

THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR

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Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4

North-West Sydney Sector Transport (Inquiry)

Rouse Hill Community Submission

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a submission to the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, for the North-West Sydney Sector Transport Inquiry.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this report is to highlight the issues of concern to the residents regarding the current public transport services within Rouse Hill.

Investigate and report on a solution that will benefit both the community of Rouse Hill and be cost effective for the State Government.

INTRODUCTION

The suburb of Rouse Hill is situated in the Shire of Baulkham Hills, 42 kilometres north-west of Sydney and 18 kilometres north of Parramatta.

In 2001 Rouse Hill was considered a semi rural suburb within The Hills District with a comparatively small population of 3,151 ¹. By the 2006 population doubled to 6,473 ² and with the continued development in Rouse Hill and near-by suburbs of Kellyville, Kellyville Ridge, North Kellyville, Beaumont Hills, the population of this area is expected to increase further.

Rouse Hill is also the home of the \$1 billion regional centre, known as The New Rouse Hill Town Centre. Stage One was opened in the September 2007 with Stage 2 opened in March 2008. The completed project will include over 1,500 residential dwellings, up to 180,000 m2 of retail/commercial floor space and more than 20 hectares of open space and is anticipated to be finished by 2015.

The completed development will include;

- Community facilities including library, child care and community hall;
- Two school sites (one private and one public);
- Retail facilities including supermarkets, specialty shops and entertainment venues;
- Commercial development;
- Residential development in a range of styles;
- Transport interchange and
- Open space and recreation areas.

Rouse Hill located on Windsor Rd is close to the M2 motorway allowing residents to travel to Sydney ideally within 40 minutes (on a good day) and to Parramatta within 20 minutes. Public Transport to and from the suburb is provided by Hillsbus and Busways.

1. *Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census*

2. *Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 Census*

2006 CENSUS STATISTICS FOR ROUSE HILL

Population Figures

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Persons</u>
Age groups:			
0-4 years	433	455	888
5-14 years	633	595	1,228
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>1066</i>	<i>1050</i>	<i>2116</i>
15-19 years	178	145	323
20-24 years	118	129	247
25-34 years	579	700	1,279
35-44 years	652	581	1,233
45-54 years	315	291	606
55-64 years	219	208	427
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>2061</i>	<i>2054</i>	<i>4115</i>
65-74 years	81	81	162
75-84 years	28	36	64
85 years and over	9	7	16
Total	3,246	3,228	6,474

Composition of Family

	<u>Families</u>	<u>%</u>
Couple family with no children	400	23.3
Couple family with children	1,161	67.7
One parent family with children	150	8.7
Other family	5	0.3
Total	1,716	

Vehicle Ownership

	<u>Dwellings</u>	<u>%</u>
Number of motor vehicles per dwelling:		
None	26	1.4
1 motor vehicle	365	19.4
2 motor vehicles	1,091	58.1
3 motor vehicles	250	13.3
4 or more motor vehicles	106	5.6
Number of motor vehicles not stated	40	2.1
Total	1,878	

Industry of Employment

	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	31	1.0
Mining	7	0.2
Manufacturing	369	11.4
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	32	1.0
Construction	356	11.0
Wholesale trade	237	7.3
Retail trade	340	10.5
Accommodation & food services	133	4.1
Transport, postal & warehousing	160	4.9
Information media & telecommunications	76	2.3
Financial & insurance services	194	6.0
Rental, hiring & real estate services	81	2.5
Professional, scientific & technical services	235	7.2
Administrative & support services	83	2.6
Public administration & safety	169	5.2
Education & training	216	6.7
Health care & social assistance	269	8.3
Arts & recreation services	34	1.0
Other services	156	4.8
Inadequately described	36	1.1
Not stated	29	0.9
Total	3,243	

Method of Travel to Work (employed persons aged 15 and over)

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Train	89	77	166	5.1
Bus	25	32	57	1.8
Car	1,396	968	2,364	72.9
Taxi	10	0	10	0.3
Truck	58	3	61	1.9
Motorbike/scooter	4	0	4	0.1
Bicycle	4	0	4	0.1
Other	7	0	7	0.2
Walked only	19	14	33	1.0
Worked at home	42	113	155	4.8
Did not go to work	103	231	334	10.3
Not stated	27	22	49	1.5
Total	1,784	1,460	3,244	100.0

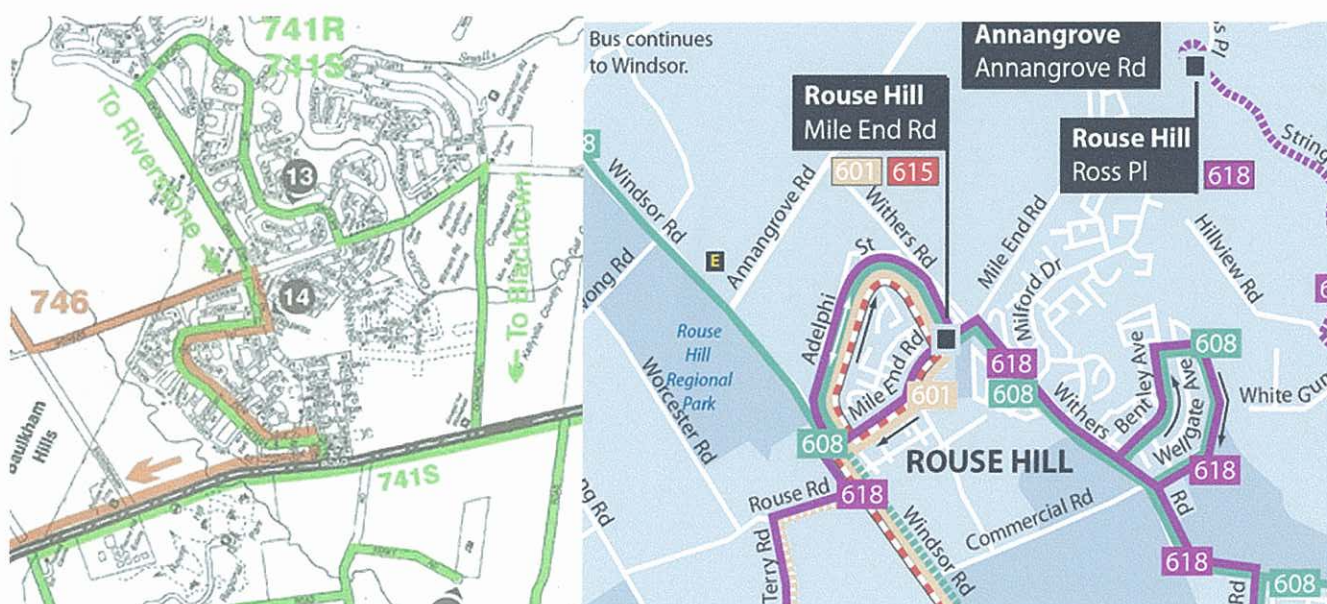
TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2001 the NSW Government announced an increase in the funding for the upgrade of Windsor and Old Windsor Roads to provide four lanes from Parramatta to Windsor by the end of 2006. The 'All the Way to Windsor' upgrade was the then largest urban arterial road program by the State Government. The upgrade was to lead to quicker journeys for motorists as well as providing a safer road environment for all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.

