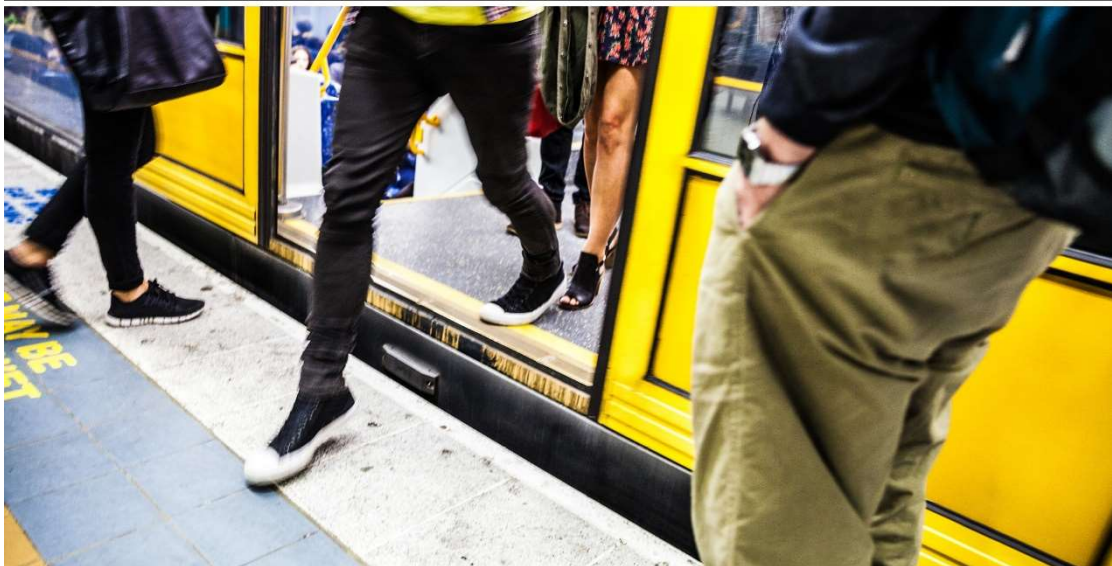




RAIL CAPACITY & PUBLIC TRANSPORT INITIATIVES

BRIEFING PAPER



State and Federal Issues Briefing Paper

Title: Increase passenger capacity, rail services and access to other public transport initiatives

Date: August 2018

Key issues (*What problem/issue needs to be resolved?*)

- Wollondilly is the most transport disadvantaged area in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Region in terms of daily travel time, average journey to work time, and vehicle kilometres travelled per person.
- There is no electrified rail services in Wollondilly and residents are dependent upon a diesel service that is slow and unreliable.
- Currently, commuters from Wollondilly face a two-hour rail commute to Sydney for a drive that takes around 60 minutes
- Public and alternate transport arrangements are poor in Wollondilly Shire, with limited bus services and infrequent diesel train services that terminate at Campbelltown.
- There is a lack of, and slow rail services from the Southern Highlands and Wollondilly.
- When compared to the Greater Sydney Region, Wollondilly Shire residents travel the furthest and spend the greatest amount of time on their daily commuting.
- Public transport options are extremely limited
- A heavy reliance on private vehicles to travel significant distances to jobs, schooling and services.
- Limited public transport options lead to:
 - Social exclusion and time-poor lifestyles
 - Environmental impacts
 - Economic inefficiency
 - Reduced public health

Action sought	Timeframe
Direct diesel services into Sydney Central to assist in improving transport outcomes, and reducing travel times due to the need to swap services at Campbelltown.	immediate

Improved and regular train timetable	immediate
Development of a business case to extend the electrification of the line south of Macarthur Station, to improve rail services for local residents, including future housing developments	Next 0-5 years
Access to additional local funding to improve the transport environment for Wollondilly residents	immediate

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone		Suggested first contact
		direct line	after hours	
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The Briefing note:

Wollondilly is the most transport disadvantaged area in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Region in terms of daily travel time, average journey to work time, and vehicle kilometres travelled per person.

Council is advocating for improved rail services and other public transport options for the Wollondilly Shire

The community and Council have had long term concerns relating to the lack of public transport options for the Wollondilly Shire

Background

The scale and geographic spread of Wollondilly Shire is such that we have a high reliance on private vehicles. Sydney is dealing with 43,000 vehicles — passenger and freight — from the Illawarra into Sydney and back again each day.

The Wollondilly Shire is located in a PeriUrban area i.e. both within a rural region, while also being considered part of the Sydney Metropolitan Region. This has resulted in Wollondilly Shire being ineligible for rural / regional transport funding and being remote from the main focus of transport improvements within the Sydney region.

There is a notable absence of consideration in current planning to the external linkages to, and including, the outer metropolitan areas. A specific plan is required now for an integrated public transport network in Wollondilly due to the impending growth issues. A plan is crucial as retrofitting to address needs, it costs six times more to deliver.

Improving accessibility to Periurban areas, where significant commuting populations live as there is limited access to employment opportunities within the LGA, as well as access to health and other support services, will improve wellbeing and connectivity issues for our residents.

In addition there is a need for regional plans to focus on the intra-regional issues and connections such as between Wollondilly and the Illawarra.

Public and alternate transport arrangements are poor in the Wollondilly Shire, with limited bus services and infrequent diesel train services that terminate at Campbelltown.

