

**Submission
No 17**

**INQUIRY INTO CURRENT AND FUTURE PUBLIC
TRANSPORT NEEDS IN WESTERN SYDNEY**

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No doubt other submissions will make the case that the predictions for Sydney's growth require a major rebalancing of the roles for public rather than private transport use.

make little difference. Although the words "roads" or "parking" are not mentioned in the Terms Reference, the presence or absence of them have a major impact on public transport use.

Restricted parking at the journey's destination, such as a major sporting event or where employment opportunities are concentrated, encourages people to use public transport.

Where high-capacity public transport services or opportunities exist, received wisdom is that residential zonings around such places should be intensified in the expectation that the residents will use the service.

But that is not necessarily the case. Unfortunately, the most recent census figures would be distorted by the census having taken place during the COVID-19 epidemic.

But Epping station has 12 services an hour making it the pinnacle of public transport's accessibility by any standard. As it happens, it is also cursed with heavy peak hour through traffic from outside the area.

Those well disposed to using public transport should be attracted to live in the suburb and public transport use should be at its maximum.

A study of this suburb should give an idea of the best case that might flow from providing the maximum number of dwellings close to stations.

My anecdotal observation is that, even when living near the station,

Carparks are cheaper and can be better targeted than bringing metros to suburbs with existing services.

very few of these nearby residents use the service.

Nevertheless, measuring the usage by residents living within a kilometre of selected stations should be considered before a wholesale adoption of the "activation" imposed on Epping by the Planning Department is deployed more generally.

The "activation" policy has led to long-standing white-collar businesses leaving the area.

Commercial activity in the suburb has declined.

This policy seems to have been driven by the facile preference for catering for people leaving the area each day rather than **also** catering for those (employees and clients) who would travel to it.

Because of existing settlement patterns, large parts of Sydney cannot receive the levels of public transport service that will encourage a larger market share.

But if it is not practical to bring increased public transport services to where people live, it should be cheaper to bring people to places offering more frequent services.

In other words, more could be achieved for a given area by providing car parking resources within walking

distance of stations rather than rezoning for dwellings.

People who formerly used public transport for work may be reluctant to move in their (long) retirement years.

In addition to making more use of land (i.e., less disruption to existing land use) car parking caters for a more flexible customer base—when people no longer use the train, they no longer use the car park.

If the resource serves cars rather than residents, the car parks are more likely to be used by those using the train service from time to time.

The potential problem is: how to provide parking for commuters rather than local shoppers.

This is where technology may have a solution in the form of Opal cards.

Use of the commuter car parks could be managed by using existing Opal cards for entry and exit.

The conditions for use of the car park would be on the basis that short stayers pay a parking charge, but longer stayers pay nothing.

The technology behind the card would permit the parking charges to be different in each car park and change over time as usage patterns emerge.

Reference item (f) the role of public transport technologies.

A new use for Opal cards

Australian cities and towns are marked by low-density housing and low public transport use by comparison with European cities.

Short of major rezoning and the replacement of existing settled areas with more dense occupation, increasing public transport services will