are a range of experts available. The Government should be using the best evidence base to determine where to put commuter car parking.

Ms JODI McKAY: In your submission you say that there needs to be a merit-based methodology—which means there is not currently, because you are asking for one. How do you believe the Government determines where to build commuter car parks now?

Mr GIJSELMAN: That is not necessarily what we are saying. What I would say to you honestly is—

The CHAIR: Could I suggest that you used the words "supports merit-based methodology", not "needs"?

Mr GIJSELMAN: What I would say to you is that I do not know how the Government currently selects commuter car parking sites. We would support evidence-based determination of that selection.

Ms JODI McKAY: Transparency around it?

Mr GIJSELMAN: Absolutely.

The CHAIR: Since we are talking about how we are choosing commuter car parks and the location of them, your submission says that you support the New South Wales Government's approach of providing adjacent park and ride facilities at transport hubs. One of the other submissions says they would support putting commuter car parks within a five-minute to 10-minute walk of the transport hub—this view was based on the idea that having it any closer would congest the thoroughfare to and from the stations. How do you feel about that proposal? Why would you support the furthering of providing commuter car parking adjacent to the station?

Mr GIJSELMAN: In many instances you would need to have parking facilities closer than a 10-minute walk. Certainly if you are less mobile or have other concerns such as luggage, children and so on, there is a range of reasons you would not want to walk 10 minutes in order to get to a train station. Our view is that there needs to be effective and proper design consideration when selecting commuter car parking in terms of stations. There are always improvements that can be made in that sense, but our position is that it needs to be as adjacent as possible, bearing in mind the impacts that will have on traffic.

The CHAIR: As there are no further questions, thank you very much for appearing before the Committee and answering our questions. As we mentioned earlier, if further questions arise, we will provide them to you on notice and you will have two weeks to return those to us.

Mr GIJSELMAN: Thank you, Chair and Committee.

Mr TAYLOR: Thank you.

(The witnesses withdrew)

ALAN STEWART, Director, PeopleTrans, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today to give evidence. Before we proceed do you have any questions about the Committee process?

Mr STEWART: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a brief opening statement before the commencement of questions?

Mr STEWART: Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into, and hopefully assist with, improving the current policy on commuter car parking in New South Wales. PeopleTrans was established in 2012 with the philosophy of improving the quality of people's lives through excellence in transport planning and engineering. Another key reason was to help make Sydney's transport capabilities commensurate with the world-class city that it should be. To do this requires, in our view, a suite of transport policies, no matter how small, which provide certainty and confidence to the public and industry professionals—certainty that the policy aims are required or relevant, and confidence that any public money spent on implementation of the policy provides value.

Our submission to this inquiry aimed to be constructive by highlighting some of the current issues around the planning and implementation of commuter car parking in New South Wales. The issues highlighted by us are based primarily on our practical experience of working on commuter car parking projects in New South Wales. I guess the main issues are the lack of information or transparency around the planning of commuter car parking and the one-policy-fits-all approach, particularly in relation to non-user charging in the context of the size and type of centre where it is provided. I welcome the opportunity to expand on or clarify anything provided in our submission.

The CHAIR: I might kick off with some questions around the one-policy-fits-all approach that you just mentioned. What areas would benefit from different policy approaches if you were to expand on that concept?

Mr STEWART: One of the main things that we have experienced is that the planning of commuter car parking is typically geared to transport hubs—transport nodes. It does not necessarily distinguish between a regional centre in outer parts of New South Wales as opposed to more urban development centres. Our experience of working on these projects shows that what that means—particularly around the free, non-charging aspect—is that where you are providing commuter car parking, for example, in a town centre, there are different users, such as staff who work there and people who shop. The use of commuter car parking is meant to promote commuters travelling from their homes to their places of work to reduce the miles of driving all the way to their end destinations.

What happens is that there is abuse of the commuter parking facilities. Hundreds of spaces are provided at the station but you get staff that work in the centre, shoppers and commuters all using it. So it really diminishes the intention; whereas in outer areas the town centres are away from the station or the transport hub, so you literally only have a transport hub, and commuter parking. That type of situation is much more effective. So the issue is around the elements of where it is and whether or not it is free.

The CHAIR: You just touched on the concept of free parking. Your submission effectively states that this is not your preferred free structure for commuters. Your statement now was around the movement of consumers but did not necessarily touch on why you would support a removal of a fee-free structure as opposed to linking an Opal card to the passenger's movement. Given that you can restrict access to a transport or a commuter car park by tapping on and off and not necessarily implementing a charge, why do you believe that we should not have free car parks moving forward?

Mr STEWART: Our submission was really saying that there needs to be a fee structure of some sort. Whether it is linked to an Opal card or a straight charge it needs to be a paid system. I think Transport for NSW are trialing the Opal cards—to try and implement that system. My only comment about the Opal card arrangement is that I am not sure how it will work because everyone, these days, has Opal cards. So even if you are not travelling to a centre to catch the train the method of charging is by Opal card. Most people have an Opal card so it would be hard to manage that or enforce it.

Ms JODI McKAY: You also speak about incentive subsidies. Following on from the Chair's comments, it is not just a fee but you are advocating for some sort of incentive? What sort of incentive do you envisage?

Mr STEWART: The incentive is just really encouraging people that are actually genuine commuters that the charge is subsidised: That is to say, if you go there or you just park there because it is convenient for where you work, those people should be charged a much higher fee than if they were genuine commuters catching the train to wherever their end destination is.

Ms JODI McKAY: I am sorry, I am a bit confused. You would advocate for a parking fee on all commuter car parks. Is that what you are saying?

Mr STEWART: Correct.

Ms JODI McKAY: But there is a subsidy or an incentive for someone who is actually commuting.

Mr STEWART: Correct.

Ms JODI McKAY: But anyone can use a commuter car park. Is that what you are saying?

Mr STEWART: Yes.

Ms JODI McKAY: I am a bit confused, I am sorry.

Mr STEWART: No, that is exactly what I am saying. The reason I am saying that is that if you provide enough of a charge, it is a disincentive for those non-commuters to use it.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to Ms McKay's point, I note you refer to the parking space levy [PSL] and I further note that PeopleTrans views that the policy seems to provide appropriate levels of funding for commuter parking facilities across New South Wales with a positive outcome. In that case, are you proposing that there should be any kind of fees, charges or any other mechanism as a second source of revenue? If so, what is PeopleTrans' view, if that were to exist, how that would be used? You do support alternative sources of revenue?

Mr STEWART: Correct.

Mr GREG WARREN: Or are you suggesting that the PSL be reviewed? Are you looking at other revenues in addition to the PSL? Ultimately, if you were a consumer, you could effectively argue, "Well, I actually have already paid for it." Do you understand what I am saying?

Mr STEWART: Correct. From my understanding, PSL delivers about \$100 million per annum—something in that range.

Ms JODI McKAY: Yes, it does.

Mr STEWART: We worked on the Transport Access Program [TAP] as a company which was investing something like \$700 million over four years, so it was significantly more than that —

Ms JODI McKAY: But you still have both.

Mr STEWART: You still have both.

Ms JODI McKAY: You still have the parking space levy and you have the TAP funding, which is how it is funded currently.

Mr STEWART: Correct.

Ms JODI McKAY: Although there is no transparency in that.

Mr STEWART: Correct. But I guess my view on charging for the facility and where that money should be spent is that there seems to be enough revenue already to support the implementation of these facilities around New South Wales. I would say that the money and I would think the PSL advocates for that money to be spent on alternative modes of transport facilities.

Ms JODI McKAY: As well, yes.

Mr STEWART: So the feeder links to the stations. PSL really focused on that from the outset. Commuter parking seems to have been a bolt-on coming secondary to that intent, but I would say that rather than it being a secondary source of revenue for commuter parking it should be invested in active travel modes, like walking facilities, biking facilities and other facilities that get you to the station.

Mr GREG WARREN: That leads me to my second question, which relates to your opening remarks. PeopleTrans support a metropolitan-wide parking plan. Is that funding model part of that plan? How would you propose the Government would develop a plan in terms of the mechanisms of it? How would government best approach a metropolitan-wide parking plan as proposed by PeopleTrans?

Mr STEWART: That proposal is not per se our proposal. There was a metropolitan parking plan developed by the Department of Planning some time ago in a draft format. It was never released. This is what I understand.

Mr GREG WARREN: Did you say it was never released?

Mr STEWART: It was never released to anybody. It was really people in the industry who knew of it. This could be as far back as 10 years ago. It was anticipated that it was going to be released and that it would be a really valuable thing. The reason that really we are talking about this is that parking is a complex area. Commuter parking is only one component of the whole picture. At the moment it is very difficult to work on projects when there is a policy on commuter parking and a policy on timed parking and a policy on general parking. If we had it all under one umbrella—we are not talking about details. We are talking just about principles.

Mr GREG WARREN: PeopleTrans ideally would support an integrated public transport solution and a relationship between parking, bus, train and roads. Is that what you are ultimately saying?

Mr STEWART: It is not so much about integration. It is really about how you tackle parking as a discipline in itself. I think I mentioned in our submission that a lot of councils have their own individual plans but they are not based on a New South Wales standard or an overarching umbrella document. It could be just the person that is working on it at the time; it is his view, and that is how the policy develops internally within the local government area [LGA]. The second part of your question is about how the Government should go about doing that. I do not have the answers to those questions, really. We have ideas but that is a much bigger exercise in itself. But given that someone already has attempted to do it, I would imagine there is already some sort of framework in place.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Your submission highlights the parking plans of the Willoughby City Council and the council of the City of Sydney as some examples. Do those specific plans reference commuter car parking in their areas?

Mr STEWART: They do. Probably Willoughby one of the better examples. The City of Sydney one is a bit more high level and broad. It does to a degree. It is more around the planning principles of the 400 metre and the 800 metre radius around stations and how that should be treated for parking management. If you live in an area within 800 metres of a station, as a person who is going to move in there you would understand from that policy that potentially you would have timed parking in your street with an exemption to the restriction, but there would be a lot of activity in your street.

I guess the councils produce these things because they get a lot of angst, particularly in the area of parking. It is really if the community understands what is happening and there is an open document that they can reference, then the views that they have and the anger that they may feel are placated. But coming back to your question of does it deal with commuter parking, I am sure it does. I have not looked at it in detail, but it would be all part and parcel of those types of plans.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: It has long been policy of a number of councils that those who live close by to major transport hubs are not entitled to on-street parking. They do not have access to resident permits, only to any parking that is provided on site. What is your view on that?

Mr STEWART: My view on that is, again, what I come back to: There is an individual policy on resident parking schemes so it sits in isolation. It is a process that you go through and it varies across LGAs. Some councils will say, "We will allow you to have three permits regardless of how many off-street spaces you have", and others will say, "You get nothing if you have two spaces on site."

It is so varied and so confusing that, depending on where you live which could change if you are moving house, there is a different set of rules. I have had intimate involvement in these types of schemes. As a general view, nobody is entitled to on-street parking. There seems to be view that there is an entitlement to have it—it is public land, public space. That is a deep-rooted thing that has been around for a long time.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Are there major cost implications for not having a consistent policy statewide with regards to parking schemes?

Mr STEWART: There absolutely is.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Could you elaborate?

Mr STEWART: I do not know your background, but you would probably know that a lot of these things are politically driven. Some of the changes that are made within local government are made at a local government level. The guidelines on resident parking schemes are guidelines. They sometimes say, "You shall," or, "You must", but they are open to interpretation, and that is why these changes have been able to be made.

The CHAIR: You mentioned local government areas. Do certain communities take on their own characteristics and cultures? You are talking about a one size fits all, but certain communities have very different traits. You have talked about paid parking. There is no paid parking in the entire LGA my seat is within, so we do not have a culture of paying for parking, which is very common in other parts of Sydney where people think it is bizarre that we do not have that culture. How can a blanket approach be applied to everyone?

Mr STEWART: I am trying to say that there needs to be a degree of consistency. I agree completely that every area is different—the characteristics are different. When it comes to commuter car parking, each centre, each station, is completely different, and so when you are planning for these things, each location needs to be planned for based on its make-up. I am trying to advocate for some overarching guidance that provides some level of consistency as a starting point. A lot of the things that you mentioned have a starting point that is local government led, so that is fine. But New South Wales is a State, and there needs to be some overarching guidance. At the moment there is not a lot of it.

Ms JODI McKAY: Following on from the Chair's question, are you saying that at the moment there are no guidelines for local government to consider in regard to commuter car parking—within a local environmental plan [LEP]?

Mr STEWART: Yes. I am not aware of any guidelines—

Ms JODI McKAY: Are you saying that at the moment local governments determine their own parking strategy, based on the needs of shoppers and residents and not of commuters?

Mr STEWART: Yes, primarily it is all to do with the management of the resource that they are responsible for as an authority.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to that, would you accept that as part of any development or redevelopment master plan they should be a requirement for a parking allocation within the council's development control plan [DCP]? That would then have to go to Gateway in the Department of Planning and Environment or, perhaps, the Minister, depending on the style and the value of the parking. Would that provide a mechanism for a holistic approach?

Mr STEWART: Potentially, but I am not sure how the DCP as a guiding development principle for parking, which is associated with the development particularly, would spread into the wider context.

Mr GREG WARREN: Would there be the capacity through the Gateway process, pending the provisions in the LEP or the DCP of the relevant council, to capture the data? Would PeopleTrans propose that the consideration of that would be part of the planning approval process?

Mr STEWART: Are you talking specifically about commuter parking?

Mr GREG WARREN: Yes, commuter parking in reference to a development or redevelopment of a central business district that includes a transport hub or node.

Mr STEWART: I guess that would be quite a valuable source, yes.

Ms JODI McKAY: Do you have any idea how the Government currently determines where it will locate commuter car parking?

Mr STEWART: I do have some idea, having been involved in the process of being a consultant at the other end. Probably more relevantly, I was involved directly in the Transport Access Program. It was not that clear, but I think it comes back to the point of each area being different. The model of the Transport for NSW was that planning and programs determined the location, the numbers and the make-up of commuter parking, which was then passed over to TAP, which was really an implementation arm.

Ms JODI McKAY: Which has the funding.

Mr STEWART: Through contracts TAP implemented the facilities. To answer your question directly, I only know of our own methods that we have adopted to determine more the quantum of parking and—how much was required—to meet existing and future demand, as opposed to the locations. The locations were

generally set for us. My only knowledge of how the locations are planned is that I know that it is done and that there is a process in place for doing it, but I could not tell you exactly what that was.

Ms JODI McKAY: What role do local members of Parliament have in lobbying on behalf of their communities—that is, a decision made on political grounds rather than evidence-based?

Mr STEWART: What I put in our submission was that when you are planning for commuter parking, there is a whole range of factors that you need to consider. It could be the size and the type of the transport node; it could be the frequency of services to and from the end destination; it could be the availability of space—there is a range of factors.

Ms JODI McKAY: They are not transparent; we do not know what they are.

Mr STEWART: Yes, that is right, at the moment we do not. There may be someone in Transport for NSW that does, but we are not aware of that. Coming back to your question, one of the contributing factors in the decision-making should be the local and the community need, even though sometimes that railroads the process. I am intimately involved in a project in Eastwood at the moment, which is a politically driven project and just very recently a new local government was appointed and decided that what was proposed and in progress is no longer supported. It can be detrimental in one respect and very helpful in another.

Ms JODI McKAY: That was the location, rather than not wanting it.

Mr STEWART: It was, but there have been about four or five adjustments.

Ms JODI McKAY: There was an announcement over the weekend of about \$25 million for that commuter car park, which has been given to council to develop rather than Transport for NSW.

Mr STEWART: The difficulty is that it is not land that is owned by the State Government, so they are at the mercy of the land owners. In a lot of cases, the land is not right at the station or above the station—

Ms JODI McKAY: At least you have council and the State Government working together on this, which comes back to what you were saying in regard to Transport for NSW operating in isolation with planning involvement, but not really understanding how they are determined.

Mr STEWART: But you never get anybody at a local government level knowing what goes on in the planning of these things at Transport for NSW. I think the community can play a role, because typically the community raises the need and then a process starts.

Ms JODI McKAY: Yes, and that is usually done through their MP, who lobbies for it.

Mr STEWART: It is just another one of the factors, not the determining factor.

The CHAIR: We talked earlier about incentivising commuters but your submission touched on GoGet, which we have not specifically asked you about today. What do you think the role of GoGet or similar services is in the ultimate transport puzzle, and how much access should such services have to our commuter car parking?