Windsor Road is one of the oldest roads in Australia. It is the major route linking Sydney's north-west sector to key employment and commercial centres in Parramatta and Blacktown. It also links to Sydney's orbital road network via the M2 motorway and the M7 Western Sydney Orbital motorway.

In conjunction with the upgrade of Windsor Road, a rapid bus transit way (T-Way) was built to connect Parramatta with Rouse Hill and Blacktown, with a future connection to Castle Hill.

In 2002 all collector streets within Rouse Hill (appendix A) were serviced by a dedicated public transport provider, as per the NSW Government's Service Guidelines. Busways operated two routes in the area, 741 service between Riverstone and Blacktown Station travelled through Adelphi Street and Milford Drive and 746 service Box Hill to Rouse Hill, which travelled along Withers Road and Adelphi Street³.



Picture 1: Busways³ & Westbus⁴ Bus Routes in Rouse Hill 2002⁴

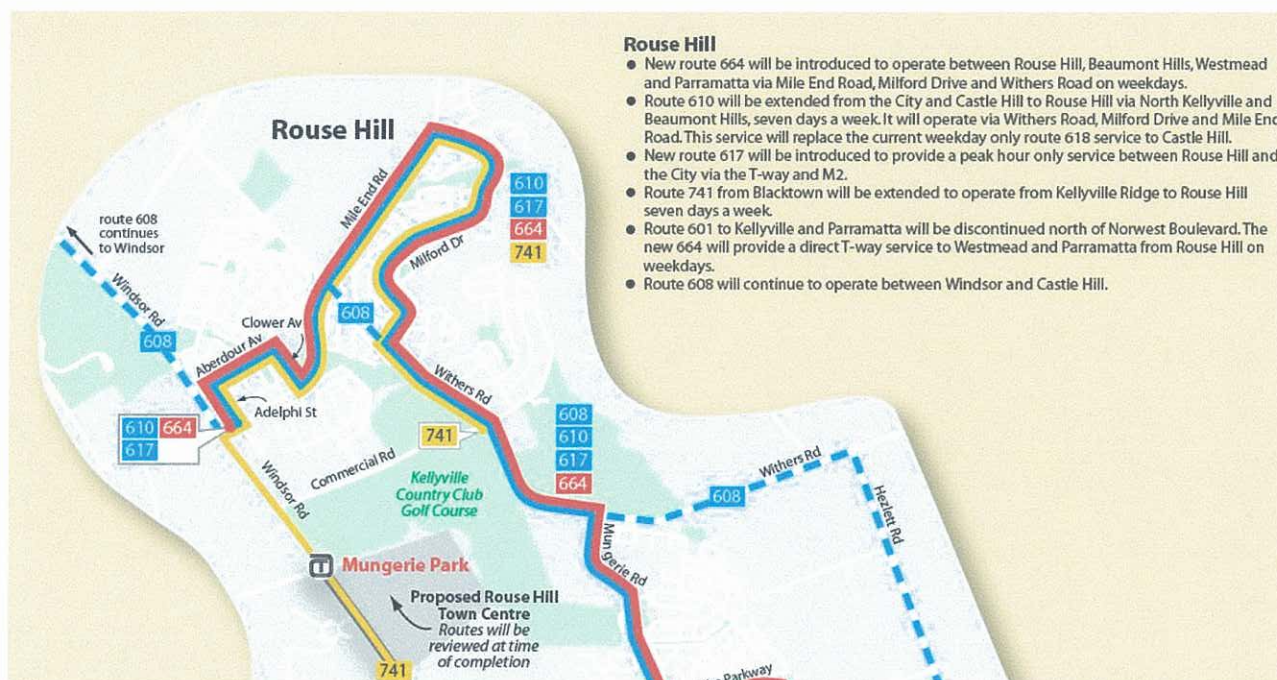
Westbus had four routes in the area⁴. The 608 Windsor to Castle Hill and the 618 Rouse Hill to Castle Hill, both routes travelled along Adelphi Street, Withers Road, Bentley Avenue and Wellgate Avenue. The 601 Rouse Hill to Parramatta and 615 Rouse Hill to the City, both routes travelled along Adelphi Street.

3. Busways Bus Timetable Routes 740, 741 & 746 - September 2002

4. Westbus Bus Guide to the Hills District - December 2002

In 2006 in preparation of the completion of the North-West T-way, the following changes were made to the routes within Rouse Hill⁵.

