

**Submission  
No 106**

## **THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR**

**Name:** Mrs Catherine Lai

**Date received:** 16/10/2008

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Believe the closing date for the above submission is 17 October, 2008, so I respond as follows ...

When I was a kid, I took for granted living a few blocks away from Strathfield Station. The train would reliably get me to work & provide easy transport for my social life during my growing years.

Now my husband and I are raising teenage daughters living in Castle Hill and have quickly learned that unless you have a car & licence, your life-style can be very restrictive / non-existent. Our 19-year-old daughter who has a few years left at uni, feels ever so pressured to get a her licence & purchase a car. This only happens if your family is well off so her lack of independence has put much reliance on us as parents to drive her around; unlike my previous situation of just hopping on a train at Strathfield Station, with no traffic jams to interfere with the journey.

Until earlier this year, I worked in Parramatta; leaving home (Castle Hill) at 7.20am to plough my way through the Windsor Road traffic. Then cruise up and down the back streets of North Parramatta to find a parking space by 8.15am at the latest, so I could complete my 15 minute walk to get me to the office by 8.30am. Of course, the return journey wasn't any better, as the majority of people finish work at the standard time of 5pm.

As for the buses ... well, that's another story. I've had new drivers who can't speak English properly with unmarked destinations on their bus, allowing me to board a wrong bus, making me walk for ages to my destination. Understandably, these drivers are pressured into meeting deadlines, which is an unreasonable expectation during peak hour on Windsor Road. However, the inevitable accident happens, especially with the elderly, of tripping over, due to the brakes being slammed on from time to time. On a couple of occasions I've lost my balance - falling onto other people & saw many other young people do the same. My elderly father recently suffered a terrible fate whilst travelling to his office by bus, ending up with injuries - with people retiring later & later, this is just not on! How demeaning, a man who's been a solicitor all his life, to be thrown around like a sack of potatoes by a bus-driver who was probably having a 'bad' day or running behind schedule.

When I worked in Parramatta, some of my work colleagues travelled from Penrith. THEY WOULD LEAVE HOME AFTER ME IN THE MORNING & ARRIVE HOME BEFORE ME IN THE EVENING! (Of course, their mode of travel was by rail). I invite interested persons to drive between Parramatta and Castle Hill off-peak & compare the ridiculous time difference, as opposed to peak hour. Then compare land distance of Castle Hill/Parramatta & Penrith/Parramatta.

Yes, trains are definitely superior to buses when time is to be saved.

I had my share of bus rides into Parramatta, but with the lack of air conditioning, bad-mood drivers threatening my safety, buses not turning up from time-to-time, the stress of wondering whether I'd miss my stop with passing through so many bodies & trying not to irritate people whilst exiting the bus, etc., I resorted to my car journey ... forget about trying to read a book on the bus.

Having teenage daughters, it was not an option to be away from them for so long during weekdays. Thankfully, I found work which is only a 20 minute walk from home. Finding this job was like extracting a needle from a haystack. I do feel for the poor souls out there who are bounded to our roads for so long each day, with the time increasing each year as more cars join our roads in the Hills district. So what about them? And what about our daughters and other youngsters, plus the breadwinners?

I believe whether the government is Labor or Liberal is immaterial in regards to this matter. I'm just appealing to commonsense ... places such as Strathfield and Penrith didn't always have rail but, as the demand grew, the rail followed. How many more cars does the Hills district have to endure before commonsense prevails here?

Thanking you for taking the time to read this submission.

Yours sincerely,  
Mrs Catherine Lai