Mr STEWART: I do not think it is a major point in the debate. As designers or planners we know that you have to provide a certain percentage of disabled spaces, a certain percentage of bicycle parking, security and a number of general spaces. I think the GoGet argument is not so much linked to commuter parking as just another element of what you should provide in a facility. Because it follows the same principles of trying to encourage people not to drive as much and not to have car ownership, it is another one that adds value to the situation. Some people have said it is first mile-last mile, and there could be some value in that.

The CHAIR: What about ridesharing services? Do you support the idea of dedicating spaces in commuter car parks for pick-up and drop-off zones?

Mr STEWART: I have not given it much thought, but before arriving in this country I worked for Transport for London. Most of the station parking is priced. They would provide car sharing spaces. It was not really a costing thing; the incentive was that you got closer to the station if you were in a rideshare scheme. I think it is important, but it is another element of the whole puzzle as to what you provide. I do not know how much discussion or how much input you had in this inquiry around ridesharing, particularly in relation to spaces and what should be provided, but I would imagine that you perhaps had a lot. That is just a guess.

The CHAIR: The Committee has received evidence about Mobility as a Service, where commuters can use several different modes of transport to reach their destination. Can you comment on this idea and its merits?

Mr STEWART: What is the basis of that?

The CHAIR: Mobility as a Service. If you are unfamiliar with it, that is fine—you do not need to comment on it. It is merely something that has been in the other submissions.

Mr STEWART: I am unfamiliar with that.

Ms JODI McKAY: I have one final question with regard to the parking space levy. Obviously that is a source of funding as well as the Transport Access Program for commuter car parks. Do you think it is working in discouraging people from using cars rather than just being a way of raising revenue? Depending what your answer is, do you support it being expanded? I think there are currently five or six precincts.

Mr STEWART: That is right. I know there has been a lot of discussion about expanding it—

Ms JODI McKAY: We are waiting for the results of a review that has just finished.

Mr STEWART: That is right. I think the tax is relatively effective, particularly in the centres it is in at the moment. No-one likes a tax. At the end of the day, it is a tax on business—

Ms JODI McKAY: We pay it here, so we do not like it either!

Mr STEWART: I do think it is effective, though. It gets confusing, though. I tried to explain in the submission that, if you think about the centres like Chatswood, St Leonards, the city and North Sydney, it does encourage people not to drive to their businesses because for a lot of businesses it is an additional cost. That on one hand works. The money then is given to the commuter parking program, and then you have situations where commuter parking is free in centres and people who live in those centres are driving, so it is encouraging them to drive to those centres. There is something fundamentally wrong with that. As far as expanding into other centres, Sydney is in an absolute growth phase. I am not sure whether Parramatta is included in the PSL—

Ms JODI McKAY: It is not.

Mr STEWART: I would say it would be a good candidate when we are talking about cities of cities—the airport, the new airport and Parramatta as the next really big city. I would say in a lot of the centres the principles are still the same, so I think it would be effective in those centres.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. The Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing. Your replies will form part of your evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Mr STEWART: Yes, absolutely.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing today and thank you again for your time.

(The witness withdrew)

(Short adjournment)

JESSIKA LOEFSTEDT, Manager Public Policy, Uber, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: Do you have any questions about the hearing process?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Yes, if I could. Thank you very much for inviting me here today, I really appreciate the opportunity to appear. I am pleased that we have a chance to speak about some of the policy challenges that are facing this State and how technology and ridesharing can make a positive contribution in this area. On that note, I want to start by saying that we welcome the New South Wales Government's reform in the point-to-point transport sector. It has been a very thorough reform process and I want to acknowledge the bipartisan support that we have seen in this Parliament for ridesharing. I think it is fair to say that New South Wales has led the reform agenda in this area, not just here nationally but globally.

As I said earlier, I am the head of public policy for the Australia and New Zealand region. When I started at Uber a bit over two years ago we were just 37 people in an office in Pyrmont and we were trying to make a difference to people getting around cities in Australia. The Uber technology is now used in over 600 cities around the world. At its core we use technology to connect drivers and riders. It is a very simple concept for those of you who have used it—hopefully everyone, but may not quite be there yet. You simply press a button on your smart phone and request to send to the closest online driver, and a car arrives to take you to where you want to go. As long as you have a full driver licence, an exemplary driving record, a good criminal history, and a vehicle that passes an annual inspection, you can become a ridesharing driver here in New South Wales. The ease and simplicity of the New South Wales regulatory reform agenda means the benefits of ridesharing can be easily realised by many.

For riders it is about being able to easily get a safe, reliable, affordable ride from A to B at the push of a button. For drivers it means being able to access flexible income using your personal vehicle. We now have more than a million people in New South Wales catching rides through the Uber platform with about 20,000 drivers partnering with us to provide those rides. In Sydney approximately 10 per cent of all trips start and end within 200 metres of a public transport station. What that means is that one in 10 Uber trips already organically are being used as the first-mile solution for public transport commuters. For others, Uber is being used to fill the gap of existing public transport.

In Australia we did some research about a year ago with Deloitte, which showed that 60 per cent of all trips start and end in a public transport desert and almost half of all trips are one way, implying that for some suburbs, for at least part of the day, public transport is not available to cover either the outbound or return leg of a journey that someone takes. In this way ridesharing complements public transport where reliable services are unavailable. Ridesharing provides a flexible and scalable solution to the first-mile transport problem, connecting riders from their door to a transport hub.

I am pleased to be here today to talk about one of the issues we spend a lot of time discussing; that is, getting people more effectively from A to B in a safe, reliable and affordable way. Commuter car parks play a critical role in this mobility puzzle. Historically, commuter car parks have been part of an effective solution to the first- and last-mile problem, which is the problem that most public transport hubs face because most commuters live outside a one-mile radius of the hub.

Car parks, train stations and other hubs have enabled workers to commute with mobility or using multi-modal transport or driving their car a short distance before catching a train, bus or ferry. However, in recent years the growing commuter demand in Sydney has meant that this solution to the first- and last-mile problem is often inadequate or at least prohibitively expensive. While community car parks will always have a place in the urban and suburban transport mix, we need to ask ourselves how we can make sure they are used better or more effectively.

Some governments around the world have started turning to on-demand transport solutions that can adapt flexibly to commuter behaviour and provide a service that is tailored to the individual. The ways people think about transport are also changing. What we are seeing across the State is that it is no longer the private car versus public transport or even the private car versus ridesharing; it is about how we get most effectively from A to B in a reliable, safe and affordable way. Across the globe we see mobility as a service taking off through apps like TripCo and Citymapper, on which people can plan their trip using a number of different modes. It is not public transport versus the car versus ridesharing versus taxis. It is about people being at point A and wanting to

go to point B, and how they get there as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Those are the things that excite Uber. I am here today to speak about the ways in which technology can help us to reconceptualise mobility and to get more people on to public transport. I am happy to take questions.

The CHAIR: Thank you for your very interesting submission. I am interested in the statistics you provided about the changing nature of car ownership and car use around Sydney. If you have data in this area, I am particularly interested in the demographic that Uber in any of its versions—whether it be Driver Destination or uberPOOL—is now tapping into and the uptake rate in certain segments of the population.

Ms LOEFSTEDT: The best way to think about it is that in the early stages we had uberX, which is the ridesharing product. We have run it in New South Wales for the past three-and-a-bit years; it started in April 2014. Initially we saw a trend of early adopters, which is usually what you get with new technology. They are the savvy technology people and they push the boundaries a bit. Initially we saw a strong trend in the 18 to 25 to 30 age group. They were the early adopters of the platform in the early stages. It has developed a lot further since then. Internally we call them the second- and third-generation adopters. That is the 30- to 45-plus age group. That gets a little more interesting. Many of the early adopters were getting their families and parents to take it up. We now see a lot of seniors taking it up because of the ease of being able to push a button. I do not have a specific demographic breakdown, but the vast majority of people who use Uber are still in the 18- to 35-year bracket. We are now seeing enormous uptake by more mature people across the board.

The CHAIR: You mentioned the Driver Destination program and how it works within Uber. Can you elaborate on the frequency of service use and how often commuters use this type of ridesharing app to travel from home to commuter car parks instead of going the entire way to their destination?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: We launched Driver Destination about 18 months ago. It is a feature within the app that allows users to pick their destination twice a day. The example in the submission is a good one and we have seen a lot of uptake in this area. It can be used by people who travel to the city and back each day because they work in the city. They might live in the Hills, for example, at Baulkham Hills. Many people are signing up as an Uber driver and are utilising this functionality to subsidise their trip to and from the city. Perhaps I should have used Campbelltown or Blacktown as an example.

In the context of the tolls on the M2 and the Lane Cove Tunnel going into the city, if you get a pick-up three or four times a week you have helped to offset those fixed costs. The submission alludes to the fact that for a proportion of people one in 10 trips are already organically to and from public transport destinations. That is slightly different from this product. This product is very much about subsidising trips to and from work. Campbelltown is good example. Many people who live there work in and around the airport and come into the city that way. They turn on the app in the morning five or 10 minutes before they are ready to leave their house, and if they get a trip that is good. Frankly, they are not fussed either way. It is nice when they do and sometimes it will not happen. However, it is an option and it helps them to utilise their vehicle more effectively.

The CHAIR: What about uberPOOL?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: We run the uberPOOL in more than 100 markets globally. You have two people going in the same direction. For example, I am in Coogee and I am going to the city, and there is someone at Queens Park going to a similar destination. What the technology does is align those two trips. You have to opt in to that as a product. It aligns those two trips. You are on the same route but it would be a diversion of a couple of minutes, so I will go and pick that person up and then we will continue our journey. That is how that one works. At the moment we do not have that available in Australia. They are usually available in more mature markets, which is what we call markets where you have a certain volume or certain times of day when you would get more of that direct traffic going in certain directions.

What we are starting to see in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane are really strong commuting patterns. I usually use Bondi Junction and North Bondi as a very good thing to look at in the morning. It is almost like a lemming train of Ubers going from North Bondi into Bondi Junction. Where it is happening organically, we feel pretty confident that over time we will be able to offer those types of products.

The CHAIR: Do you support the idea of reserving space in commuter car parks for Uber vehicles—I suppose similar to the idea of having waiting bays at Sydney Airport?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: That is an interesting question. I guess the whole premise of Uber and the way that those vehicles are utilised is that they should not be statically sitting in a car park. But there are a couple of ways of looking at that. One is: do you even need to drive your car into the commuter car park in the first place or is there a more effective way of getting there which is on par in terms of price point, whether that is what you pay to maintain and hold your vehicle throughout the year or whether that is what you pay at the car park itself? That

is one way of putting it—could you leave your car at home and not even have to take it into the commuter car park?

The second way of thinking about it is if you say to yourself, yes, I actually need to take my car into wherever I am going because I need to whip around after work and do shopping, pick up kids or whatever it is. Then I guess the conceptual question for us is: Could you turn your vehicle into an Uber vehicle as you go there so that you are picking up people as you are going to the commuter car park in the first place? Those are the ways we think about it. Going back to your question about whether or not we believe you would have designated holding bays, that is an option. But at the end of the day I do not think that is what the end product would look like. We would want a much more dynamic product. We would look at a different way of conceptualising that utility as opposed to just creating static infrastructure around it as well.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: On that point that the Chair made with regard to allocating spots within commuter car parks for rideshares, the software platforms which operate allow for incredible things to develop and happen. Could there be a case for a rideshare driver, if they were to make X number of trips to a commuter car park in the morning before they actually utilise it, to get discounted use of the commuter car park?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Yes, I think that is a great idea. Those are the types of things we could look at, given we have the opportunity to geofence and not necessarily track but certainly know where someone has been and where they are going. As you say, if you spend an hour before you actually park your car and jump on the train yourself to actually funnel people in there, that would be a great option and it is something we could practically look at if there is the opportunity to work with Government on what that price point is in the context of making sure that they get priority. Yes, I think that is a good idea.

Ms JODI McKAY: I have two questions. This inquiry is about commuter car parking, but what you are advocating for is a way not to have cars parked at commuter hubs. I am just trying to get this right in my head. What you are advocating for is the Uber destination, of course, and then the uberX model, which is about sharing a ride to a common destination. In regard to commuter car parking, apart from those two things, does commuter car parking in your world need to exist?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Yes. I alluded to that in my opening statement. It is an important part of the transport mix. I do not think we can say, "Out with the old; in with the new," and you never have to do it again. That would be a little bit naïve. We know how people utilise their vehicles, whether it is pre or post work hours. We need to recognise that there is certainly play for commuter car parks to have. From where we are sitting and what we have seen over the years, and this is not a unique problem to New South Wales or even Australia—we are seeing similar things in Victoria and other cities right across the world—we need to ask ourselves, "Could we actually make them work better?" What we do know is that you build them and they will come—that is, the cars will come. The problem there is that we continue building static infrastructure without thinking about how we make sure people use that infrastructure more effectively.

There are a couple of good examples in New South Wales at the moment. Leppington is one of them. Early on they built the infrastructure to be there for kiss-and-ride facilities and commuter car parks. What we know for a fact is the South West Rail Link opened up and it was a matter of months before the commuter car parks were basically overflowing. Last year I went down there and had a look. It is interesting to see because it is not even orderly parking any more. It is very much overflowing at the edges. For us it is more about thinking: "Okay. We have limited road corridors. We have limited infrastructure." Strathfield is a great example where there is very limited infrastructure and land value is exceptionally high. In those types of situations, how do we reconceptualise how we use them? The point made by the member for Coogee is a good one: Can we as the Government and the private sector work together to help in certain types of behaviour changes and then incentivise them in that way to get a better deal?

Ms JODI McKAY: That brings me to my next question, which is about integration with the Opal system—I think you are advocating for that. I am not sure I am supportive of that with Uber, but how would that work? Would you tap on to Uber with Opal?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: No. The way the Uber app works is that you have a number of different payment systems in the back end. You can pay with credit card, debit card or even PayPal. What we have seen in some other markets is basically where mobility as a service apps have really taken off and you get that end-to-end journey and an end-to-end journey payment system as well. What a potential Opal integration could look like—and this is something that would need to be fleshed out in a lot more detail—is basically having the Opal as a direct debit option as part of your app back-end solution. So you can basically choose whether to pay with credit card, Opal, debit card or PayPal—it would sit as part of that back-end solution.

Ms JODI McKAY: And would there be subsidies or incentives to use that?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Again, that would all be open for discussion. I guess the way you could think about it, if that was something that you wanted to engage in, if you know that someone lives and works on a particular route and there would be a way to have them go from their front door to a train station to where they work in one clean transaction—we have this already with the Opal card in terms of mode shifts—you could get an incentivised version of doing that. That is the type of thing that could well be discussed, but obviously that is a little bit into the future.

The CHAIR: Since we are talking about partnering, you mentioned in your submission the arrangement or trial that you had with the Australian Capital Territory Government in relation to night rides. Would you like to tell the Committee a little more about the trial and whether you have had any feedback or results from the trial?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Yes. This was a trial we ran down in Canberra last year before Christmas. The Australian Capital Territory Government through Transport Canberra run what is called a night rider bus. That is just for the month of December and it is to get people home safely during the silly season. This was a trial we ran last year. The year before that they ran a lot of small buses, doing a lot of nipping around to the different suburbs of Canberra and going into every nook and cranny. They found that utilisation of the last legs on a lot of those trips was very low. So they issued a tender last year, basically saying, "Does anyone have any other ideas about how we could do this at a lower capital cost—that is, for the buses—plus lower op-ex, or operational costs of the buses?" We went to them with a proposal, which was basically looking at how we could partner with them. So, along three trunk routes in Canberra we basically geo-fenced around the bus stops. So if you jumped off there and basically pressed a button you would get a ride from that bus stop to your front door, subsidised by us as well as the Australian Capital Territory Government—\$5 from us and \$5 from the ACT Government—which drove the cost point down quite significantly.

The CHAIR: Do you know how many people used any of the buses in the month of December?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Now you are testing my memory. I probably should have brought those statistics with me.

The CHAIR: You can take the question on notice and come back to us.

Ms LOEFSTEDT: I might do that. It was definitely in the hundreds. It was a very short trial. As I said, it just ran for those four weekends, and it just ran on a Friday and Saturday night. Those were, basically, the parameters of it. I might take that question on notice and come back to you.

The CHAIR: Was any data collected from the consumers at that point about their satisfaction with the service and their acceptance of the pricing point?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: We obviously used the five-star rating system that is built in, at all times. That was part of the feedback process that riders went through. One of the early indicators was in terms of how we get to people and how we market this as a product, because it is quite new and quite novel. On Friday and Saturday nights after the pubs close there might have been a couple of people who were struggling a little bit understanding exactly what they were doing! But such is life. The longer those types of things are in place the easier it will be for people to adopt and pick them up.

The CHAIR: Do you think that this could be a desirable service during peak hour in Sydney?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Peak hour?