- Removal of Routes 601, 615 and 618.
- Removal of Adelphi Street from Route 608 Windsor to Castle Hill
- New route 664 between Rouse Hill and Parramatta.
- New route 617 peak hour weekday service between Rouse Hill and the City.
- Route 610 was extended from the City to Castle Hill to Rouse Hill.



Picture 2: Hillbus Bus Routes in Rouse Hill 2006⁵



Picture 3: Busways Bus Routes in Rouse Hill 2007⁶

5. Hillsbus Proposed T-Way Map - 2006

6. Busways Timetable Routes 742 & 746 - March 2007

Route 741 Blacktown to Riverstone via Rouse Hill was to continue through Milford Drive and Mile End Road⁷.

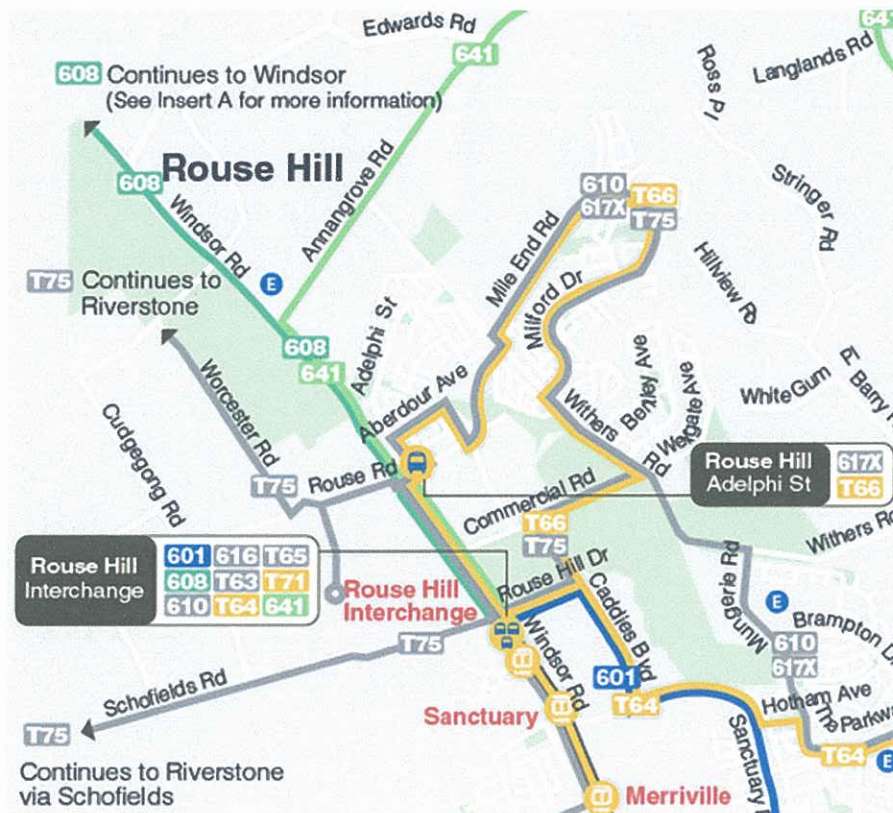
With these changes saw the removal of four services from Adelphi Street, leaving the only Busways 746 between Riverstone and Box Hill Service⁷, providing only 10 buses per weekday.

The three replacement services were re-routed through Mile End Road and Milford Drive, increasing the bus routes servicing this street and increasing the buses travelling along these residential streets from 45 to 145 per day.

March 2008, saw the completion of the The New Rouse Hill Town Centre and Interchange. The North West T-Way was also extended to include the Rouse Hill Town Centre interchange, The T-Way bus network was set up to provide direct services from Rouse Hill Town Centre to an extensive number of metropolitan wide and local destinations⁸.

In May 2008 in conjunction with the Ministry of Transport a review was undertaken to Region 4 bus network services, with proposals given for the new bus network⁹.

Following the Region 4 bus network review, there were no changes to the routes 610, 610X, 617X, 746 and T75. With the Parramatta T66 services replacing the T64 in the Rouse Hill area, and route 608 to no longer operate between Rouse Hill and Castle Hill, removing the only bus route currently servicing Bentley and Wellgate Avenues, Kellyville. These changes effectively remove all bus services from Collector Streets within the Rouse Hill Area with the exception of Mile End Road and Milford Drive.



Picture 4: Proposed Busways & Westbus Bus Routes in Rouse Hill 2008⁹

7. Busways Timetable Routes 742 & 746 - March 2007
8. Rouse Hill Town Centre Transport Information - September 2007
9. Ministry of Transport/Hillsbus - Region 4 - Proposed Bus Network - 2008

ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS OF MILFORD DRIVE

Regulatory information suggests that the current volume of traffic and the bus routes assigned to Milford Drive are not in compliance with Baulkham Hills Shire Council Development Control Plan Part E Section 15 (BHSC DCP) or the AUSTRROADS 2006 specifications for a major bus route.

The following are extracts from BHSC DCP for the Kellyville/Rouse Hill Release Area with regards to road planning and carriageway design.

Street Type	Max Traffic Volume (1)	Max No Dwellings	Design Speed	Carriageway width	Verge Width	Road Reserve	Footpath
Collector	3000 veh/d	1000	50 (20 at ped/cycle crossings)	9.5 metres	3.5 metres	16.5 metres	Yes 1.5 metres wide both sides
Access Street	2000 veh/d	200	40	8.5 metres	3.5 metres	15.5 metres	Yes 1.5 metres wide one side only

Figure 1: Extract from BHSC DCP Part E Section 15, page 13

Council, at its meeting of the Planning Services Review Committee on 4 April 2000, resolved to adopt changes to the carriageway width standards of this Development Control Plan as follows:

This indicates that any development of the area prior to April 2000, the required carriageway width for a Collector Road in the Kellyville/Rouse Hill Release Area was that of 9.5 metres and has remained unchanged ⁷. Milford Drive has a carriageway width of only 8.5 metres wide (including roll top curb and guttering, giving only 8 metres of tar), which is 1 metre short of the required width as set out in the DCP.