The CHAIR: Do you have any other ideas about it?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: I think it is an interesting concept. It comes back to what we are trying to achieve here. Peak hour is one thing; there are a number of different ways of looking at this. I think it needs to be mapped out through different trial phases because I do not think one size fits all throughout any metropolitan areas or any particular routes. So I think we should look at it in bite-sized chunks and identify a couple of areas where it could work—because we are seeing this type of behaviour happening organically anyway—and then figure out a way of working with government to achieve the key outcome, which is safe rides and, importantly, having people leave the car at home in the first place.

The CHAIR: Do you want to tell the Committee about ways in which you have partnered with local government?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Local government is still very much a work in progress. Here in Australia we are having ongoing conversations with all levels of government, from the Federal Government all the way down to local governments, but it is very much a work in progress. In the United States we have done a couple of interesting trials, especially in Jersey, where we partnered with one of the local municipalities around a

community car park that they were going to build. They basically said, "We do not want to take this capital cost on. What can you guys do to provide rides to the extent we would see this community car park utilised at?" So there we had that type of partnership, which is going exceptionally well.

In Innisfail in Canada we have done a similar thing. Basically the municipal government said, "We will have to buy 15 buses and run a public transport network, which will cost us this much in terms of capital up-front expenditure and this much in operational costs. What can you guys do to utilise the network that you already have on our streets to get the same commuter benefits and the same outcome?" There they have basically gone for a straight ridesharing product. They have not even gone down the route of public transport. They made an informed decision not to invest in a public transport network. Basically, they said, "We can subsidise rides to this extent and still keep our capital and operational costs much lower over time."

The CHAIR: In your submission you state that self-driving technology is imminent. What are the benefits and risks of the Government's operating fleets and having on-demand, self-driving vehicles to meet consumer demand versus ridesharing services such as Uber?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: I hope I did not say that it was imminent; that might have been stretching it a little bit. I think self-driving cars is obviously the next frontier when we think about mobility. It is still probably 15 or 20 years before we see self-driving vehicles on our roads. But if we think about the changing behaviour—this is what we put in the submission—and the way that people conceptualise transport here, as well, this is a real opportunity. The way we look at ridesharing is that it is a kind of 1.0 version of what self-driving can be in the medium to long term, which is the 2.0 version. What you have to achieve in order to get good utilisation or a good autonomous vehicle model is that mode change from not having your own private vehicle. Looking around the room, if we all had our own autonomous vehicles that would not make too much sense, but if all of us could jump into two or three of them then the productivity and efficiency benefits would be enormous.

The way we look at it is that ridesharing helps drive that behavioural change. We are seeing that in particular in the younger demographic, where people do not bother to get their own driver licences any more. They find they can go and get a ride from where they are to where they want to go. That is the way we think about the future of autonomous vehicles. It is super important that people get into the mindset of sharing rides and being in the same vehicles, and not owning their own vehicles. That is where you can see some of the huge benefits, medium to long term.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. The Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing. Your replies will form part of your evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Ms LOEFSTEDT: Absolutely, no problem at all.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much.

(The witness withdrew)

DARRYL JAMES MELLISH, Industry Adviser and Former Executive Director, BusNSW, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today to give evidence. Before we proceed do you have any questions about the hearing process?

Mr MELLISH: No.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a brief opening statement before the opening of questions?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, I would be happy to do that. As you know, the bus industry is very important to the community of New South Wales. On an average day it carries more passengers than the other modes put together. We understand that there are a lot of policies and procedures impacting on customer and commuter car parking in New South Wales. Four or five of those have been identified in some of the submissions. How the policies fit together with customer car parking still has a bit of evolution to go. The reference to digital technology in the Government's submission arguably shows that there is still a way to go in the regulatory, political and policy environment to understand how digital technology will change things in the future.

If anything, you would have to say there is probably going to be a reduced demand for parking and an increased demand for travel other than by car. As you can see from our submission we would like to see greater emphasis on using buses to travel to and from railway stations. We have certainly been very supportive of the Government's initiatives of on-demand trials. But when considering requests from operators for new services, the greater priority should be given to looking at the economic, social and environmental benefits of getting people out of their cars. For us a lot of the commuter car parks have caused localised congestion, which we view as a negative option when other outcomes could be considered. Thank you for the opportunity to make those opening comments.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I will begin by asking you about parking fees. Some submissions have recommended a small parking fee so that commuters are contributing towards their parking and to help to manage the accessibility of parking spaces. However, in your submission you actually recommend against charging commuters and you are one of the few who do. Can you please explain to the Committee why that is your position?

Mr MELLISH: We support a price being placed on parking at railway stations so that there is a proper value put on that opportunity. If you are looking to pay a fare for the bus or pay for parking, there should be a fee for parking.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to Madam Chair's point, I note in part (a) of the final paragraph you encourage a review of policy to ensure that public and active transport services feed rail services; in other words, you advocate for an integrated approach with bus and rail. Ultimately, what would BusNSW hope to be achieved from that? In getting people off roads and onto buses from home to the station to work, for example, and back on the train, onto the bus and then home, ultimately what model would you like to see as an outcome of any review of policy?

Mr MELLISH: We would like to see more frequent bus services, particularly at the peak times for stations, but we are also very supportive of on-demand trials that have been announced already in metropolitan areas. There are another five or six to come. We would like to see the outcome where people have a reliable and frequent bus service opportunity to take them to railway stations when they think it is cost effective and more efficient than using the car. As you may know, those on-demand trials are not really underway yet. The opportunity of having an app that allows you to get picked up and taken to a rail station will probably prove to be successful.

Mr GREG WARREN: Do you have any cost comparisons that draw a parallel between commuter car parking, which is capital investment, and operational cost? I acknowledge that to build a car park is a capital investment cost as opposed to a bus, which is an ongoing operational cost. Do you have any cost comparisons in place?

Mr MELLISH: No, I am sorry I do not. I think the University of Sydney has done some work on that, but the industry does not have that data.

The CHAIR: I will go back to the question I asked you incorrectly and modify it. My apologies.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you, yes.

The CHAIR: Why do you support paid parking at stations?

Mr MELLISH: We believe there should be a value placed on that facility and ability to park at a railway station. If there is a fee, which is a reasonably moderate fee that can be easily paid using Opal or some other method of payment, we would ask commuters to consider whether they would be better off to look at alternative options. We know now that lots of car parks are full at 7.00 a.m. They fill up the streets around suburbs and they block the buses getting in and out of the local area. I think there is a lot of evidence that there is congestion in localised areas where there are buses and commuter car parks trying to operate at the same time. You actually are worsening congestion.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to Madam Chair's point, do you think it would be fair for consumers and commuters to effectively argue that they have already paid for their parking as part of their fare to commute when combined with the PSL funding model?

Mr MELLISH: That is a great question.

Mr GREG WARREN: I caught the bus on the train this morning for other reasons. I commonly do that, but you could picture being a person who would argue that point.

Mr MELLISH: They could, yes.

Mr GREG WARREN: As a Committee, how could we respond to that?

Mr MELLISH: How much the user pays and how much the general taxpayer pays obviously is a difficult one both in fare setting and policy for parking fees. A lot of people do not value the use of their car. They think it is the same cost. They put petrol in it and they know the registration. But we are seeing an increasing debate about road pricing and valuing both access and time. I think the community would accept that it is reasonable to attach a charge to the facility.

Mr GREG WARREN: Would you also think that it is reasonable to accept that a more integrated, convenient and affordable synergy between buses and trains from end to end would be a greater incentive for higher use rather than any additional charge on commuter parking?

Mr MELLISH: Yes. I think that is fair comment. We have some sort of transfer discounts now but a truly integrated fare that would take into account the evidence of use of the parking facility is probably a good idea.

Mr GREG WARREN: Madam Chair will refer later on to further contributions on that synergy. Is that something that BusNSW would be comfortable in contributing to?

Mr MELLISH: We would, yes. We have written articles and policies on integration of fares with the development of the Opal system and some of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] determinations on fare structures. We feel that there is an opportunity to use that system to better promote the value of using public transport.

Mr GREG WARREN: Coming back to my original point about the review of policy in terms of hotspot areas, for want of a better term, and in relation to where commuters currently come from, the style of commuters and their social, economic and demographic backgrounds, there are higher proportions in other density areas throughout the suburban outer regions who would commonly benefit more from bus allocations linked to trains. Would you suggest that having that specific focus on these areas would be a benefit, or would you rather see a holistic or targeted approach?

Mr MELLISH: I think we have to be realistic and see that there are benefits and circumstances that warrant different solutions, but you can have a fares system and an integrated pricing policy and then have examples like further out from the central business district, for example, where it is warranted maybe to have a different solution because of the distances travelled. Just look at the density that is going on around railway stations now and some of the building approvals. It is clear that part of the urban strategy is to get high density in suburbs and around railway stations. For people in the outer suburbs, who often have two cars and need to commute, I think it is fair to have an approach that is fair for them as well.

Mr GREG WARREN: High-density development around rail corridors is an initiative of the Government. There is still a requirement for integration of commuter transport and a more diverse and targeted approach.

The CHAIR: I was interested in your comments about on-demand buses, because an on-demand bus trial will be conducted in my electorate. You provided two potential delivery models for on-demand bus services. Please expand on the two models you put forward and the benefits of each model.

Mr MELLISH: The existing feeder bus model is characterised by government contracts. It requires Transport for NSW to set the timetables, and the fare box goes back to Transport for NSW. You have a public transport system without a direct incentive for the operator to carry more people, because the fare box goes back to Transport for NSW, but there are key performance indicators for customer satisfaction, on-time running and complaints. The operators would like to see reduced congestion so that they could improve customer satisfaction and on-time running. That model is relatively new; it is a new generation of contracts from 2013.

I think we are trying to come to grips with how the other model will work in combination with the marketplace. This Committee has heard from Uber, and we know that the services are looking at ridesharing, automated vehicles and mobility as a service. The bus industry is fairly keen to trial and to operate in a highly competitive market environment for that last-mile operation, probably with small buses using their depots and fleet. I cannot give you an example of what the model will be, but our concern as an industry is that if it is partly subsidised for a year or two and then converted to a non-subsidised or market-driven service then we are not sure how it will operate in comparison with Uber or changes, for example, in the transport sector. I cannot effectively answer your question on the second model, but I know the trials, including the one in your area, will probably help.

The CHAIR: Have these models been trialled in other jurisdictions?

Mr MELLISH: I think some work has been done in the US, though I am certainly not an expert in that area but I have read some internet articles on it. From the bus industry's point of view, the cost of the drivers is probably half of the cost of the service. If drivers are waiting around, you often have minimum engagement provisions under the industrial provisions, which is why smaller vehicles tend to be used for on-demand services, rather than buses. Most on-demand trials are a minibus-style operation, because of the cost effectiveness of the capital and the labour.

The CHAIR: The Committee has received evidence that more should be done to engage active transport to and around transport hubs. Do you have safety concerns about an increase in pedestrians and cyclists in these areas?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, we do. If there is not adequate separation then we do have a concern. I mentioned before the traffic congestion around railway stations. I suppose that cyclists need to have separation from the traffic, and the same is true for pedestrians. Security is also an issue at car parks, as I am sure you are aware. It is important for people on bikes or on foot to feel secure and not at risk from buses or cars on the road.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: On the point of security, the Committee has received recommendations that commuter car parks be located further from stations—say, a five- or a 10-minute walk away. Do you have a view on that?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, I think that is a reasonable opportunity. I live at Thornleigh, and the entrance to the free car park is right where the buses go past, which is really quite congested. It fills up at 7.00 a.m. and you cannot find a spot so have to drive a couple of hundred metres away, where Transdev, the operator in that area, provides a high-frequency service. I think asking commuters to walk up to about 500 metres is a sensible approach.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Have your members being involved in the upcoming trial for Opal cardholders to receive free parking if they catch a B-line bus to the northern beaches?

Mr MELLISH: No, our members have not, but we certainly support the concept. The B-line services are being run by the State Transit Authority, which is outside our area of membership at the moment.

The CHAIR: A number of submissions have indicated that more frequent services would encourage people to use buses, rather than to drive. Do you have any comment on this?

Mr MELLISH: The evidence and feedback we have is that frequency is very important to ridership. If you have a frequent service which means that you do not need a timetable because you know the bus is going to come up in the next five or six minutes, that is very attractive to people. However, the customers are concerned where the bus gets caught in congestion. You can have a frequent bus service, but if it is caught in traffic that is not a good customer outcome. That is why if we can reduce the number of cars around railway stations and have better access to bus services, you will improve the travel time and the experience for those customers.

The CHAIR: Are there any other impediments to having more frequent buses?

Mr MELLISH: Transport for NSW might argue the cost, but we have not seen any analysis of the cost-benefit when looking at adding bus services versus a combination of commuter parking. We are not sure,

the way the budget is set out within Transport, whether the full environmental, social and economic benefits were assessed against individual budgets. We believe that if you were to do a full cost-benefit analysis looking at those externalities then you would probably see an increase in bus services to selected railway stations.

The CHAIR: Your submission does not necessarily touch on the changing nature of consumer behaviour and the need to look at how we change the parking situation moving forward, but it is quite frequently referenced in other submissions. Many have said that there is a role for parking in the future, but we also need to acknowledge that consumer behaviour is changing and, as a result, we need to provide other offerings. Do you see any other way for your industry to be responsive as part of meeting changing consumer behaviour, other than on-demand bus services? How do you feel about changes as a result of automated vehicles being more common?

Mr MELLISH: That is a big question. We certainly see improved information for passengers, whether it is on personal transport or buses—better access to on-time running, information on where the bus is and how full it is—as being important for us. We think that automated vehicles will eventually have a place, although not necessarily in every circumstance. I heard a comment about how far away automated vehicles are, which was estimated to be about 25 years, but it may be sooner if you look at trials going on at Homebush, Darwin and Perth. We are about moving people effectively, and therefore we have looked at a whole network. The industry wants to be a part of a greater focus on digital technology and on-demand services—if it is not big buses then it could be smaller buses, or it could be the operator of those services providing a range of different options including smaller buses and even cars for the effective movement of people going forward.

I think I read that the National Transport Commission said there were 700-plus regulations that would have to be changed for automated vehicles to be operated on what we think are public roads. That is a pretty big task in itself, so the policy settings and the regulatory settings will need to be changed. The bus industry wants to be part of that, so that is our answer.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. The Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing. Your replies will form part of your evidence and will be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, I would.

(The witness withdrew)

(Luncheon adjournment)

MARTIN ROGERS, Chief Executive Officer, NSW Taxi Council, sworn and examined

NICK ABRAHIM, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, NSW Taxi Council, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: Thank you for attending this public hearing of the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure. I remind everyone to switch off their mobile phones, as they can interfere with the recording equipment. The Committee has resolved to authorise media to broadcast sound and video excerpts of its public proceedings, and copies of the guidelines governing coverage of proceedings are available. I welcome Martin Rogers, chief executive officer, and Nick Abraham, deputy chief executive officer, of the NSW Taxi Council. Thank you for appearing before the Committee today to give evidence. Before we proceed, do you have any questions regarding the hearing process?

Mr ROGERS: No.

The CHAIR: Would either of you like to make a brief opening statement?

Mr ROGERS: On behalf of the NSW Taxi Council and its affiliate members, I thank the Committee for allowing us to be part of the inquiry into commuter car parking. The New South Wales taxi industry has been servicing the men and women of this State for more than 70 years and, on a daily basis, we are the primary financial means for the households of more than 30,000 men and women who gain their employment in this industry. We were the first passenger transport service to offer services for patients with disabilities. We provide our services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. There is the opportunity for anybody to participate in that.

We are delighted to be part of the first mile-last mile process for people to travel and part of the on-demand process when people need to seek our services. We have previously submitted proposals regarding the on-demand opportunities, and we are awaiting a debrief on those outcomes. We are an important part of the transport solution and we believe we definitely add value to this system.

The CHAIR: Thank you. To begin with, please tell the Committee how you see point-to-point transport operating in conjunction with commuter car parking in New South Wales.

Mr ROGERS: When I look at where commuter car parking fits into all of this, I look at my previous role as a business owner in towns and in towns around Sydney. Getting customers to come to my store was always a bit of a challenge because there were no car parks available. I often asked myself why those car parks were not available: because some of those all-day car parks might have been available for those who work in the town who might start work at nine o'clock but were already filled by people who might have caught a train at seven o'clock to head out of town; because the car parking facilities and commuter car parking facilities available were inadequate; or because the capacity was not available to the number of people who may leave a certain town on a daily basis to work elsewhere. That had a flow-on effect to the economic viability of some of the towns and the businesses in the towns.