Road Type	Required carriageway width	
	PREVIOUS	CURRENT
Access Way	5.0 metres	6.0 metres
Access Place	6.5 metres	7.5 metres
Access Street	7.5 metres	8.5 metres
Collector Road	9.5 metres	9.5 metres (no change)

Figure 2: Extract from BHSC DCP Part E Section 15, page 59

Milford Drive has been classified by BHSC DCP as a Collector Road in the local street network. According to the BHSC DCP governing all development within the Kellyville/Rouse Hill Release Area a Collector Road and should have a carriageway width of 9.5 metres with a 3.5 metre council verge on each side ¹⁰.

10. Baulkham Hills Shire Council DCP Part E Section 15.

Table D1.5
Characteristics of Roads in Residential Subdivision Road Networks

Category/ Characteristics	Shareway	Access Place	Local Street	Collector Road	Commercial	Industrial	Distributor	Sub Arterial	2 Lane Arterial	4 Lane Arterial
Maximum No of potential tenements or vehicles/day (vpd)	6 ET 60	36 ET 390	100 ET 2000	1000 ET 6000	NA 10000	NA 10000	NA 10000	NA 20000	NA >20000	NA >20000
Carriageway Width (m)	5	5.5 to 7	8	11	13	13	15	16	16	25(15)
Verge Width (m)	variable	4	4	4.5	5	5	4.5(min)	4.5(min)	4.5(min)	4.5(min)
Road Reserve Width (m)	8.5 (min)	13.5 to 15	16	20	23	23	24	25	25	34-(m n 32)
Lanes (m)			4,4	2.5, 3.3, 2.5 (17)	3.3, 5.3, 5.3	3.3, 5.3, 5.3	4.3, 5.3, 5.4	4.5, 3.5, 3.5, 4.5	3.1, 5.3, 5.3, 5.1, 5.3 3	3.1, 5.3, 3.3, 5.3, 3.3, 5.3, 1.5, 3
Lane Type (16)				P, L, L, P	P, L, L, P	P, L, L, P	P, L, L, P	P, C, L, L, P, C	P, C, L, L, P, C	P, C, L, L, M, L, L, C, P
Line Marking Required	Optional	Optional	Intersection s Only (Traffic Calmings)	Intersection s Only Optional elsewhere (Traffic Calmings)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Kerb Type	Optional (9)	Roll Top or (9) SE	Roll Top or (9) SE	Barrier /SA	Barrier /SA	Barrier /SA	Barrier /SA	Barrier /SA		
Footpath	-	Optional	Optional	Y	CBD Paving	Y	Optional	Optional	N	N
Design Speed (km/hr)	15 max	25 max	40 max	50 max	50 max	50 max	60	80	100	110
Minimum Distance between	-	-	150	200	150	150	200	500	500	500

AUSPEC-D1 - January 06 (Copyright STR-114)

Figure 3: Extract from Austroads Guide Policy for geometric design of major urban roads – Jan 2006¹¹

According to current AUSTROADS specifications 2006, bus routes should be designated to a Collector Road and the specifications under AUSTROADS for a Collector Road are a minimum width of 11 metres and a verge width of 4.5 metres. Again, Milford Drive is only 8.5 metres wide and a verge of 4 metres. According to the current AUSTROADS specifications Milford Drive would be classified as a Local Street, with maximum traffic volume of 2,000 vehicles per day and a design speed of 40kph. Bus routes are further discussed in detail regarding appropriate criteria.

D1.21 BUS ROUTES

1. Bus routes will normally be identified by Council. It is important that the road hierarchy adequately caters for buses. The main criteria in determining the location of bus routes is that *no residents should have to walk in excess of 400 metres* to catch a bus. Normally roads above the access street in the hierarchy are designed as bus routes.

Buses

Table D1.6
Bus Route Criteria

Road	Carriageway Width (min)	Stops (Spacing)	Bays
Collector	11m	400 metre	Indented
Sub-Arterial	13m	400 metre	Shelters*
Arterial	13m	400 metre	Shelters and Bays

* Shelters are subject to Council's requirements.

Figure 4: Extract from Austroads Specifications - Jan 2006¹¹

It may be argued that Milford Drive was developed in 1999, before the AUSTROAD specifications 2006 shown above came into force. However, previous AUSTROAD specifications in place when Milford Drive was developed stated that a Collector Road with no bus routes have a minimum width of 7.4 metres and that Collector Roads on bus routes should be 9 metres minimum width with 2 metre indented parking bus bays ⁸. At the time of development, Milford Drive failed to meet the BHSC SCP however it did met the AUSTROADS specification for a *Collector Road with no bus route*.

GEOMETRIC ROAD DESIGN

Road Type	Maximum Traffic Volume (vpd) ⁽¹⁾	Maximum Speed ⁽²⁾ (kph)	Carriageway Width (m) ⁽³⁾		Parking Provisions Within Road Reserve ⁽⁴⁾	Kerbing ⁽⁵⁾	Footpath Requirement	Cycle-path Requirement	Verge Width (each side)
			Minimum	Maximum					
Collector Street Min. for Commercial / Industrial Areas	3,000 (with access to residential allotments)	60 ⁽⁶⁾	7.4 On bus routes 9.0m minimum (11.0m maximum) travelled way with 2.0m wide indented parking and bus bays	9.0	Carriageway Indented parking and bus bays on bus route to provide minimum 6.0m travelled way	Rollover/ Barrier	1.2m wide footpath	No 1.0m gap in protruberances required for cyclists (10)	As above provided adequate road reserve width for widening for future bus route required
Local Distributor Road	6,000 (no access to single dwelling residential allotments)	60 ⁽⁷⁾	7.4 Plus cycle lanes if required. 9.0m minimum with indented bus bays on bus route	9.0 12.0	Parking not permitted on carriageway (12) With Carriageway Parking	Barrier	If required 1.2m wide footpath, and/or 2.0m cycle path one side only, or two 1.5m wide cycle lanes marked on carriageway ⁽¹¹⁾	Minimum 4.0m	

AUS-SPEC-1/NSW-D1 Jun 98 (Copyright)

Figure 5: Extract from Austroads Specifications June 1998¹¹

Adjoining roads to Milford Drive, such as Withers Road and Mile End Road appear to have been constructed to specifications as Sub Arterial Roads. Greenhills Drive, which runs off Mile End Road, is an enhanced Collector Road, which has a carriageway width of 15.5m (including a 3.5m concrete median strip), this has obviously been designed to cater for the traffic use and as a future bus route to Rouse Hill Town Centre.

The carriageway design of Milford Drive through the horizontal and vertical alignment is conducive to excessive speed. Many residents have witnessed first hand both buses and other vehicles speeding along Milford Drive, and swerving around bends and parked cars. When vehicles are parked on the road, this leaves two lanes for smaller vehicles and only one lane for buses to drive through, yet the BHSC DCP Part E Section 15, 2.5 (a) clearly states:

On collector streets, which function as two-way bus routes, a travelled way allowing unobstructed movements in both directions is required. Safety at bus stops, particularly the overtaking of stationery buses, is also an important design consideration. Speed control through design is a fundamental principal of this Section of the DCP. The alignment and geometry of all collector streets are to be design for the efficient and unimpeded movement of buses ¹².

Milford Drive is both undulating and contains a number of blind bends, and there is a high probability that there will be an accident between speeding motorists and a residential vehicle entering or exiting its driveway.

11. Austroads Specifications June 1998 & January 2006

12. Baulkham Hills Shire Council DCP Part E Section 15

HISTORY OF TRAFFIC ISSUES ON MILFORD DRIVE

In 2000, the first stage of development on Milford Drive, the street was a signposted as a no through road. A second development in 2001 under a different developer saw Milford Drive extended to Mile End Road. On completion of this second development residents at the Withers Road end of Milford Drive witnessed many speeding vehicles and were concerned with the safety following several accidents occurring between Withers Road and Knox Place.



TRAFFIC INCIDENT SITES ON MILFORD DRIVE

- Collisions with stationary object or vehicles leaving the road
- Near misses witnessed by drivers and residents

Figure 6: Known Accidents & Near Misses on Milford Drive between Withers Road and Knox Place

In 2004 and within the space of 6 months the residents at No.24 Milford Drive had on two separate occasions vehicles colliding into their retaining wall (Figure 6). Residents were awoken early one morning when a taxi collided into parked car and pushing this vehicle into the retaining wall in front of No.20 Milford Drive. A further stationary vehicle was struck while parked in front of No.34 Milford Drive. These incidents and the many near misses witnessed prompted residents to contact Baulkham Hills Shire Council in March 2005 with their concerns on the traffic conditions on Milford Drive.

In April 2005, speed monitoring devices were placed in front of No.22 Milford Drive. The results showing average of 2,702 vehicles per day, with the highest number of vehicles of 2,970 travelling on the Friday ¹³. 96% of traffic being class 1 & 2 vehicles and 4% being class 3 and above, which includes trucks and buses.

The mean speed travelling along Milford Drive was recorded at 48 kph and the 85th percentile speed of 55 kph. These figures were not deemed to be unusual by BHSC for a street in the local street network and was compared with having similar road figures for four car wide street that joins two major arterial roads in Castle Hill ¹⁴. Again Milford Drive is only 8.5metres wide and within in a solely residential area.

In the two years following the first contact with Baulkham Hills Shire Council, more speed related accidents including a driver losing control, colliding with a tree, and a solid brick letterbox before finally colliding with a vehicle parked in front of the garage at No.27 Milford Drive. School children were only minutes away from a potential major incident, when a vehicle and trailer travelling around a bend on Milford Drive flipped the trailer into the retaining wall of No. 41 Carmelita Circuit, and metres from the school bus stop.

With the opening of the North-West T-Way and the changed traffic conditions in March 2007 ¹⁵, Milford Drive has been become a major bus thoroughfare¹. Residents became concerned with increase of speeding buses and the possibility of a serious accident involving a bus and car, or worse pedestrians as there is now general lack of consideration from drivers as the once calm residential road was now being perceived as a main thoroughfare. It was also during this period that residents witnessed Not In Service buses as the street appeared to being used as a turning circle.

During 2007 residents raised their concerns with the Ministry of Transport, Westbus and Hillsbus. With little or no response from these organisations residents contacted Kellyville/Rouse Hill Progress Association and Baulkham Hills Shire Council, where their concerns were tabled at Baulkham Hills Shire Council Traffic Planning Committee in August 2007, coincidentally the same date that saw the collision of two Hillsbus route 610 buses on James Mileham Drive, Kellyville. James Mileham Drive is a residential street not dissimilar to Milford Drive.

13. Baulkham Hills Shire Council – MetroCount Traffic Executive Site 800016 - April 2005

14. Baulkham Hills Shire Council – Letter Re: Traffic Conditions – Milford Drive – 23 May 2005

15. Hillsbus Bus Timetables – Routes 610, 610X, 617X & T64

In September 2007, speed monitoring devices were placed again in front of 22/23 Milford Drive. The results showing an average increase of only 140 extra vehicles per day ¹³. However, the daily figures for Thursday to Saturday showing that the traffic on this particular section of Milford Drive exceeds the maximum recommended limit of vehicles per day, reaching 3,225 on Friday. With an increase in larger class vehicles to 7%. There were no significant changes in both mean and 85th percentile speeds.