The whole idea is thinking about how can we solve commuter car parking. The aim for that is for people to leave their cars at home. Land is at a premium and building more car parks is not the answer. The aim is to get people who may want to use commuter transport from their home to the hub, and then on to the appropriate transport. The role that the taxi industry will play in that is to be part of that on-demand process where commuters can engage in our services and therefore they can get to those hubs safely, efficiently and reliably. They can leave their cars at home and we can be part of that process.

Mr ABRAHIM: With the imminent point-to-point regulations, which are about to go live, it has been well noted that they will be able to provide more flexibility and choice for the customer. While the New South Wales taxi industry has evolved from a very heavily regulated background, the new point-to-point regulations we believe will assist us as an industry to be more flexible and to be able to remove some of the inequities in the market place and allow us to compete and open up a more competitive, neutral environment. While we do not believe it will fix all of our problems immediately, it is definitely a step forward in the levelling of the playing field and enabling us to be able to compete in a fair and equitable manner. To Mr Rogers point earlier about the on-demand process and looking at how we can deliver that first mile-last mile notion, we believe that this is definitely an area and a space that we want to participate in and we feel we can add a lot of value.

The CHAIR: One of the things the Committee has been talking to other witnesses about is how they see the future of car parking in New South Wales. Many of the submissions and the evidence earlier today has suggested that there should be a fee introduced on commuter car parking. Yet, your submission advocates in the opposite direction. You have suggested that no fee needs to be introduced. Can you tell the Committee why you have this position?

Mr ROGERS: As we mentioned in our proposal in the submission—talking about the user pays system—pricing is a method of rationing usage to those who are most willing and able to pay, so can be used as a means of matching demand to supply. However, given the public policy objective of encouraging use of public transport, simply increasing the cost of using public transport for users of commuter car parks is likely to achieve little in terms of public policy objective other than reduce congestion in commuter car parks. The whole idea, if we want to get people to use public transport and have those that are willing pay, it is not achieving that outcome.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to madam Chair's question, I note on page 2, the second last paragraph of "Supply and Demand for Commuter Parking", you make the argument that:

Whenever something is provided at no cost to the user, then demand is likely to exceed supply in many situations. For this reason, it might be expected that many submissions to the Inquiry will call for increased supply of commuter parking.

In light of the council's position on no fee, how do you substantiate that position?

Mr ROGERS: The view of the council is that the opportunity of commuter car parking should be available for people to utilise, but in terms of a capacity exercise we should be looking at other means to get people to move from their home to the hub at an available time and encourage them to leave their vehicles at home. It should not be about imposing a cost on people to utilise that service of commuter car parking.

Ms JODI McKAY: How do you change behaviour then?

Mr ROGERS: Over time.

Ms JODI McKAY: A lot of people have reasons for putting a cost on commuter car parking.

Mr ABRAHIM: We strongly believe that there are those who would need to genuinely use commuter car parking and in some cases have limited options other than using commuter car parking. We do not think it is fair for the genuine users. We do not believe we will get to a zero usage result. What we are trying to say is there are those that genuinely need to use commuter car parking, it might be passengers from an accessibility perspective or passengers who might suffer a disability. The other side of the token is we are saying, rather than putting a cost across the board where those that are genuinely using it will get hit with a fee, let us incentivise those that have the option to use another form, for example utilising a taxi service, utilising the first mile, where there is an incentive in place.

Without getting too ahead of myself, when we get to look at some of the recommendations, one example is use of the Opal system within taxis where a commuter may be able to enjoy some of those benefits by using an integrated approach and the whole public transport system, whether it be getting a taxi from the moment they leave home to the moment they hit the workplace or their choice of destination. By putting an incentive in place to discourage those, I believe that is the type of behaviour that will see a shift in the change of behaviour so it is not a costly exercise and they can see the benefits of leaving the car at home and using other modes.

The CHAIR: With regard to Opal, one of the things that the Committee touched on earlier with one of the witnesses was exactly how they would envisage Opal tying into their particular organisation or representative body. How would you foresee you would tie Opal in to the New South Wales taxi system?

Ms JODI McKAY: How would it work practically?

Mr ROGERS: In the proposal, just after recommendation 4 on page 6, "Expansion of the Opal beyond Mass Transport", the notion of that is that a customer or passenger would hire a taxi, jump into the taxi and there will be an Opal transaction in the taxi, which will then take them to the transport hub. There would be a cost of that taxi ride on the Opal system.

Ms JODI McKAY: That is a lot of money. Apart from making it more efficient, what do you achieve? The cost would be huge. What is different in terms of encouraging people?

Mr ROGERS: Cost analyses can be done on fares and booked fares. We could look at ways in which that can be addressed. The notion would be that you could not utilise the Opal system just to catch a taxi into town. When you got on the train or you went to the transport hub, you would tap your Opal card and it would recognise that you had engaged the services of the wider mass-market transport system, and a rebate would be applied to your card. The rebate would be applicable only when people were using other services in the mass-transit system.

The CHAIR: I understand the multi-fare benefits across the transport network. However, Ms McKay is trying establish how you would pay for it and how you think it could be rolled out across your network.

Ms JODI McKAY: You obviously have licence holders and there are many levels of people making money within the taxi industry. The Committee has suggested that there be a minimal fee. I am mystified as to how that would work with taxis other than by treating your industry completely differently.

Mr ABRAHIM: There are a few parts to my response. First, we referred to the on-demand process and the proposal that the NSW Taxi Council developed as part of the on-demand review. We engaged with Cubic Transportation Systems, which runs the Opal system, and established a partnership approach to our proposal. There is a lot in that proposal that we would be happy to share, including what we submitted to Transport for NSW, and how it will work. We would be happy to provide that proposal to the Committee.

The CHAIR: The Committee would like to receive it.

Mr ABRAHIM: It talks to Ms McKay's question about how it will work with the chain of people in the mix.

Ms JODI McKAY: And the complexity of the taxi industry.

Mr ABRAHIM: Yes. We definitely have a solution to address how that will work.

Mr GREG WARREN: Is it reasonable or unreasonable to suggest that the NSW Taxi Council would like to see some sort of government subsidy to taxis as part of an integrated public transport solution?

Mr ABRAHIM: That was my next point. There is still a lot of work to be done in this space. We will be asking Transport for NSW and other departments to undertake further investigations, cost modelling and scenario planning on the cost of establishing, maintaining and servicing commuter car parks versus a subsidy approach. We would like an investigation of the cost savings that may be enjoyed as a result of resorting to an alternative option to the first-mile and last-mile approach and a cost-benefit scenario.

Mr GREG WARREN: Do you have cost-comparison data to demonstrate a successful and valid integrated approach that would be cost effective?

Mr ABRAHIM: I do not have that information with me today. However, we have undertaken similar exercises in the past. There are a few examples in our submission that talk to work done by the New South Wales taxi industry with local government and the State Government. There is the Campbelltown to Ambarvale taxi and bus service trial and the Willoughby taxi trial.

Mr GREG WARREN: Can you take that question on notice and respond at a later time?

Mr ROGERS: Yes.

Mr GREG WARREN: I understand the concept. I note the tone of your submission and I accept it. By saying that, I mean I accept specifically that that is the tone of your submission. Please do not interpret that as my personal approval. I do not see any specific reference to it, but it is definitely the tone of your submission.

The CHAIR: You touched on some of the ridesharing trials conducted by the NSW Taxi Council. Can you tell the Committee about any feedback you have received in that process?

Mr ROGERS: The trials were conducted before my time in this role. The deputy chief executive officer will provide some commentary.

Mr ABRAHIM: As alluded to earlier, the industry has engaged in a number of ridesharing trials. In the Campbelltown taxi-bus service trial, taxis were engaged to replace bus services between Campbelltown and Ambarvale. Ultimately, it was a cost-saving exercise because the taxis were used during off-peak periods—on Sundays and public holidays—when it would be more costly to run a bus shuttle service. I believe the service was every 30 minutes between Campbelltown station and Ambarvale station. In putting together our submission, we referred to experts within our industry who were involved in that trial, which was conducted some time ago—I believe it was conducted in the late 1980s or early 1990s. Mr Warren suggested that the Committee would like us to provide data on the trial. We would be more than happy to do so, but I am not sure what limitations there might be given that it was conducted so long ago. A subsidy was granted to taxi services for providing that service. The passenger would show their bus ticket to the taxi driver as proof of purchase.

Another trial was conducted more recently—probably within the past couple of years—involving a Batemans Bay taxi service. Many tourists were travelling to the South Coast with limited options to enjoy a vibrant nightlife. I say that with respect to our colleagues on the South Coast; but there are limited options. Patrons were travelling from Narooma to Batemans Bay in the interests of having a good time, perhaps involving alcohol. I believe the Government felt a degree of responsibility to ensure that patrons had access to safe transport. It engaged with the Batemans Bay taxi service to ensure that patrons could travel long distances

to enjoy a good night out and get back to their accommodation safely. The trial was conducted in the summer when patronage on the South Coast was high and there were many tourists.

The NSW Taxi Council was not involved in trials conducted by the Brisbane City Council on the Gold Coast, but they are good examples. I believe services were provided primarily to disadvantaged passengers or those to who required assistance. Passengers were charged between \$1 and \$3 to travel one way to their local shopping centre, community centre and so on.

There was a degree of subsidy involved in that process. Again, we are happy to talk further with our Queensland counterparts on the nature of that trial, how that worked and so forth. The only other one I wanted to talk about was the Willoughby taxi service that was established in conjunction with Willoughby City Council. That was more of a booked service. Jobs would get booked the night before, so it was a pre-booked arrangement. Then there would be a run, if you like, or shuttle where passengers would get picked up and taken to their area of choice. However, we believe there were some issues involved in that trial that were tabled by Roads and Maritime Services who were the regulatory body enforcing the regulations. One of those issues was with the issue of a multi-hire arrangement. Unfortunately that is one of the hold-backs the taxi industry has had, having a heavily prescriptive, regulated background—in some cases, one would argue it may be too prescriptive. That is one example where the industry was at a disadvantage in providing that service because of regulatory definition.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: On that point, how are you going with the Government in overhauling these regulations?

Mr ROGERS: As the Committee may know, on 1 November this year the new regulations come into force. That is a new regime for us all to go into. For the 30,000 men and women whose financial means rely directly on this industry there is adjustment that will be required. The industry is preparing for them. Over time we will accommodate and adjust to the new world. We are pleased to note that we are heading towards a level playing field. The rideshare and hire vehicles that will be in this space post 1 November from a legal perspective will allow us to compete at a competitive rate. Adjustment is difficult. It does take time. As Ms Jodi McKay mentioned previously, changing behaviour is what takes time, but we need to start somewhere. This is a whole process of moving towards it. We are confident that in the future we will have a viable taxi industry within New South Wales.

Ms JODI MCKAY: I very much appreciate what Mr Abraham said about it being a complete change in the way of looking at things from the Taxi Council, which is great, because you are actually seeing opportunity now rather than negativity. I welcome that. Has the levy been determined in regard to this new regulatory environment?

Mr ROGERS: The passenger service levy, as it states in the regulations, is from 1 February. A dollar per trip will be needed to be collected for each passenger transport trip that is undertaken. In terms of the regulations, the NSW Taxi Council does not agree that the taxi network and the provider are to be held financially liable for the fares that are collected.

Ms JODI MCKAY: It still has not been resolved.

Mr ROGERS: We are working with Transport and having discussions to have them in place and settle on an arrangement that works. We are not saying that we do not need to collect the passenger service levy. We just need to look at the way and means by which that gets collected effectively and efficiently without putting financial risk to the industry.

Mr ABRAHIM: I add that, whilst the NSW Taxi Council particularly as the peak body of the taxi industry has flagged a number of concerns with the new point-to-point regulations, it must be acknowledged that the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, his department and Transport for NSW in general have shown a willingness to negotiate and sit down with us to discuss some of these issues. A good example is the passenger service levy—the fact that its start date has been extended to 1 February is testament that they are prepared to sit down and work through some of these issues. Some of them are quite serious, as our chief executive officer indicated. We are appreciative of and grateful for that opportunity to have that discussion and to work through some of these inequities and complexities.

Ms JODI MCKAY: That levy is determined through legislation. Obviously your fares are determined by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal. You would need some sort of parliamentary intervention if any of this was to be changed in order to achieve what you are saying. It is not as simple as it is for others such as Uber, who appeared earlier today, who said, "We can do this. It fits within our regime." You would still have some way to go within the regulatory environment in which you operate to be able to achieve what you are talking about.

Mr ROGERS: Through the conversations and the dialogue that we are having—and, as Mr Abraham mentioned, we are grateful that that opportunity is there—we believe we will be able to achieve an outcome, hopefully without needing to change regulation.

Ms JODI McKAY: You will?

Mr ROGERS: We are hoping to.

Ms JODI McKAY: Aren't your fares set by IPART?

Mr ROGERS: The fares are set by IPART. Are you talking about the collection of the passenger service levy?

Ms JODI McKAY: No, I just used that as an example. Obviously that has been determined through legislation, so you are legislatively required to implement that. Your fares are set by IPART. What I am talking about is the rigorous regime which you have always indicated you operate within. For you to be able to achieve what you are talking about in terms of playing your part in what this Committee is about—which is relieving commuter parking—you would need significant government intervention to allow you to do that.

Mr ROGERS: The new fares are set at maximums, not minimums.

Mr ABRAHIM: To add to that, one thing the new regulations have done is provide more flexibility in the booked service space. In actual fact, taxis can now operate in the same way as any other rideshare—Uber or anyone else, for that matter.

Ms JODI McKAY: Are you saying that is the way it currently is would allow you to do everything you would want to do?

Mr ABRAHIM: Once the new point-to-point regulations kick in from 1 November in the booked service space. Rank and hail is still regulated and determined through IPART.

Ms JODI McKAY: And only for taxis.

Mr ABRAHIM: Correct—absolutely. But from a booked service space it has been almost deregulated—that is the way you can look at it—so that taxi networks can set their own—

Ms JODI McKAY: There are no legislative obstacles for you to do what you are saying.

Mr ABRAHIM: That is correct, for booked services.

Mr ROGERS: At the end of the day, from our position, quite simply, it is costly to have commuter car parks. It is costly to build them and costly to maintain them. Quite often they will fill up and be overfilled by the time they are built. Our view is: Let us look at alternative means such as providing some subsidies for people to get from their place of residence to those hubs in a cost-effective manner. We believe we can tie that in through the Opal system.

Ms JODI McKAY: But what you are asking is a comparison.

Mr ROGERS: A cost analysis to say what the Government currently commits, which is hidden and no-one really knows.

Ms JODI McKAY: To commuter car parks.

Mr ROGERS: Versus some subsidised, flexible, on-demand type process that is not holding up capital infrastructure costs.

Ms JODI McKAY: It may not be either/or.

Mr ROGERS: It could be a combination. It is up to you to have a combination of both. If the commuter car parks are currently there then you might utilise them. Who knows? Our view is that if somebody can have a bit of choice as to when they commute, our opportunity is to make sure that we have the demand available at a time that they need it and to cater for that. If the industry can supply the demand and the speed at which they need to react then a person will make those choices. Realistically, a person will say, "If I can leave my car at home, order a taxi service and it picks me up and drops me there within a time frame that means I am not running late, then I will do that."

The CHAIR: Given that you support a shared ride contract between the Government and providers, how would you consider a shared service would operate with members of the NSW Taxi Council?

Mr ROGERS: The recommendation was to start a trial—to look at a geographic location and implement a trial with one of our member networks to see the processes and cost efficiencies that can be

achieved through that. The proposal for us here is to suggest that we do a trial in a nominated geographic location and see what outcomes we achieve from that.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Would some of those efficiencies that can be achieved be passed on to the consumer by the taxi operators, or is it just the Government that foots the bill?

Mr ROGERS: That is an open question we have with the whole industry. When you look at the utilisation rate of a taxi in terms of the hours it is on the road, there is a lot of capacity there. I am sure there is a conversation that can be had as to how we can deliver a cost-effective means and increase the utilisation rate of those taxis.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Because surely built into that fare structure is the sporadic nature and the uncertainty of what jobs a driver is going to get in that shift. If you are able to provide a degree of certainty for a proportion of that day through, say, advanced bookings and "no cancellation" policies whereby you have to pay if you do not use it, there would be some great cost efficiencies for operators.

Mr ROGERS: Most definitely. In respect of looking at a trial in a geographic location, it is picking up these things and saying we need some commitment from all parties who are involved in delivering point-to-point services. It is not only the passenger, it is the Government and potentially the networks as well to ensure everybody works together to realise those cost efficiencies. Those suggestions you are raising can definitely become part of the consideration.