Date	Vehicle Count		Highest No. Vehicles Per Day	Mean Speed	85 th Percentile Speed	Vehicles travelling >5kph	
	Av. Daily	Weekly				Daily	Weekly
May 2005	2,702	18,921	2,971 (Friday)	48	55	405	2,838
Sep 2007	2,840	20,079	3,225 (Friday)	48	55	426	3,012

Figure 6: Average Vehicle Statistics at 22 Milford Drive – September 2007 ^{16 & 17}

Residents believe that the location of these speed monitoring devices do not accurately show the number of vehicles speeding on the street. The devices were placed 40 metres from the intersection at Carmelita Circuit, the slower speeds of the traffic both leaving and entering this intersection and those of the residents entering their driveways, will counteract those travelling well above 50kph to give a mean figure of 48kph. The devices also being 20 metres ahead of a tight double right hand bend with a recommended speed sign of 25kph.

Taking into account that 15% of traffic is travelling at over 55kph, this equals 426 vehicles per day and 3,012 vehicles per week speeding at more than 5kph above the posted speed limit. All in a solely residential area with 76% of the population of being families with children or 3 out of every 4 homes.

Following the second speed monitoring figures and subsequent report, the Traffic Committee agreed that single white lines were to be painted along the entire stretch of Milford Drive. This measure saw vehicles starting to travel on the correct side of the road. A reduction in vehicle speeds was witnessed by locals as drivers became aware of a physical change to the road conditions. However, this reduction in speed only lasted for a few days.

According to BHSC DCP ¹⁸ the streets and network within Rouse Hill have been designed to maintain the amenity of local roads by the restrictions of traffic volume, especially heavy traffic and vehicle speeds. All of the streets within the Rouse Hill road network within the 50 kph speed zones have a certain number of roundabouts or pedestrian safety crossings at intersections on the longer streets to slow down traffic.

16. Baulkham Hills Shire Council – MetroCount Traffic Executive Site 800016 – April 2005

17. Baulkham Hills Shire Council – MetroCount Traffic Executive Site 800056 – September 2007

18. Baulkham Hills Shire Council DCP Part E Section 15

However, Milford Drive again falls short of the required design specifications. At 1.7km Milford Drive is one of the longest Collector Roads with full residential access. It's only two speed reducing control measures being within 400 metres from the Mile End Road entry into Milford Drive, leave 1.4km of road with no physical measures to control traffic speed.

Further adding to the problem is the design of Milford Drive with its many steep hills does not have the designed effect to reduce drivers speeds, as vehicles both pick up speed as they travel downhill and to accelerate uphill. The many bends are taken at speeds too high to and the section of road between Knox Place and Mindaribba Avenue being the only flat and relatively straight section, which in turn encourages drivers to speed.

It is also known in the area that instead of the traffic exiting equally from both ends of Milford Drive, many drivers are choosing to use the Withers Road exit as a quicker route to avoid the traffic lights on Mile End Road.

Since the introduction of the additional buses upon the opening of the T-Way in March 2007 has also seen the rapid deterioration of the road surface on both Milford Drive and Clower Avenue. This is especially evident on the sections of road where vehicles and in particular the extra heavier buses are braking and accelerating.

Concerned residents of Milford Drive are continuing to lobby Baulkham Hills Shire Council for traffic management measures to be installed between Withers Road and Knox Place to control the speed of traffic on Milford Drive.

Members of the Rouse Hill Community have also raised their concerns on a new Internet Blog Site¹⁹, and will continue to lobby along with the Kellyville/Rouse Hill Progress Association to our local, state and federal government on all issues regarding traffic and transportation in the Rouse Hill Area.

Rouse Hill Local Transport Blog

7 oct

Rouse Hill Local Transport Blog

Author: admin



Windsor Road

Following years of transport problems in the Hills, an inquiry is to be held in November into the Transport in the North-West Sydney Sector. Local residents are being encouraged to make a submission to the NSW parliamentary inquiry, chaired by the Nationals Jenny Gardiner.

The aim of this community initiative is to gather the thoughts of the local community and forward them to the Parliamentary inquiry as part of a 'Community Submission'.

Public transport in Rouse Hill is simply an afterthought, and our concerns have been ignored, giving way to an unworkable and unwanted system. It is 'now or never' for us to have our say.

Local residents are being encouraged to contribute towards a 'Community Submission' by way of article submissions through the 'Contact Us' page of this blog relating to residents personal experiences and concerns, by commenting on articles posted on this blog or direct to the NSW parliament.

Web: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/gpsc4

Email: gpscno4@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Post: The Director, General Purpose Standing Committee No.4 Parliament House, Macquarie St, Sydney, NSW, 2000

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- Busways - Timetables
- Hills Bus - Timetables
- Rouse Hill Town Centre

19. www.rousehilllocaltransport-blog.com











PREFERRED TRAVEL OPTIONS WITHIN ROUSE HILL

As has been previously mentioned Rouse Hill is currently serviced by five bus routes which travel through the streets of the suburb directly connecting to Castle Hill, Windsor, Blacktown, Riverstone, Parramatta and the City ²⁰ & ²¹. A further six services are available from Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange, and yet the bus patronage in Rouse Hill is very low ²².

Residents who work in areas that are accessible by public transport are still choosing to travel by car rather than use the public transport available. The answer that is coming back from resident, is that it just takes too long on the current services as they wind their way through the many suburbs of the Hills District. Many residents are driving to Schofields and Blacktown and travel by train. Other residents who do use the bus service drive to the car park at Samantha Riley Drive to save time as the bus travels through all of the local streets.

Rouse Hill has been simply added to the end of the previous Castle Hill to the City route, however in doing so makes the travelling time to the city by bus nearly 2 hours. On a return trip, this adds up to 4 hours to a person's working day. This has even prompted one local of Kellyville to start up an internet website for car pooling, as "it is still cheaper and more comfortable than travelling by public transport" ²³.

In a test case, details were entered into the Ministry of Transport 13500 website for both the quickest and most direct options available for travelling from Rouse Hill Town Centre to the City. The results showing that it is quicker by up to 36 minutes to travelling by bus and train, than bus alone. This is clearly reflected in the Census figures of 2006 with only 68 people used the bus as a means to travel to work, with 159 using the train and 2,426 preferring to travel by car as a driver or passenger.