The CHAIR: Following with the theme of change, we have been talking about technology quite a bit this afternoon. Several submissions the Committee has received talk about self-driving or automated vehicles being imminent. Do you have a view about this new technology when considering commuter car parking or your industry?

Mr ROGERS: At some point in the future, if technology advances, and there is talk about self-driving cars and flying drones, they may or may not come in the future. That depends on what the Government says and how technology improves.

Ms JODI McKAY: I think there are flying drones.

Mr ROGERS: In respect of drones transporting people around. At the end of the day, our role for the future is to say we want people to be on demand. It fits into our proposal of moving people away from commuter car parks and getting from their place of residence to that transport hub. At some point in the future there probably will be a mix of driverless or manned vehicles. At the moment, people drive vehicles and we are able to deliver that service now. As technology evolves in the future, if we have self-driving cars or mobility as a service, then those platforms will have due consideration.

The CHAIR: To take it one step further without making it seem like we are going to *The Jetsons*, do you envisage you would have driverless taxis picking people up and, as a result, your industry does not necessarily need reserved car spots at commuter car parks because you are moving toward a mode of pick-up, drop-off?

Mr ROGERS: At the moment the taxi industry does not have reserved spots. It is on demand; we pick up, we drop off. That is how the taxi industry currently works. Part of the commuter car parking solution is part of what we do every day; it is filling the extra capacity that we have. Conversations are beginning to be had about self-driving cars picking us up. As an industry, we look at it from the point of view that people have a taxi, they have the safety and reliability of the cameras and the person driving. We do not see a need for parking spots because the taxi will drop someone off and will go off to their normal opportunities of transferring passengers and they will come back and pick people up in that way.

Mr ABRAHIM: One big factor of the past 18 to 24 months that our industry has encountered is obviously change. We have learned that change is imminent and we have been trying to take our members and industry through the changed journey. One thing we are getting better at is anticipating that change. Driverless vehicles and autonomous vehicles is inevitable. It is imminent. It is a matter of not if but when. From our perspective, it is about being prepared to anticipate and embrace that change. We are starting to have those conversations in our industry. It is clear that the taxi industry will focus on what we are good at and that is providing a safe passenger service. It is not about building cars or autonomous vehicles. We will adopt it and potentially partner with vehicle manufacturers. We will look at providing those services.

One thing is very clear: The taxi industry is here to stay. Our plan is to be here for the long run. People are saying that autonomous cars will be the end of taxidivers. We challenge that. The role of a driver may change, if you look at the importance of the service we provide, particularly for the disabled community, passengers with special needs. The prevalence of dementia is growing. By 2050 we will see a huge increase in

people with dementia and we do not believe that autonomous vehicles will be able to service those people without having other support in place. We think upskilling drivers—potentially their role may change to a concierge or customer service. It will be relevant to continue to provide those important services to that part of our community in the future.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee this afternoon. The Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing. Your replies may form part of the evidence and be made public. Will you be prepared to provide a written response to further questions?

Mr ROGERS: Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew)

LORRAINE DUFFY, Chief Executive, Parking Australia, sworn and examined

ANDREW MORSE, Partner and Senior Traffic Engineer, Parking and Traffic Consultants, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: Would either of you like to make a brief opening statement before the commencement of questions?

Ms DUFFY: Good afternoon. I am Lorraine Duffy, chief executive of Parking Australia, which is the association for the parking industry, formed in 1986 by the Council of City Mayors. Today with me is Andrew Morse, who is the partner and senior traffic engineer for one of our member organisations, Parking and Traffic Consultants [PTC]. Parking Australia focused its commitment on three key strategies with some underpinning objectives. The strategies being convenience, safety and price of commuter parking, which are delivered through the efficient use of transport land—that is, transit-orientated development; ease of mobility, incorporating service and mobility as a service; and the professional management and operation of parking facilities, such as that offered by the health infrastructure which in turn places a value on parking—that is, charging and control.

Parking should be considered as a high-quality service. Parking, in general, is about the storage of vehicles which are left for a period of time to allow drivers to undertake their intended activities. However, what we are seeing now, and will see into the future, is that parking will be part of that journey and experience. I think the focus is on experience. The future mobility ecosystem will provide commuters with more individual choices and some new roles, including the integration of parking as part of the decision-making tool, along with shared services as in mass transit. We cannot continue to build more commuter parking, but must make better use of the existing infrastructure through technologies and effective parking management such as remote feeders et cetera, which we have mentioned in our submission.

This will mean collaboration with the private parking sector, and responsiveness at all government levels. New technologies are currently transforming parking, which, in turn, will produce opportunities. As we have heard, autonomous vehicles, plus other service models which are being driven by technology will not necessarily mean the end of commuter car parking, or parking in general. Recent research indicates that a fair percentage of 18- to 34-year-olds believe they will still own a vehicle in 10 or 15 years. So parking a vehicle will need to be part of an integrated transport journey towards the use of connected and autonomous vehicles in the future.

The CHAIR: I might pick up on the comment you just made about 18- to 34-year-olds and their car ownership in the future. A witness earlier today put it to us that having a drivers licence does not necessarily mean that you use that vehicle to get to and from the station. Conversely, if a person does not own a drivers licence, he or she may not necessarily be a passenger in a vehicle to get to and from the station. What I was trying to ascertain earlier today was whether a decrease in the number of people obtaining a drivers licence meant that people were moving away from cars to other forms of transport. You are saying that 18- to 34-year-olds, who are open to using Uber and more technologically advanced mechanisms of transport, are still looking at owning a vehicle in the future.

How do you perceive that that is going to relate to your industry in terms of providing car parking? It does not appear, from what we have heard thus far today, that people believe that having a licence or a vehicle means that you will use it to get to the commuter hubs. Do you believe that this means that the next generation is still going to be commuting to and from the commuter hubs using that more conventional form of transport—their personal vehicles—or do you believe that there is a shift away from parking?

Ms DUFFY: There is a shift; that is without a doubt. I am sure Mr Morse can elaborate on that, but it is about choice. The really important thing is that people have, and will have, choice. So mobility as a service model is about that choice. It is about looking at your app and at the technology and saying, "What am I going to do today? How will I get to the station? It is raining; maybe I will drive my own vehicle." If it is not raining you might say, "I might get a shared vehicle." It is about choice. With respect to 18- to 34-year-olds, I think it was the Tourism and Transport Forum [TTF] research that said that for the next 10 to 15 years there will still be a propensity to own a vehicle.

Registrations are still on the incline so we are not seeing people buying fewer cars—fewer vehicles. They are being registered. It is about choice. Autonomous vehicles will certainly be coming within the next 20 to 30 years. We heard you speaking to the NSW Taxi Council about that. The parking industry—whether it is for commuter parking, university parking, shopping centre parking or any other sector of parking—is being adaptive with respect to that.

Ms DUFFY: The decline in the uptake of licences in that age group is probably just a delaying process that is connected to a whole bunch of other socio-economic or resident changes that are happening, particularly in somewhere like Sydney. Housing affordability issues mean that people are staying at home longer. There is also a desire by that generation to live, work and play in the same area. It is just a delayed process in the sense that members of that generation will eventually move to outer suburbs or perhaps have families later in their lives. We are not seeing a decline in car sales commensurate with the decline in the take-up of licences by the younger generation. My view is that it is purely a delay in the uptake of vehicle purchases. There has also been an uptake in the use of Uber and the desire to use apps and those sorts of things, which has changed the landscape for that particular age group. People do not necessarily need a licence as young as they used to, because they are more inclined to take up those choices or opportunities that did not exist earlier.

The CHAIR: In your submission you talk about 18- to 24-year olds and their consumer preferences, and the role of technology with respect to those preferences. With all of this in mind, what do you see as the consumer preference and the implication for commuter parking specifically, other than the use of apps? You have referenced the idea of using one app to integrate our choices. You have spoken a lot about choice today, but surely the role of technology in parking has to concern more than one app for a generation that talks about having choice.

Ms DUFFY: No, I think that is the important thing. We probably do need one app. We need some sort of aggregation—one app. You would have seen that there are, at the moment, many apps for parking, as there are for many other sectors, but that generation—the 18- to 34-year-olds—in 10 or 20 years time will not want to look for five, six or seven apps. When we talk about mobilities of service—you probably would have heard a fair bit about that today—we are talking about having one or two pieces of technology or an app to give you all the choices. So the different mobility choices—whether it is car sharing, parking in the traditional form, using a taxi or whatever—are all enclosed in that one piece of technology. That experience of using one piece of technology gives you the choice to be able to do many things.

Moving forward, it does not really matter whether it is one, two, three or however many pieces of information, the concern is about the data. With respect to parking we are certainly lacking data—knowing exactly the spaces and the availability—to put into that technology. Without the data the technology means little.

Ms JODI McKAY: Your organisation has obviously been established to lobby or make representations on behalf of private parking companies. Have you or your members had, or are they having, discussions with Government to take over public commuter car parking? That would necessarily mean that you would manage that, and the cost would be given to your members. How does that work? Are there discussions about public commuter car parks being taken over by the private sector?

Ms DUFFY: Our members are private operators, but there is also local government as well as shopping centres, universities et cetera. So we represent pretty much the full gamut of parking. The discussion is not about taking over commuter parking. It is certainly something to consider and something that the Committee should look at. I think we mentioned in our submission Infrastructure NSW. Certainly in Queensland and Western Australia the public-private partnerships have worked well.

Ms JODI McKAY: Do you see a role for the private sector in providing commuter car parking?

Ms DUFFY: Most definitely. They are in the business of parking. That is what they do, and they do that very well. Parking is about that experience, now. In everything we do—whether it is the first and last part of our journey, or the first and last part of our travel overseas—there is a parking experience, and we need to make sure that that is a good one irrespective of whether it is linked to a train trip or air travel. Certainly there would be no reason why parking organisations could not get involved in commuter parking.

Ms JODI McKAY: The Committee has heard evidence this morning about parking being able to be achieved on an Opal card. Have you or your members given thought to what the cost for parking could be if there were an Opal card introduced for parking? Is there a nominal fee? The Committee has been given some fees but in your view what should or could people be paying for commuter parking?

Mr MORSE: That is going to come down almost to a site-by-site basis because you have to look at the competition that is in the area around a particular station. If you are looking at Chatswood or a high density transport orientated development style car park, that is clearly going to have competition around it and pricing is going to have to be structured to deal with that competition, as opposed to commuter parking that is out on the sort of fringe areas where really the competition then as soon as you put some sort of fee on commuters using that car park there is then the question of do you then absorb that into the cost of the transport trips so that it does not become another barrier to someone using the train rather than just staying in the car and completing the

entire journey without using the train at all? The other competition is they then get pushed onto the streets and then you have a zone of influence around the car park that then becomes the management issue. How do we then address the resident parking scheme and everything that goes with that because of \$1 that has been placed on the cost of the car park that is not absorbed into the transport journey?

Ms JODI McKAY: It is the case if you charge someone to use a commuter car park you may, in fact, discourage them from using public transport?

Mr MORSE: You may. It depends how it is structured. I think there are a couple of issues to address. One is who is using the commuter car park and who is the intended user? The intended user is surely somebody who is using the car park as part of their journey and they are using the train for the rest of the journey. If the car park is serving the last or first mile or two from the house to the station really that is the customer. But, of course, if the car park is uncontrolled anybody can use it and that could be the people in the local community or the competing retail or commercial hub. So the idea of a price is a good one in the sense of controlling that, and discouraging that sort of use. In that situation for each individual car park you would need to look at a pricing structure that would perhaps allow short-term parking if that was desirable with a low fee, but a very steep curve up to a high fee for, say, an all-day car park space. That would discourage the community around that car park from using it for the purpose of just parking all day.

For the commuter I think the important thing is that does not become another barrier to using the car park and that that is somehow absorbed into the ticket price, which is where the connection with Opal comes in. The technology as to how to do that I am not across, but that is just part of the whole journey price rather than specifically the car park price.

The CHAIR: Given the points of your submission that you are currently speaking to, I want to clarify one sentence which states:

Research indicates that shifting from a free to cost-recovery parking model typically reduces car commuting by 10 -30% especially if it is implemented in conjunction with other transport demand strategies.

However, you have not told the Committee whose research it is.

Ms DUFFY: That has come out of the States, Tom Lipman.

The CHAIR: You say it is from the States but how recent is it? I have no sense of how reliable this information is because you have not said where it has come from.

Ms DUFFY: I can certainly send it all to you. That is obviously from a transport planner that is involved in this space very considerably. I am more than happy to send the whole research paper, if you like.

The CHAIR: I would like a source so I can see it is something that is real as opposed to an assertion that you are making without a quantifiable source.

Mr GREG WARREN: What is the position of Parking Australia in regard to the usage of commuter car parking? What benefits does Parking Australia see, if any, for consumers and commuters?

Ms DUFFY: Benefits in what way?

Mr GREG WARREN: In terms of the ownership model of commuter parking and other parking models, for instance, if it were private versus government?

Ms DUFFY: From like a PPE perspective?

Mr GREG WARREN: Yes.

Ms DUFFY: Obviously it takes some of the risk away from the Government.

Mr GREG WARREN: What sorts of risk?

Ms DUFFY: As far as managing car parks, from a financial perspective as well. So it depends on the model that they are operating under, whether it is a build, own, operate and transfer or BOOT style model, or whether it is managed, or whether the operator is actually building it and then looking after it. But it also takes away from the expertise, I suppose, of saying that people in private parking, that is the business they are in. It is around understanding the operation that they do run, the cost of that 24/7 car park.

Mr GREG WARREN: I draw your attention to the second paragraph of part 3 of your submission that states:

...parking is not really free, consumers ultimately bear parking costs through higher taxes and in some ways the car is actually being subsidized to park at a transport hub when its free.

What is the position of Parking Australia on the PSL as a funding model to provide parking? Is it effective or non-effective?

Ms DUFFY: The recent submission about six months ago—I am not quite sure that the funds are hypothecated to where they should be. Certainly more money could be injected into, as we said before, research, into data, understanding availability around car parks and more funding around electric vehicles. There are some other initiatives that could really well be used, and around technology. The parking space levy can well be, and should probably be, more hypothecated directly towards parking. It certainly has facilitated a lot around the access program and done a lot of work in commuter parking. However, there have been some considerable funds that have been not hypothecated and have been left in the kitty, if you like, and could well be used.

Mr GREG WARREN: Is it reasonable to suggest the view of Parking Australia is that the PSL could be more effective and provide better efficiencies?

Ms DUFFY: Yes, certainly.

Mr GREG WARREN: In what areas would Parking Australia suggest it could be?

Ms DUFFY: In understanding the occupancy levels, in working towards technologies and looking at technologies to facilitate better parking, and to plan park and go. Certainly they are initial areas that the parking space levy could well be looking at. I mean, there has been certainly a considerable round of funding over the many years that it has been implemented so there could well be some funding towards understanding what the availability of parking is in and around commuter hubs, as well as technology to better advise occupancies—whether that is facilitation of the apps. That is a big part of what we are talking about; it is around the availability and the overcrowding of commuter car parking. As we have noticed, in most centres car parks are full by 7.00 a.m. or 8.00 a.m. so they are being used by commuters but it is around understanding how we inject that parking space levy into better managing parking.

Mr GREG WARREN: Ultimately it would be reasonable to suggest that whilst any technologies may guide road travellers to go and park somewhere, whether it be to commute or any other thing, it does not increase the footprint though.

Ms DUFFY: No, it does not create the footprint that is there but what we do not know is what is around. A really key issue is understanding what other available parking spaces there are around commuter parking. Because without saying "Let's build more", what else do we know? What sporting fields are around? What other feeder areas can people park in without saying "Yes, let's just have on-street parking". Sometimes our on-street parking, if it is free parking around commuter parking, which does happen at various locations, all that does is obviously then clog up the streets and create congestion. Let us understand what else is out there. Let us look at whether there are clubs, fields or other areas where there are car spaces that we do not know about. I suspect that if there was heat mapping or something like that it would show us the availability of car spaces throughout New South Wales near commuter railway stations and we would have a better understanding of availability.

Ms JODI McKAY: Further to Mr Warren's question, your members pay or have to facilitate the parking space levy.

Ms DUFFY: Correct.

Ms JODI McKAY: The Government's intention when it was introduced in 2008 was that it would go some way to encouraging people not to take their cars into the city.

Ms DUFFY: Yes.

Ms JODI McKAY: Do you support the parking space levy?

Ms DUFFY: Yes.

Ms JODI McKAY: Has it achieved what the Government set out to do?