Trip planner results					
You Searched: New Trip Help					
From:	Rouse Hill Town Centre (2155225)				
To:	Central Station				
When:	Tuesday, 23 September 2008				
Leave after:	07:00am				
Mode:	Regular Buses, Trains, Ferries				
Accessibility:	All Services What is easy access / wheelchair accessible? Change to show: Easy access only				
Option	Depart	Arrive	Travel time	Transport	
1	7:03am	8:23am	1hr 20mins	 	View trip
2	7:07am	8:26am	1hr 19mins	 	View trip
3	7:23am	8:38am	1hr 15mins	 	View trip
4	7:43am	9:00am	1hr 17mins	 	View trip
5	7:45am	9:10am	1hr 25mins	 	View trip
All times are approximate					






Trip planner results					
You Searched: New Trip Help					
From:	Rouse Hill Town Centre (2155225)				
To:	Central Station				
When:	Tuesday, 23 September 2008				
Leave after:	07:00am				
Mode:	Regular Buses, Trains, Ferries				
Accessibility:	All Services What is easy access / wheelchair accessible? Change to show: Easy access only				
Option	Depart	Arrive	Travel time	Transport	
1	7:12am	9:04am	1hr 52mins		View trip
2	7:20am	9:27am	2hrs 07mins		View trip
3	7:38am	9:36am	1hr 58mins		View trip
4	8:08am	10:03am	1hr 55mins		View trip
5	8:33am	10:27am	1hr 54mins		View trip
All times are approximate					

Figure 7: Information taken from Ministry of Transport 13500 Website 23 September 2008

20. Hillsbus Bus Timetables – Routes 608, 610, 610X, 616, 617, 641, T63, T64 & T65

21. Busways Bus Timetable – Routes T75, 741 & 742

22. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 Census

23. LetsCarPool.com.au

PROPOSAL

The current transport service within Rouse Hill does not reflect the needs of the community. Since the development of Rouse Hill in 1999, residents in the 2006 census ¹⁹ 72% of residents travel to work by car, 5% by train and only 1.8% by bus, even being beaten by 1.9% by truck.

The 2006 census figures further show that a large proportion of families in Rouse Hill consist of two working household ²⁴, where one member of the household often having to negotiate the school/child care drop off before continuing to work and returning directly from work in the afternoon for pick up before the after school sports and activities, which public transport does not cater for. If the ultimate goal of the public transport system is to negate the need for the second car, then the services need to be tailored for commuters during peak hours.

However, the journey time for commuters using the current services from Rouse Hill to the City and Parramatta is too long; travelling by bus to the City can take on average two hours and up to one hour to Parramatta. Commuters in Rouse Hill are choosing to drive and park further down the T-Way or driving to Blacktown and Schofields train stations, as both options are quicker than winding through the suburbs by bus.

The current services do not accommodate the need of young families, as most schools, sporting grounds, medical centres and other activities are not serviced by the current bus routes. It is also easier for a family with young children to travel 15 minutes by car to Castle Hill, a journey that would take 40 minutes by bus. It is even worse to ask children to sit for up to two hours on a bus to the city, when they can get there in approximately 45 minutes by car or train in non peak hour traffic.

Knox City Council, Victoria run a very successful Telebus system ²⁵, where there are smaller buses running hourly through the residential areas to the local shopping centre and train station. This system could easily be adapted to suit the needs of the community of Rouse Hill and possibly to the surrounding suburbs of Kellyville Ridge and Beaumont Hills. The proposal is that a smaller more efficient "feeder" bus runs in a service through the suburb connecting back to the Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange, where it connects with the larger and more end to end services from the Rouse Hill Interchange to the City and Parramatta by way of the T-Way and the M2.

According to the Rouse Hill Town Centre Transport Information ²⁶, the interchange is to provide a transport gateway to Western Sydney, linking bus services with the rail network, the Western Sydney Transit way and other transport services such as taxis and coaches. The T-Way buses are to operate both end to end services as well as "feeder" services from the surrounding suburbs. The network helping commuters, shoppers, school children, people visiting doctors, medical centres and hospitals, students and other passengers to get around their local community and beyond

24. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 Census

25. Telebus Rowville – 31 May 2007- Knox City Council Website

26. Rouse Town Centre Transport Information – September 2007

The following proposal is an adaptation of the current schedules, with the introduction of a proposed new route which would better suit the community.

1. New route to operate between Rouse Hill Area and the Rouse Hill Town Centre, via Highlands Estate, Kellyville, operating along Greenhills Drive, Adelphi Street, Mile End Road, Milford Drive, Withers Road, Bentley Avenue, Wellgate Avenue and Commercial Road.
2. Remove route 608 from Rouse Hill and re-route through Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange for service between Windsor and Castle Hill. Alternative services available on the new Rouse Hill feeder route
3. Route T66 to provide a Peak Hour direct service between Rouse Hill (Adelphi Street) and Parramatta via Mile End Rd, Milford Drive, Withers Road, Commercial Road and the Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange, then by T-Way to Parramatta. This will replace route T64 in the Rouse Hill area Alternative services available on the new Rouse Hill feeder route.
4. Route 617X to be modified to provide a Peak Hour direct service between Rouse Hill (Adelphi Street) and the City via Mile End Rd, Milford Drive, Withers Road, Commercial Road and the Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange, then by T-Way to M2 junction at Seven Hills to the City. Alternative services available on the new Rouse Hill feeder route.
5. Remove route T75 from Aberdour Avenue, Mile End Road and Milford Drive and re-route along Mile End Road, Withers Road and Commercial Road through Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange for service between Riverstone and Blacktown, with exception of school services. Alternative services available on the new Rouse Hill feeder route .
6. Remove route 746 from Adelphi Street and re-route through Withers Road and Mile End Road, with the exception of school services.
7. Remove route 610 from Rouse Hill Area, commencing from Rouse Hill Town Centre Interchange to the City via Beaumont Hills and Castle Hill.
8. New Route City Express to operate between Rouse Hill Town Centre and the City via T-Way and M2