Ms DUFFY: The parking space levy was initially a congestion living. That is what it was called. The goal of it was to reduce congestion. Obviously, that has not worked because we still have a lot of congestion. It is not about just saying, "Let's build better roads or more roads." It is about understanding how we plan and what we do as far as drivers and commuting are concerned. There is a lot of work. The congestion levy or parking space levy is imposed on only private operators. There is no levy for on-street parking. It is certainly not going to assist with the reducing congestion.

Ms JODI McKAY: I take on board what you said in regard to not all the parking space levy being expended.

Ms DUFFY: Yes.

Ms JODI McKAY: I actually have it here but I think there is quite a bit that has not been spent. Your issue as well is in regard to how much money is actually being spent on commuter car parking. There is no transparency in how this is being spent. We know there are two sources of commuter car parking funding; one is the tap and one is the car parking space levy.

Ms DUFFY: Yes.

Ms JODI McKAY: There is a lack of transparency around those, but in regard to the parking space levy which is a levy or a tax or whatever you want to call it, you would expect, and your members would want, transparency around that and to know whether it is in fact feeding into greater commuter car parking.

Ms DUFFY: Correct. That is exactly right.

Ms JODI McKAY: The other question I have relates to your management of commuter management committees.

Ms DUFFY: Yes.

Ms JODI McKAY: What are they, and how do they work?

Ms DUFFY: Commuter management committees could well be something that is related to Campbelltown, or wherever it may be.

Ms JODI McKAY: Here is Campbelltown. Mr Warren likes Campbelltown.

Ms DUFFY: I will use Campbelltown. That is a good one.

Mr GREG WARREN: You can use Campbelltown for anything.

Ms DUFFY: That could well be the stakeholders, the developers, the people who are involved in any new builds that are happening as far as urban design and planning to facilitate transit and commuter parking. It is really about getting stakeholders who are involved, even at a local level, to talk around those sorts of issues and task force strategies, parking strategies, around commuter parking. I do believe, with all respect to the submission and all respect to the actual call for the inquiry, that it was quite difficult to find an actual commuter parking strategy, full stop. Where we can actually get commuter parking strategies at the local level, that can actually feed in as well and that could be an initiative. But it was a bit of a challenge to find a strategy for commuter parking for New South Wales.

Ms JODI McKAY: Your members want to provide commuter car parking.

Ms DUFFY: Our private operator members?

Ms JODI McKAY: Yes.

Ms DUFFY: At the end of the day, if it was based on—and certainly Andrew Morse could talk to the hospital model probably a little bit as well—but around that Infrastructure NSW model—

Ms JODI McKAY: So you are talking about a public-private partnership from construction?

Ms DUFFY: Not necessarily from construction. It could just well be an operator and transfer model. Could be either an operator, manage and transfer model. It does not necessarily have to be at the build level.

Ms JODI McKAY: But there would have to be some funding attached to that to make it work.

Ms DUFFY: Correct—if it was a new build, definitely. Do you want to add anything?

Mr MORSE: It is only that the health infrastructure model is probably a good reference one in the sense that you have a Health portfolio that essentially says that we are not in the business of car parking, but we do need to provide it.

Ms JODI McKAY: But Transport is in the business of transport.

Mr MORSE: Yes, it is. It is more related to beds versus car spaces, but the model there is that there is a business case too. Obviously, there is a demand for parking at a hospital in the same way as there is at a station. It is somewhat indirectly related to the end use to some degree. Therefore there is the cost of construction of the car park, which is borne by the taxpayer or the health department but then there is a business case to pay itself out through being privately managed and through funds. That is not always the case because, à la Campbelltown, there is no fee for parking at that hospital. That comes back to the question of then: What is

the fee model for each individual commuter car park? I suspect it would be different depending on each, on the site selection process and the surrounding conditions.

Ms DUFFY: To Andrew Morse's point: That is prior to the Opal card costs. Parking is a supply and demand model. If I park in the Sydney central business district or I park in Campbelltown, they are very different beasts. Putting one charge to the Opal card could be quite challenging because they have different demands and different needs and different levels of commuting.

The CHAIR: They are, but if we are talking pure demand and supply and you guys are starting to reference hospitals and what you have done there, are you suggesting that the idea of hitting a commuter with \$25 a day or something to that effect would be acceptable at your end? That seems completely outrageous.

Ms DUFFY: Certainly, we are not referencing the price because we cannot talk to the price.

The CHAIR: No, I know you are not, but you have used examples of hospitals and you are talking demand and supply. It is quite standard that a daily rate somewhere is about \$25 in the metropolitan area. Is that what you are suggesting would be a comparison for your members, if we were to look at something like that?

Ms DUFFY: In using the hospital model, if you are a regular user at a hospital, which is probably not the most desirable thing, but if you were a regular visitor to a hospital, then you have concessions, and considerable concessions, so it is a similar sort of scenario. If you are a regular user of the car park, then you may well pay less than someone who is only travelling once a twice a week.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to Madam Chair's point, would it be reasonable to suggest or for Parking Australia to acknowledge that at a hospital or a train station, or at any other State asset or asset of State significance, that the users of those commuter car parking places ultimately have paid because they pay taxes. Obviously private enterprise has alternative reasons from those of the public sector because it is a revenue-based model, but the significant variance between the two enterprises, in my view, cannot be overlooked. Is that a view that Parking Australia would share—that there is a significant variance between private and non-private operators?

Ms DUFFY: Yes. Obviously, public and private operate in very different models.

Mr GREG WARREN: Yes.

Ms DUFFY: But bear in mind that the hospital model, as you well know, is a management model so that they are subsidised. The operator basically gets a subsidy in the hospital model.

Mr GREG WARREN: The private operator?

Ms DUFFY: Yes. The private operator gets a flat fee in most cases to operate that car park on behalf of the health service.

Mr GREG WARREN: But, ultimately, it would be fair to suggest as well that the consumer of that private model is also a patient attending that hospital or is associated with patient care at that hospital, and is of course a taxpayer. It could be argued that that particular consumer is being hit twice. Would that be a fair suggestion? Would Parking Australia concede that?

Ms DUFFY: Yes, I suppose if that is the way you look at it in the sense that you are a taxpayer and also a hospital visitor, or patient.

Mr GREG WARREN: Yes. Okay.

Mr MORSE: With these car parks—and we are referring to the hospital model, which has similarities in the way it can be delivered and the way it can be costed—but essentially there are three user groups of these car parks and I think the commuter car parks are similar. In the hospital model, you have got staff, you have got visitors to that hospital, and you have got people that you do not really want parking in the car park, which is really the basis on which—

Mr GREG WARREN: Like who?

Mr MORSE: Sorry?

Mr GREG WARREN: Like who? Who do you not want parking in there?

Mr MORSE: Say, workers in the surrounding area.

Mr GREG WARREN: But if they work at the hospital, they need to park somewhere.

Mr MORSE: Well, yes—the hospital staff, hospital visitors and patients, and the general public.

Mr GREG WARREN: Yes. It is reasonable to suggest that they want to park where they want to go.

Mr MORSE: That is exactly right. Those are two user groups. The third one is people that you really do not want to be parking in the car park.

Mr GREG WARREN: So who would those people be?

Mr MORSE: Those would be surrounding businesses, surrounding visitors, who are creating demand in a car park that is not really built for them.

Mr GREG WARREN: Sure.

Mr MORSE: That is where costing models come in—essentially, to create a barrier between the people that use and the people that you do not really want to be taking up that demand and essentially are getting a freebie, for want of a better term. In the context of the commuter car park that is why if you were going to have some sort of fee arrangement, the commuter, the person who the car park is there for—

Mr GREG WARREN: The consumer.

Mr MORSE: The consumer would not be slugged with a climbing \$25 per day type of fee structure. That would be in place to prevent others. Shopping centres employ exactly the same thing. We have all been to shopping centres where there is two hours free—that is great, you go in and do your shopping—but it ramps up very steeply to stop people who are just going to abuse the use of that car park. It is not about slugging commuters with an extra \$25 per day or something like that; it is really about trying to pick off the people who you do not really want to be taking up that demand. You want the taxpayer, who is using it for the purpose it is supposed to be used for, to not really be slugged twice but for some structure to be in place to prevent abusing—we use the word "abuse" in the industry and it is not a very nice word to use—that car parking supply for purposes not related.

The CHAIR: In your submission you suggest having commuter car parks five to 10 minutes away from the actual commuter hub. Can you expand on why you would want to generate parking opportunities so far from a designated transport hub and what you consider the benefits to be? For example, the detriments in denying people with mobility issues to parking are very obvious. What are the merits of advocating that position?

Mr MORSE: There are certain merits. Clearly there are connectivity issues to be looked at in each individual case and the provision of parking for a particular proportion of the population. We have seen this in places like Parramatta where they have historically developed with not really a master plan or provision for how Parramatta was going to develop—it developed with a number of multistorey car parks, public car parks, in the core of the central business district. What is happening over time is that councils are selling those sites off and those car parks are being pushed to the fringe because the land around the station, the land in the core of the central business district, is prime real estate and it has a higher value use to be used as usable land space.

The idea of detaching a car park from a station is to look at each individual station and see what the growth prospects are. What are the density prospects around that station? Not all of them are going to have high density or medium density going into the future but some will be contenders to be transport-orientated developments—even if they are not today, one day. Constructing a car park with a 50- to 100-year lifespan in what essentially will become a core centre is a reason to detach it and put it somewhere else. That enables development of higher-value land use around the station with the car park detached. That is really the idea of doing that. In the short term it seems silly that there is a car park detached but in the long term it has kept land available for higher density further down the track.

The CHAIR: Do you think the land value is more important than the life of a single mum pushing her pram down a busy road to get to the local station?

Mr MORSE: No.

The CHAIR: Where do the needs of the people whom we represent factor in versus the basic economics that you are talking to about? We are talking about people's lives and their ability to access crucial services. You are talking about clinical facts and figures as though we are not dealing with real people. Tell me about the person's life I am actually touching.

Mr MORSE: The station, and its close proximity, can have a parking provision associated with it, at grade, around the station that at the moment is not really dedicated to anyone. You will have disability parking spaces adjacent to the entrance generally, with Disability Discrimination Act [DDA] compliant access so that it is level and often covered. You may have parent with pram parking in some instances as well. All that other parking at the moment is open to anybody. The suggestion is that you could remove that demand from that car

park and place it in the structure—whether it is that grade or whatever—which frees up the proximate parking for those users who really need it the most. It is actually the opposite. It is actually providing more parking more proximately for the people who really do need it.

Ms JODI McKAY: You would have more disability parking?

Mr MORSE: You would have more disability, more elderly, more parent pram parking in the higher value spaces, those that are most accessible and most in need for that community, to be near the entrance, at grade and proximate. Everybody else is placed in the commuter car park, everyone able to make the journey from the car park to the station. You are, in fact, relieving space for those most in need.

Ms JODI McKAY: Or for people who arrive late such as commuters who may not work? If someone arrives at 7.00 a.m. they are obviously heading to work as a commuter but not if they are travelling at 10.00 a.m. or 11.00 a.m. The Government is encouraging people to delay their journeys but when they do cannot get a car park. Your suggestion could actually pick up some of those who currently do not have a car park?

Mr MORSE: It could pick up some of them. Again, to connect it back to the Health model—we are not obsessed with hospital car parks but they have a similar issue with the afternoon shift, for example. They have the same issue—the car park is full—but they have managed it by nesting areas and having them chained off or some other management that says, "A proportion of parking is available for those who arrive at 3.00 p.m. for the afternoon shift. It is not fair that they should be locked out of the car park." Those same management systems could be in place but the idea would be exactly the opposite—the spaces that exist proximate to the station would become more available for those who need it most, rather than being mixed in and competing with everybody else.

Ms DUFFY: It is a different value model, is it not?

Mr MORSE: Exactly.

The CHAIR: To your knowledge is this model successful anywhere?

Mr MORSE: To my knowledge, yes. I cannot think of any specific examples in New South Wales where that has been done but I am certainly aware of the decanting of parking to the edge of areas—whether it is the central business district model or the campus model—

Ms JODI McKAY: You see it a lot in regional areas.

Mr MORSE: Or the university or hospital model where parking is pushed to the outside to allow the core—

Ms JODI McKAY: It is what was called the old park 'n' ride?

Mr MORSE: Exactly. Pushing car parks to the edges of something so that the higher important land uses—

Ms DUFFY: It is what happens on university campuses.

Mr MORSE: Exactly, campus-style arrangements.

The CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. The Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing. Your replies will form part of the evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Ms DUFFY: Certainly.

Mr MORSE: Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Short adjournment)

ANTHONY DAVID BRAXTON-SMITH, Deputy Secretary Customer Service, Transport for NSW, affirmed and examined

ANTHONY WING, Executive Director, Transport Policy, Transport for NSW, sworn and examined

RACHEL MARIE WHEELER, Executive Director, Customer Service, Design and Drive, Transport for NSW, sworn and examined

WILLIAM JOHN GRANT, Executive Director, Integrated Planning, Infrastructure and Services, Transport for NSW, affirmed and examined

The CHAIR: Good afternoon and thank you for appearing before the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure. The Committee welcomes witnesses from Transport for NSW. Before we proceed, do you have any questions about the hearing process?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: No.

The CHAIR: Would any of you like to make a brief opening statement?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Thank you, Chair. As Sydney's transport networks grow, interchange becomes more important to us. Commuter car parking is an aspect of interchange that plays an important and evolving role in our customers' first- and last-mile connections with public transport. Our focus at Transport for NSW, as far as commuter car parking is concerned, is to treat it as an important element in a suite of options for improved transport access at the public transport interchange. Since Transport for NSW was established in 2011 we have invested over \$1 billion in the Transport Access Program to improve interchanges in a variety of ways, with 420 projects either completed or currently in delivery.

First- and last-mile transport is rapidly evolving, with new technologies sparking innovations that offer commuters a lot of different options, a greater variety of point-to-point services, including taxis and new rideshare options, new bikeshare schemes and our own trials in on-demand transport. We have enacted new point-to-point transport legislation from 1 November, which will enable point-to-point operators to further innovate to meet customer demands for transfer to public transport and their destination or from their origin. We have also introduced the \$2 transfer discount in our Opal fare structure to encourage greater use of intermodal transfer, particularly bus to train, which is the predominant form of transfer as I speak today. This has resulted in the number of Opal card customers who transfer between modes increasing in the past year from about 36 per cent of all active cardholders to 50 per cent of active cardholders.

These initiatives all moderate the demand for commuter car parking and provide customers with alternative options for the first- and last-mile transfer. However, when they do use a commuter car park, we want to ensure that the car parks are used for their intended purposes. Recent market research that we conducted indicated that commuter car park space is sometimes being occupied by people fulfilling tasks other than travelling on public transport at times when the demand for parking cannot be fully met. That is why we will be trialling the use of Opal technology at six locations across the northern beaches for customers seeking to link with the new B-Line services, with a new system whose objective is to protect commuter car parking spaces for commuters.

We at Transport for NSW are focused heavily on growing public transport patronage, and we know that access to interchanges via a range of first-mile and last-mile solutions is going to be vital to this. We look forward to the findings of this inquiry.

The CHAIR: I will pick up on one of the comments you made in your opening remarks when you touched on the usage of commuter car parking spaces by people who are not commuters and looking at ways to restrict this practice. Would you like to expand on that idea for the Committee?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Certainly. We conducted some research last year, a survey of six different commuter car parks across the rail network. What we found—and this was very location dependent—was that in some instances 20 per cent of the spaces were being used by people who were not taking public transport. In fact, in one instance, a touch over 50 per cent of the people who were parking in that car park were running errands in the local area or going to somewhere in the local area, but not using public transport. That validated to us something that we had heard from time to time from our customers, who complain that they cannot get a spot to park and commute, whereas others are parking in car parks for a range of different purposes.

With that in mind, and giving consideration to technologies that are now available, we have explored a range of different options using car parking technology in combination with the Opal card, so that a customer can use an Opal card to validate that they have travelled on public transport and therefore enjoy the benefit of

the car park for its intended purpose. However, if a person has, on exiting the car park, not used public transport then we would ask them to pay a commercial rate. We have not finally developed this, but we have a concept of operations and will pilot a solution in six commuter car parks on the new B-Line service. In essence, it will have number plate recognition at the entry as well as a boom gate and, on exit, it will have an Opal card reader, the purpose of which will be for the customer to validate that they have returned by public transport. If, on tapping the validation, it is demonstrated that they have been on public transport, the gate will open and they will leave with no charge. However, if the customer, on seeking to exit, is found not to have used public transport—does not have an Opal card that demonstrates that they have just got off the public transport service—they will pay the commercial rate using their credit card or bank card.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Just on that, practically how it will work, did you say before going into the car park you tap on with your Opal card?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: My colleague Rachel Wheeler has been working on the details of it, so I will ask Rachel to explain in more detail.

Ms WHEELER: At the entrance of every car park and at the exit will be boom gates. So as a vehicle enters the car park they will come across a boom gate. Simultaneously, an automatic licence plate recognition will recognise the licence plate of the vehicle for the purpose of recording the time at which the vehicle entered the car park. The boom gates will open and the customer goes in and parks their vehicle and exits and takes a public transport trip to work or wherever they are going. When they come back via public transport, they go back into the car park to get their vehicle to leave the car park. Upon exiting they will come up to a boom gate, the licence plate recognition will recognise the vehicle number plate to determine how long the customer has been in the car park.

If the customer presents an Opal card they tap the Opal card reader and if it recognises a valid public transport trip they will be able to exit free of charge on the assumption that their vehicle has not been in the car park for greater than 18 hours, which is a business rule that we are currently working through the detail around. If they have not, however, done a public transport trip, the licence plate has recognised the duration and they will be charged commercial rates.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: You said a valid public transport trip. What constitutes a valid trip? I am just imagining how you could sort this.

The CHAIR: He is like that.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: If it is not me, somebody else will. I rock up to the car park, park my car, hop over to Myer, wander around for a few hours, go outside, hop on a bus, tap on, tap off the next stop, come back again and then hop into my car. I have taken a public transport trip even though it was a mischievous one.

Ms WHEELER: Throughout the trial we will be monitoring and reporting on the frequency and, I guess, how close to the exiting times the public transport trip is utilised and how close the public transport on and off is also utilised, to try to understand if any of that behaviour does occur.

Ms JODI McKAY: Given you have licence recognition technology as well that would in future allow you to charge someone for being in the commuter car park, can you rule out any cost to commuters in the next five, 10 years? Is that in your planning?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: The purpose of this is to protect the car space for the commuter.

Ms JODI McKAY: So you will never charge for a car park?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: That is a decision for government. At this stage the Government's policy is that there is no charge for commuters. We certainly have not done any planning or thinking of any alternative policy and we certainly have not put anything to government of that nature.

Ms JODI McKAY: This would be a pretty good way to achieve that.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: If government made a decision of that nature, then it would need a mechanism for charging. This would be one possibility.

The CHAIR: Given that the intention of the Government is not to charge transport users at this point in time, is there any limitation on the time period after which you tap off your travel and then exit the car park?

Ms WHEELER: The business rules that we are currently working to, which are still being finalised, is the vehicle needs to exit with a valid public transport trip up to 18 hours after the vehicle entered the car park.

The CHAIR: So to clarify, there is no time between the commuter coming off that tap off on the way home, jumping into their car and driving out of the car park? I understand there is an 18 hour maximum in total, but you are not saying that you have to be exiting the car park within an half an hour of getting off your train or anything like that?

Ms WHEELER: At this time we have not defined a business rule that has a time period. However, it may be that in the future we do, where that time period may be, for example, a one-hour period whereby the customer can end their last public transport trip and needs to leave the car park within that time frame.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Do you know if the technology allows you to do that at the moment?

Ms WHEELER: I am sorry, I do not know.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Does the technology allow you to determine when they alighted public transport in relation to the time gap to then exiting the car park?

Ms WHEELER: My understanding of the technology is that the technology does record the time that the last trip was taken and then, with the vehicle recognition we know when the vehicle entered the car park, we can then make business rules that will allow us to monitor and, I guess, manage the car park to those business rules.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: I recognise that it records the last time, but is that record available in real time to the car park at the exit gate?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: My understanding of the Opal card technology is that exit time is written to the card, so yes.

Ms WHEELER: Yes, I believe it is.

The CHAIR: The B-Line trial aside, has the department considered charging higher fees for people using commuter car park spaces who are not commuters?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: B-Line aside?

The CHAIR: Yes.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: No. We have been examining alternatives for trials on other parts of the network but the focus at the moment is on B-Line.

Ms JODI McKAY: How long is the trial?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: We have said we will commence the trial next year.

Ms WHEELER: We have not put a time frame around the trial at this point.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Yes. We are expecting to use the trial to monitor customer behaviour and we are to report back to Cabinet periodically on the progress of it.

Mr GREG WARREN: What is the anticipated associated cost post 18 hours?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: We are still working through the details at the moment, but it needs to be a commercial rate. It is intended to be a clear pricing signal that there is no benefit in parking your car in a commuter car park. If you are not going to use public transport you are probably better off going to the local commercial car park.

Mr GREG WARREN: Once they hit 18 hours and one minute, would it be drawn back 18 hours? Would the commuter potentially be charged for that 18 hours plus the extended time?

Ms WHEELER: No. It starts after the 18-hour period for the commuter.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: The idea is there might be commuters who might be tempted to park their car in the commuter car park, head to the airport, travel and come back several days later. That is what is known as long-term parking, and there are other ways to get public transport if that is your intent. A commercial rate will apply if commuters are intending to their car in a commuter car park for several days because, again, it deprives the regular commuter of the opportunity to use that space.

Mr GREG WARREN: Would the cost of 18 hours and one minute be an incorporated cost that includes the previous 18 hours? What is not being counted back, would the cost of 18 hours and one minute incorporate the previous 18 hours and then incur an hourly rate from there? I put myself in the position of a

commuter who may commit from, for example, Sydenham to Newcastle for a work trip and then spend the night there. I am trying to work out what potential costs that may or may not be incurred to that commuter.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: We have not worked out the business rules around that yet. We are still working through all the details of the business rules, having just been approved to proceed. We are looking at how commercial car parks work—for instance, at the shopping centre where I park, if I park for more than two hours there is one rate charged for all of the time that I have parked there.

Mr GREG WARREN: Can you provide the Committee with an update on the B-Line trial? You said it is anticipated next year. Is that correct?

Ms WHEELER: We are anticipating that at the end of this year two of the car parks will be live and we will look to have the controlled access capability in those car parks at the end of this year. The remaining car parks will be early in the first half of next year.

Mr GREG WARREN: Is there any reason that that particular area on the northern beaches was chosen for the trial?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: The thinking was around commuter car parks, because commuter car parks are being installed in areas where there is a lot of commercial activity—

Mr GREG WARREN: Yes, but there are a lot of commuter car parks all over Sydney. I am trying to understand why the northern beaches would be chosen.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Because there is nothing there at the moment and therefore trialling it from day one enables us to measure commuter response from a basis of no car parking being there to sending a clear signal that car parking is for commuters. Again, it is really a decision for Government as to exactly where the car park trials occur.

Mr GREG WARREN: Are there any plans to extend the trial to other areas in a similar situation with new parking?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Again, we presented Government with a number of options. It is a decision for Government as to whether there are other areas in which it might conduct a similar trial to charge non-commuters for their use of commuter car parking space.

The CHAIR: As you can see, the members of this Committee are very keen to have trials in their areas supporting public transport and making sure that our local residents have enough access to the commuter spaces provided. I asked earlier about Opal card technology, but we ended up speaking about the B-Line and the Opal card system on it. If trials on restricting non-commuter movements were successful after the B-Line trial, how difficult would it be to roll out Opal card technology on existing commuter car parks?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: The rate-limiting step is not likely to be Opal card technology itself; it is likely to be the boom gates, the readers and all the configuration of the car park that goes with it. The only purpose the Opal card is being used for is to demonstrate that a public transport trip has been taken. The software is building a link between that and standard car parking technology. That is not without some technical challenges, but it is not, therefore, the Opal validation function that is actually the rate-limiting step; it is how quickly, at what cost and how you would install boom gate technology at access and exit points and what the impact might be on local traffic and local road networks. There are various design guidelines you have to adhere to if you are going to install a boom gate at an entrance to any sort of building or car park. We have to assess sites on a site-by-site basis and come up with a design solution to get the car parking technology installed.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to that, has there been any consideration of changing the policy on free parking or any recommendations from the department?

Mr WING: Not that I am aware of, no.

Mr GREG WARREN: The first thing people in the community think when they see a boom gate going in at, say, a shopping centre, is, "I've got to pay for parking now." If you are a local commuter or consumer, the first thing you would look for is some certainty.

Ms JODI McKAY: I think all but one witness group today indicated that a nominal fee should be applied.

The CHAIR: To clarify, all of the witnesses who have appeared before the Committee prior to you today strongly supported a nominal fee being applied. In one submission, for whatever reason, they did not believe it was necessary—

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: This is a nominal fee for any person using the commuter car park—

Ms JODI McKAY: No, for commuters. It would be connected to the Opal card.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: I think in our submission we have provided evidence of what we have done in terms of a jurisdictional scan. There are other jurisdictions where there are nominal charges even for commuters in using commuter car parks. If your question is about that technology and whether it could be charged to an Opal card, that would require some software development. I do not want to put an estimate on it but the current configuration of the system does not naturally allow charging for anything other than the four modes of public transport. We are developing what is known as an applications programming interface [API] platform, a technical piece of kit that will enable private ferries to be charged.

You will be able to pay for a private ferry using Opal card. An announcement was made earlier this year, and it is taking us a reasonable period of time to develop the API and to modify the software system to enable that payment transaction to occur. That would be the technical path that we would use, but it would take some time and come at some cost, none of which has been quantified or assessed at this stage.

Mr GREG WARREN: How much money is spent on commuter car parking in New South Wales every year?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Spent by whom?

Ms JODI McKAY: By you.

Mr WING: Building commuter car parking?

Ms JODI McKAY: Yes.

Mr GREG WARREN: By operational and capital.

Mr WING: The difficulty of providing a separated figure is that we do not actually build separate commuter car parks; we build commuter car parks as part of innovative precincts. We have spent over \$1 million on the Transport Access Program in the last few years. That includes commuter car parks but it is not as though we have set out to build commuter car parks separately from other parts of the interchange at the station.

Ms JODI McKAY: I would argue that point: What are you doing in Ashfield bar building a commuter car park?

Mr WING: In a lot of places generally what we have done is we have gone in and we have said, "This is the station. The station needs some kind of upgrades."

Ms JODI McKAY: But there is no other upgrade occurring at Ashfield. I am just challenging you on that because the Transport Access Program should be able to say how much you are spending on commuter car parks. You should be able to say that as opposed to what an easy access upgrade is. I would challenge you on that.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Within the TAP there are a number of different components that have been delivered. We struggle with the question because with Ashfield, as a case in point, if we are building only a commuter car park then you would be able to put your finger on the number that we spent there but if you took another location where we were building a car park, doing lifts and other things in the TAP, then those costs are not separated out and there is a project overhead.

Ms JODI McKAY: You should be able to separate it out. Are you telling me that when someone gives you a quote, they are not saying, "This is the cost of the car park"?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: I am not the project guy.

Mr GRANT: There are other development costs which apply to all elements of the Transport Access Program, whether it is the interchanges, whether it is the easy access upgrades, whether it is commuter car parks or bike sheds so a lot of the development work is common totally across the program and I do not have a number that actually separates all of it.

Ms JODI McKAY: Because one of things we have had today is that there is no transparency in how the TAP or the parking space levy is spent in regard to commuter car parking and that transparency actually goes to how government determines what is a priority without political interference as well but it comes back to how those pools of money are spent. Let me clarify—I should go back—the TAP and the parking space levy are the only pools of money that are spent on commuter car parks?

Mr GRANT: No, there is also the Waterways Fund, which funds ferry wharf upgrades.

Ms JODI McKAY: So those three funds.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: And there would new project budgets, so for instance, in the case of metro—

Ms JODI McKAY: Yes, of course, or B-Line?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Yes, so it is within the project budget.

Ms JODI McKAY: Although you did forget to put in the cost of the B-Line commuter car parks in each of them initially.

Mr GREG WARREN: What is the average cost per car park space on the ground as well as elevated car parking space?

Mr GRANT: I do not have that figure.

Mr WING: But in any event it would actually depend on whether we have to acquire land or not and the value of the land in that area.

Ms JODI McKAY: Part of the challenge we have here is understanding—and one of the witnesses gave this evidence that they want a comparison of the first mile-last mile transport versus the cost of commuter car parking. They want government to look at that. How do we know that commuter car parking is the right way to go? What is the cost to government of this? How do we quantify whether commuter car parking is worth it or not?

Mr WING: The way we decide or think about how we are going to resolve all these things is we look at it from a station basis. We say that a station needs an upgrade for some reason or we are building a new station, as with the metro, so we have a lot of different ways in which people get access to that station. They can walk there, they can catch a bus there, they can drive there and park, they can drive there and be dropped off, they can catch a taxi, they can come there by rideshare, they can cycle there, they can bikeshare now. There are a lot of ways they can get there and in fact commuter car parking is a very small part of it. There are about 36,000—

Ms JODI McKAY: How do we quantify the cost—

The CHAIR: If I can put it a different way, if we are not looking at the cost, to get an idea around it, can we look at the fact that your submission notes that there is a scarcity of data available around the role that first mile-last mile transport plays with respect to hire cars and taxis. Do you have any research available on how you are going to improve or gain greater access to that data?

Ms JODI McKAY: Sorry, but I still come back to the cost of commuter car parking. How do we make recommendations in regard to commuter car parking when we do not understand what government is spending on commuter car parking?

Mr WING: I guess I would suggest that in a sense commuter car parking is part of that broader interchange so really the recommendation should be around: Is commuter car parking a useful way of making access to the station? There are a lot of different ways; there are a million trips on the train system every day. There are only 36,000 commuter car spaces around so clearly that is a very small part of how people get access to the network, but it is a part, so that is why I am saying that what we are doing is trying to build an overall interchange. We had some stuff in the Long Term Transport Master Plan about how we think about interchanges and when we get into interchanges, every one of them might have a different way of interfacing. People in the local area might all be living very close and prefer to be able to get there by walking. They may be living further away in which case we need more commuter car parks. The planning varies very much from space to space.

Ms JODI McKAY: I understand what you are saying; I just do not accept you cannot tell us the cost of an extra car park.

The CHAIR: In building this holistic picture, I go back to my original question, which is: Are you doing any work around the role that hire cars and taxis are playing in this space?

Mr WING: Exactly right. We are always thinking about what role do each of these different forms of transport play in different locations. Generally before we plan something we are already consulting with the community about what it is like in their area. In some areas you ride, so rideshare is going to make a big difference as to how people get there. We have been consulting already on the Future Transport Strategy, which is the next phase of the long-term master plan. That includes doing research and consulting with people on how they travel now and how they will travel in the future because it is clear to us that young people travel differently to how I travel.

Mr GREG WARREN: Has there been any cost analysis or cost comparison done as to having a more integrated transport solution point to point—that is, from home, bus to the train station to work, train station, bus and then home—compared with the cost of commuter parking and people commuting in their car by road to the station? Does Transport for NSW have any of those associated costs and the subsequent comparison?

Mr WING: We are doing a trial at the moment so we have a trial of on-demand services that has been announced; that is happening at the moment. We will then look at some of those different kinds of services and a lot of different ones too, so that will give us data about what is the value to people of those different services.

Mr GREG WARREN: How are you going to make a comparison if you do not know how much commuter car parking costs?

Mr WING: In a sense what we would have to do is look at each location and say: What would actually be the different options we have here? What is the total cost of the project? How much demand is there for the different kinds of options? Yes, we would have to say: To build this much commuter car parking here with this location, with this land value, with this precinct approach as opposed to what people actually want to do, trading that off against how people want to get there by other means, that is what we would have to do in each location. I suppose what I am saying is that it is very difficult to say there is a set answer for every location because in a sense each location is different.

Mr GREG WARREN: Further to Ms McKay's earlier point with regards to Ashfield, Glenfield station had a sole purpose car park built. How much was that car park? My point is there must be an understanding as to how much these car parks cost in certain and varying areas, with an average cost broken down under each car parking space. I know that the private sector does this, whether it is in a shopping centre or elsewhere.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: When project costs are estimated they use quantity surveyors and quantity surveyors will provide you with a view as to what the construction cost may be and that will be driven by a number of variables to do with design. In other words, you could probably get a range but what is going to drive it is the associated land value and whether it is an at-grade car park or whether it is a multi-deck car park but land value is going to influence it strongly. Those sorts of costs will be held somewhere within Transport for NSW as part of estimates of construction costs of various locations but whether they could be separated out and identified, I cannot tell you because I do not know if the quantity surveyor just kind of looks at a project and goes, "Well, there's so much concrete in this—some here, some here and some there."

Ms JODI McKAY: We can end this now. Could you provide the Committee with a range?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: We would have to take that on notice and see what we are able to provide.