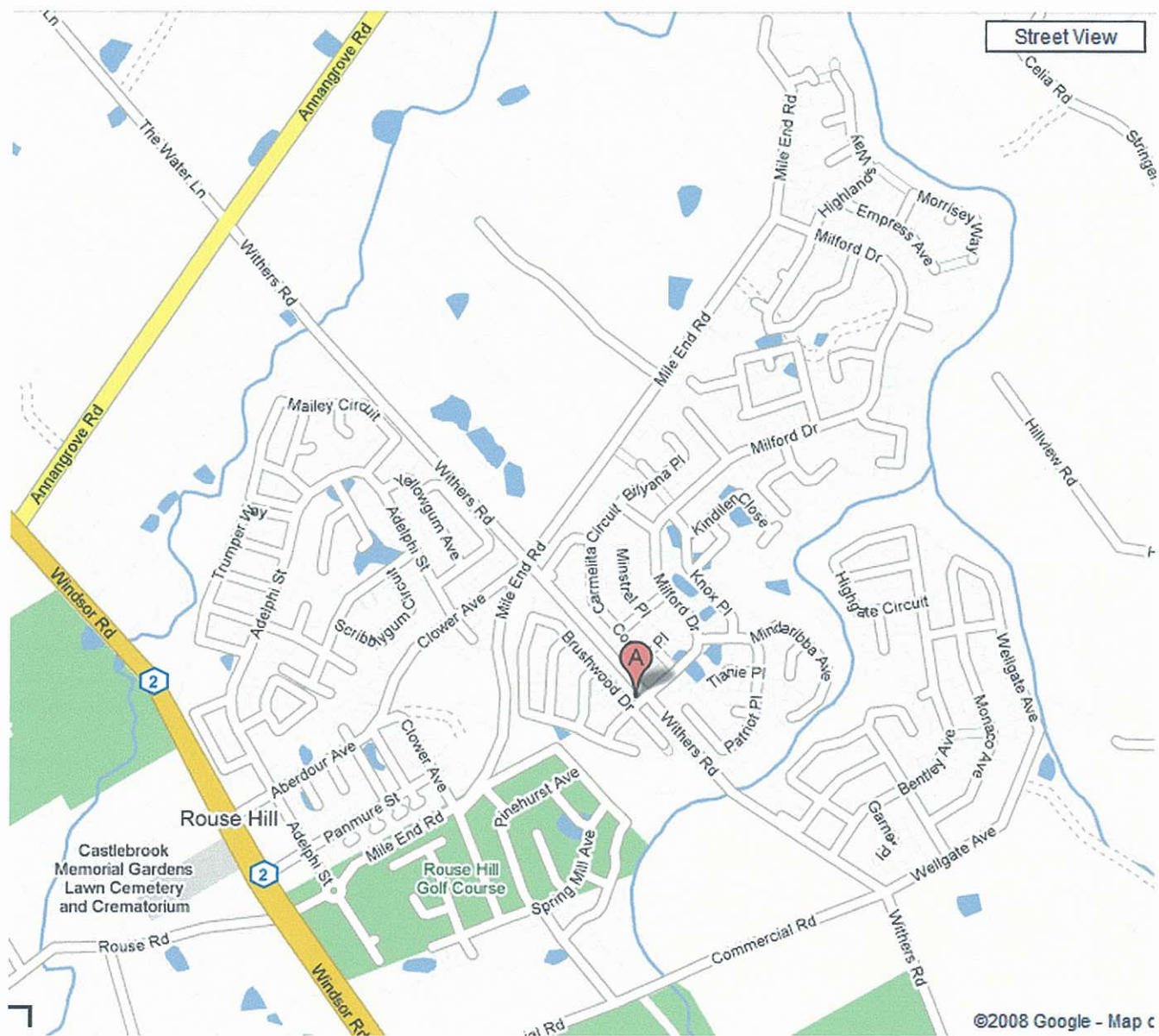
Figure 8. Proposed New Bus Routes for Rouse Hill Area

BENEFITS

The benefits of this proposal are:

1. To ensure that the majority of homes in the area would be serviced well within the Ministry of Transports service planning guidelines.
2. The residential streets of Rouse Hill do not function adequately as two-way bus routes and by replacing the non peak hour services with a one-way service, this would be safer for all street and road users.
3. If the one-way service was to provide a single bus every 30 minutes, based on 6am to 10pm, including express peak hour and school services this would reduce the number for buses on the local streets to a maximum of 50 per day.
4. Removing the need for large extended buses and double decker buses travelling through the smaller residential streets of Rouse Hill and allowing them to be used in the areas of Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill where the larger buses are needed.
5. To provide a regular service that would be available to all residents providing them easy access to the facilities of the Town Centre, local shops, cinemas, restaurants, community centre, schools and sports grounds. This would also reduce parking in the Town Centre, traffic numbers in residential areas and provide access to a central bus interchange to continue any non peak hour travel to the City or Parramatta. Many residents of Rouse Hill have indicated that they would use this service, knowing that they could catch a bus at a set time throughout the day and that this would take them to Rouse Hill Town Centre where they could use the resources of the shopping centre or catch a quicker bus to their final destination.
6. Out with these times, consideration for running the service until midnight from Thursday to Saturday nights so local residents could utilise the local restaurants without having to use their vehicles, again making our streets a safer place.
7. Providing express Peak Hour services to the City and Parramatta operating via the T-Way and M2 as a faster alternative than the current services available to commuters.

APPENDIX A - The Suburb of Rouse Hill



REFERENCES

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17. Knox City Council Website - Rowville Telebus May 2007
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