The CHAIR: I return to point-to-point transport and also look at some of the evidence we have received today as a Committee. The Committee has received submissions calling for an expansion of the Opal network, and we touched on Opal with you earlier today. There have been submissions asking for the Opal system to be tied to the use of Uber and also submissions asking for the Opal network to be tied into taxis. Does the department have any views on the use of Opal outside the existing public transport network?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Transport for NSW released a transport technology road map earlier this year and on that transport technology road map it does identify five strategies which we are going to pursue in each of those three different focus areas. One of those is to develop a single mobility account for customers. It is a technology road map and therefore it is not a structured plan for delivery of a particular piece of functionality. In essence we understand from a customer's perspective it would be desirable to be able to use Opal card to pay for a broader range of mobility options and we are looking at how we could develop the technology to enable that. To be clear about that, in other words taking the Opal card from what you use today to pay for public transport to a concept that we call Opal Pay, which uses the Opal card to pay for other forms of mobility. Again, it would require the same sort of technology approach in terms of the development of an API platform with a standard exchange mechanism for a third party payment system. Then we would need a technical agreement for the technical interface and a commercial agreement for how the money flows.

In essence it is something that we have given consideration to at a conceptual level and is an area that we want to incubate using the technology, but at this stage it is uncertain. We do not have a project delivery plan or anything like that. Our first step is to create the API platform, enable payment for private ferries, which is in essence a first-use case, then look at how customers behave with it, look at how the system performs, look at the end-to-end technical solution and any consequential impacts for them for the back office and the infrastructure, because the whole thing was bought and sized for the task that it performs today, which is public transport payments. We need to gather a lot more information and understand the technical solution and the cost consequences of that before we boldly step into that space. We are, through installing Opal as a payment

mechanism for private ferries, going to establish the data-gathering mechanism for that to see if a business case can be made.

The CHAIR: I am particularly fascinated with the on-demand bus trials, and I have said earlier today that I have one in my electorate. Given the interest in on-demand transport as we have been discussing today, I appreciate that it is early and that most of these trials have not started, but have any trials started? I know that the trial in Miranda has not. Do you have any further information available?

Mr GRANT: The very first trial started this morning. It is in the Bankstown area run by Punchbowl. We are only into the very first hours of the on-demand trials. There is actually no particular advice to give you, apart from the fact that the first one is in place and that there will be another eight rolling out by the end of the year.

Ms JODI McKAY: When is the trial starting in the electorate of Miranda?

The CHAIR: November. Does the department presently have any fixed view as to when it would be reporting back on the success or otherwise of the trials?

Mr GRANT: This is one of those projects where Transport went into this with no fixed view. The procurement process was very different from the procurement we normally run in that we went to the market and said that you tell us what is best practice out there, what are the opportunities. Each project is slightly different. They are there to complement the existing transport network, not to replace it. We really want to see what the customer response is, what the market response is, what the costs are but also what technology or systems are needed to support these to roll out. We will be very closely monitoring them but this is not the type of project where there is a very fixed view on what the outcome will be, because the outcome will be what it will be.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: I would like to know what the Glenfield standalone car park cost. Presumably you did not build it. It was constructed by the private sector, in which case they would have handed you invoices to be paid, so you would know the total cost to the private sector. Did you project manage it, do you know?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: The project management was handled by another division, so I am not aware of the costs. I am not sure if they provided us with an itemised account, but I am happy to take the question on notice.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: But you paid the bill.

Ms JODI McKAY: Coming back to the issue both of us are having here, is it possible for you to provide a cost for standalone commuter car parks that have not involved any interchange upgrade?

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: If we could go with the Glenfield one, if it is a standalone building.

Ms JODI McKAY: Like Ashfield. It should not be this hard.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: It should be fairly easy to come up with what it ultimately cost you for construction, project management and even the land acquisition.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: My understanding is that Transport Access Program projects are reported on in the annual report.

Ms JODI McKAY: Not separately.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Not separately?

Ms JODI McKAY: No.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Again, I am not sure if there is an itemised account there but if you could clarify what the question is. If it is specifically about Glenfield, then we will take the question on notice and obtain what information we have.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: I would like to know, if the Chair consents, the construction costs of that building.

Ms JODI McKAY: Could we ask for all standalone so we get an idea about how much money is going to be committed for car parking?

Mr GREG WARREN: Holsworthy is the same.

Ms JODI McKAY: Ashfield. There are quite a few.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: I have to point out again with Glenfield, if you give consideration to what was built there, it was a whole new station and I think—I stand to be corrected—but it was a significant cost and it was bid out to some major construction companies and they would have bid a single price. Whether they bid a schedule which broke it down to car parks, toilets, escalators, lifts, whatever, I cannot say because I was not part of the procurement process. But based on my experience elsewhere, I am not certain that you will find that you get an itemised account in the manner that you are talking.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: No, but the estimate of the quantity surveyor [QS] estimate—

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Which is a reference.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: Which is a reference. If there was a significant difference between what the QS came up with and what the contractor charged you, then they would have had to seek from you a variation to the contract and it would be spelt out whether there were significant overruns in one particular part of the project. Or we could just look at the QS estimate and then what it actually ended up costing the project and we could probably work our way back from there.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: I have to say that I am Deputy Secretary, Customer Services. My background is marketing and previously Chief Executive of Great Southern Rail, the operator of the Ghan and the Indian Pacific. That is the extent of my direct experience with managing capital projects. So I give you my remarks with the basis of all of the authoritative knowledge that a marketing person generally has of capital projects. My understanding from sitting on various procurement processes and having had executive responsibility in past life for these things is QS operates on the basis of estimates of quantities to complete a whole of a construction task and sometimes it is broken down at some level. But often it is broken down by nature of activity, which means that any concrete required anywhere is just kind of itemised in it and you get an estimate on concrete and this and that and the other, it does not necessarily itemise the object. And QS gives you an estimate cost, whereas—

Ms JODI McKAY: All we want to know is the cost of a commuter car park. It is pretty simple. This should not be hard.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: You do not have to provide it now.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: For a customer services and marketing guy—

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: We are not asking you to provide it now. We are asking for it to be provided.

The CHAIR: Can we agree that the question is taken on notice? We have 20 minutes left with the department. Clearly there is not an answer available at this point of time. Perhaps we can look at the other terms of reference of our inquiry and ask the department for an answer later.

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH: We are not being bloody-minded here, it is part of the terms of reference for our inquiry. A number of other witnesses have led the inquiry to this point and we need to know what the costs are.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: We will take the question on notice. We are not trying to obscure things, we are trying to point out that generally, not in the case of Ashfield, when you look at a project there are a number of elements of which the car park is but one. It might not be the case that we can readily provide the information as to the costs. Item two, the costs are likely to vary and vary very significantly dependent upon project specific positions: be they the underlying cost of the land or the nature of the car park design. We will take the question on notice and I will speak to our colleagues and see what information we can provide to you about a range of costs. You were specifically asking about Glenfield, so we will ask about Glenfield as an exemplar. You were asking about Ashfield.

Ms JODI McKAY: I am asking about all commuter car parks. Take that question on notice.

The CHAIR: The Committee received an overwhelming number of submissions about both Quakers Hill and Schofields train stations. A large number of individuals made submissions to this inquiry. It is highly unlikely but there were organised campaigns in these areas, they were driven by local members who believe that their community is facing a lack of commuter car parking. As a result there are a number of individuals who have made submissions to this inquiry. We do not have the benefit of hearing from all of these people. Given you are in front of us it is only fair we put the question to you regarding those two train stations and ask you whether or not you are aware of the concerns being faced by the commuters of both Quakers Hill and Schofields and if there are any plans to create any additional car parking in either of these areas?

Mr GRANT: I will commence answering that question. Schofields station was rebuilt prior to the establishment of Transport for NSW. It was not developed in the way we would develop a station now where we look at the station, we look at the parking, we look at the interchange holistically and make sure it relates to the local roads. About a year ago there was an announcement where Transport for NSW was working with Blacktown council to increase the car parking available by 60 spaces. A key part of that same piece of work is to slightly shift the interchange and the access arrangements so the buses can come more reliably in and out of Schofields station.

If we can get that reliability happening it will make public transport a more attractive option for people in that area. The T74 bus service runs from Riverstone to Blacktown via The Ponds and Schofields station. That is one of the routes that is using that upgraded interchange and those upgraded roads in the vicinity. In April this year we increased services on the T74. In the June State budget the Government announced that there would be more services put on to the T74. We are taking a holistic approach to Schofields. We are looking at the commuter parking but in parallel. We are looking to make sure the assets and services for the T74 are operating in parallel. We do not want to rely purely on commuter parking as the way to get interchange going into Schofields.

The CHAIR: A large number of submissions that we received made specific comment about the lack of ability to find a Government policy around commuter car parking and a strategy for commuter car parking. Does such a policy exist? If so, could it be better publicised?

Mr WING: It comes back to the earlier question about how we make decisions about how we upgrade stations. The Long Term Transport Master Plan set out information about how we categorise interchanges and how we decide which interchanges we need to deal with. That looks at the demand, whether it is currently accessible, the nature of the kind of trips people are making through it and the local area. Generally, when we are looking at stations and how we deal with them we are looking at all of those things. We want to do the entire interchange to look at how to get people on to public transport.

The other thing that tends to happen is if we are going to do a station any way, for example the metro, then that is the natural time to do all of those things, including any commuter car parking. That policy is set out in the Long Term Transport Master Plan at that high level. It does come down to each interchange and again future transport is something we are consulting on now—which is the next iteration. It is consulting with the public on exactly how do you see yourself travelling in the future.

Ms JODI McKAY: You say there is no discussion that the Minister would have with you to say, "Can you prioritise that community car park or upgrade?" There is no political involvement in determining the priorities?

Mr WING: The Minister has not had any discussions with me about that.

Ms JODI McKAY: Every single one is done on merit and there is no political interference whatsoever in determining a priority for an upgrade?

Mr WING: Governments make decisions at the end of the day about their capital projects and programs. All decisions are decisions of Government. What we are saying is that the overall principles are those which are set out in the Long Term Transport Master Plan.

The CHAIR: Sticking to guiding principles the PeopleTrans submission suggested that perhaps there should be a Sydney metro-wide parking plan. How does the department feel about that and having an overarching set of principles to abide by that are enforceable by local government?

Mr WING: About commuter car parks or generally about parking around stations?

The CHAIR: Commuter car parking specifically in our case, but the submission was broader than that.

Mr WING: As far as commuter car parking it would be important it was integrated into the overall question of interchanges. That would be the important thing, not that we had a special standalone policy for commuter car parks only, but that we had a policy for getting people on to public transport. That is key here.

Ms JODI McKAY: The Committee has heard that it is not just about building a multistorey commuter car park. Commuter car parking far more than that. It can be on-street parking that is regulated. The question is what role local government will have in that. They have spoken of an overall strategy which could look at using shopping centre car parks that are not used, using government buildings that have spare parks, or looking at how you work with residents who may have a driveway. It has been said there is no overall parking strategy or ability

to work with government on commuter car parking beyond Transport for NSW, where it has to be a multistorey. That is the only definition of commuter car parking.

Mr WING: I think that is a fair question. The real thing is we have a policy and an approach to how we deal with interchanges. We work with local councils but different councils take different views on how they deal with things. You are aware that Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] has in the past put in rules to stop some councils from reducing the amount of car parking around stations when a new commuter car park is built. Other councils work closely with us and assist us. It is a good question. If the Committee was thinking about such a policy it would be an interesting thing to look at.

The CHAIR: Some submissions have argued that the creation of new car parks lead to greater demand and building additional car parks is a limited solution. New car parks can be at capacity for the morning commute within a year, or sooner, of their creation. Can you comment on this suggestion and does Transport for NSW consider this to be a problem?

Mr WING: As long as those people are all catching the train, that is fantastic. We have just talked about what we are trying to do for people who are not catching the train. That is a problem because it is putting people off using public transport. Everyone who is driving and then catching a train into more congested areas of the city represents one less car trip on those congested roads. However, we cannot simply build our way out of all these issues. Comment was made earlier about the various new options available, including on-demand services. A commuter car park involves one or perhaps a couple of people not using a car, but an on-demand bus could carry more people. We like people using public transport, and if commuter car parks assist in achieving that, that is great. However, it is not necessarily the only or the best way to get people on to public transport.

The CHAIR: Parking Australia's submission stated that commuter car parks are best located within a five- to 10-minute walk of the commuter hub. Does the department have any view about that in terms of a strategic planning objective and its suitability in the current climate?

Mr WING: We are talking about a commuter hub or a local commuting precinct. There is definitely a move towards more integrated land use. Where we can achieve that it is a much better outcome because people can do multiple things. However, I do not know whether that is possible in every case.

The CHAIR: Is a 10-minute walk to a train station not a suitable outcome for commuters?

Mr WING: The problem we face is that as our population ages we do not necessarily want people to have to walk for 10 minutes.

Ms JODI McKAY: What about healthy living? What about NSW Health's view?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: NSW Health would support a 15-minute walk in each direction.

Ms JODI McKAY: Forty minutes every day.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: There is likely to be a range of commuter responses. From one perspective I could say, "Let's ask our customers."

Ms JODI McKAY: They said that if it is more than five or 10 minutes people will still do it. However, there was other evidence that it needed to be closer and located at an interchange. The Committee needs to know when it stops being a commuter car park that encourages people to use public transport. If a car park cannot be built next to a station, how far away can it be before it discourages people?

Mr WING: I do not think we are doing anything scientific; we are all working off our own estimates at this point.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: As a general comment, I would say that what the customers want is certainty that they will catch the next service. The commuter car park tends to be a source of anxiety because people do not know how long it will take them to find a parking space and then get to the station. There is not such a big problem when there are frequent services, and that is certainly much more the case now than it was. However, the question of certainty and overall commute time will play into it. We know that a number of customers are driven by absolute time. I suspect that the further away the car park is the more likely it is that customers will consider alternative forms of transport to get to the station. Heaven forbid, it might be a barrier to the use of public transport if it is too far away. Where that line is, I cannot say.

The CHAIR: We have well and truly covered the physical car park today. Mr Wing spoke about looking at on-demand forms of transport. We have mentioned buses, but does Transport for NSW have any further comment to make about the integration of on-demand services or any other mechanisms before the Committee makes its recommendations?

Mr WING: I can only suggest that we need to be sure that we have options for the future. We cannot predict every kind of new service or technology, but we must ensure that we can adapt to them. If people will walk to the station, that is fantastic. If they will catch a taxi or use a ridesharing service, or if they are dropped off, that is great. They might use a bikesharing service in future. We must make sure we do not cut out anything. That is our main comment.

The CHAIR: Do we have any information about people's attitudes to commuter car parking as opposed to their interest in using Uber, a bus or even walking?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: I am not sure that we have covered trade-off decisions between forms of transfer. We have talked to customers about their experiences of commuter car parks and we understand that, but we have not done any studies specifically on trade-off decisions.

The CHAIR: What is the general customer experience of commuter car parking?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: It is highly valued, but it is also a source of frustration and anxiety when it is crowded. In some instances there is demand for more.

The CHAIR: Is it more a demand not to feel frustrated when they are commuting to the station, or is it purely a demand for a physical car parking space?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: It is a need for certainty. Some customers would like to feel confident that they will get a parking spot and be able to get to their next service on time. The source of anxiety is the uncertainty about a parking space being available. Research has indicated that some customers would be prepared to pay a premium for the certainty of getting a parking spot. That is not currently government policy and it is not a proposal that we have put to the Government. However, it has come up unprompted in our market research.

Mr GREG WARREN: What is Transport for NSW's view on integration and relationships with the private sector in terms of public car parks and selling government assets to provide them?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: It is not current policy.

Mr GREG WARREN: Is it something you would rule out?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: As I said, it is not current policy. We have worked closely with the private sector in location-specific instances. For example, we have an arrangement with Westfield at Hornsby to use part of its commercial car park while we do some redevelopment of the station. It is not current policy, and they are generally decisions for the Government.

Mr GREG WARREN: What about publicly owned commuter car parks? Is there any intention to have the private sector facilitate them or buy them for the purpose of expanding or controlling them?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: They are interesting concepts that the Committee might like to address in its report. However, it is not something I am aware of—

Mr GREG WARREN: The Committee has not discussed the issue; I am simply trying to establish whether any discussion has occurred in Transport for NSW, or if the department has had a conversation with the Government about those concepts being explored.

Mr WING: The issue is that we would need to acquire land in some circumstances. Some of it may already be owned by private operators. That is opposed to a general policy of how we would deal with those situations.

The CHAIR: That concludes the public hearing. I again thank the witnesses who have appeared before the Committee today. I also thank the Committee members for their contributions and Hansard and the committee staff for their work. I remind witnesses that the Committee may wish to send additional questions in writing and your replies will form part of the evidence and will be made public. Are you happy to provide written replies to further questions?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH: Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew)

The Committee adjourned at 15:59.