Access to services such as health by elderly residents can be difficult, as outreach services are limited. This means some of the more vulnerable sections of our community who have high levels of need are unfortunately reliant on a poor public transport network.

- Only 26.9% of the workforce lives and works in Wollondilly Shire.
- Over 58% of Wollondilly's working residents travel outside of the area to work, with 32% working in adjoining local government areas. Most of the balance of those working outside the Shire work in other parts of Western Sydney (e.g. Parramatta, Blacktown).
- Around 1.8% travel to Central Sydney for work.
- The balance (around 10%) has no fixed place of work (i.e. tradesmen who travel around for work).
- Approximately 50.3% of the population aged 5-19 years are enrolled in education in Wollondilly. While not all persons aged 5-19 years access education, this indicates a large percentage that likely travel outside of Wollondilly for education.
- Levels of transport disadvantage experienced by the Wollondilly population are further evidenced by data concerning the time and distance spent in travel to work and education by Wollondilly residents.

Problems associated with a reliance on public transport include:

- In 2017 Campbelltown City Council conducted a study that found about 20% of cars parked at Campbelltown Station each day belonged to Wingecarribee and Wollondilly residents. The reason for this was found to be lack of, and slow services from the Southern Highlands and Wollondilly.
- According to the Transport NSW draft Future Transport Strategy, an electrified link from Campbelltown through to Goulburn is set for investigation and planning over a 10-20 year time frame. Inability to get to early morning or late afternoon

appointments in Campbelltown, given the length of public transport journeys and timetable and connection challenges.

- Lack of public transport services at night or weekends and infrequent bus services out of peak hours.
- The cost of public transport for those on low incomes.
- Challenges of relying on infrequent public transport services when feeling unwell or having mobility problems, or following chemotherapy or dialysis and wanting to get back home quickly.

Transport disadvantaged issues

When compared to the Greater Sydney Region, Wollondilly Shire residents travel the furthest and spend the greatest amount of time on their daily commuting. Their public transport options are extremely limited so they rely heavily on private vehicles to travel significant distances to jobs, schooling and services. This transport isolation has numerous costs:

- Social exclusion and time-poor lifestyles
- Environmental impacts
- Economic inefficiency
- Reduced public health

In 2016 Only 4% of people in Wollondilly used a train to get to work (2016 ABS data) and 70.7% drove a car compared with 22.8% and 58.2% respectively in Greater Sydney.

19.4% of the households owned one car; 36.3% owned two cars; and 34.8% owned three cars or more, compared with 35.4%; 31.1% and 14.9% respectively for Greater Sydney (2016 ABS data).

This represents a significant time and cost penalty for residents, impacting on family budgets and adding to ongoing family stress.

Additionally, the data would also suggest that despite having 5 railway stations within the Council area, the take up of rail travel is remarkably low for commuter trips.

A substantial commitment by the State Government is required to address this issue, particularly given the proposals for an accelerated delivery of residential land releases in the region, which would only add new commuter traffic into an already transport disadvantaged area.

Lack of Rail Services in Wollondilly

There is no electrified rail services in Wollondilly and residents are dependent upon a diesel service that is slow and unreliable. Despite having 5 stations within the Wollondilly Shire, there are no direct commuter train services into Central Sydney. With peak time morning services terminating at Campbelltown Station, residents are required to transfer to suburban services for trips closer to Sydney.

Although it is acknowledged that Railcorp provides a direct transfer service at Campbelltown Station, it is also acknowledged that each break in service and change in transport mode decreases the attractiveness of public transport as an option. The low take up rate for rail transport as indicated in the Transport Data Centre information shows that the existing services are not attractive to the local community.

Council therefore is seeking a commitment to assess improved rail services, particularly the extension of the electrification of the line south of Macarthur Station, to improve rail services for local residents, including future housing developments. In the short term, the return of diesel services into Central would assist in improving transport outcomes, and reducing travel times due to the need to swap services at Campbelltown.

Access to Public Transport Funding Opportunities for Wollondilly

Wollondilly Shire Council is advocating to access additional local funding to improve the transport environment for its residents, particularly given Wollondilly's position of being **the most transport disadvantaged area in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Region** in terms of daily travel time, average journey to work time, and vehicle kilometres travelled per person.

As a periurban council, Wollondilly Shire simply does not have the resources to support any substantive improvements to local public transport infrastructure, other than very limited works to maintain bus shelters and undertake occasional upgrades to bus infrastructure.

High Speed Rail

At a broader level, Wollondilly Shire (and more specifically the Wilton Priority Growth Area) is strategically located to play a pivotal role in the future rail network of the region and the State. The proposed South West Illawarra Rail link, which aims to connect burgeoning western Sydney to the Illawarra, passes through Wilton. And any future High Speed Rail between Sydney and Canberra (or Melbourne) is also likely to pass through Wilton

Council supports a route that supplemented the existing rail corridor (Main Southern Line) between Sydney and the Southern Highlands. There are synergies with providing passenger services via the Maldon - Dombarton Line, which would enable a hub to be developed in the Wollondilly area for linkages from the Illawarra region and access to the rail line, while the opportunity for fast access to Sydney would enhance and support future growth in the area, and assist in reducing the current transport isolation for Wollondilly residents.

Council Resolutions (*regarding the issue*)

- Res: 233/2017; 22/2017;
- adopted in 2016 Issues paper
- Premier & State Priorities: Delivering Infrastructure; Building infrastructure; Safer communities; Improving road travel reliability; Reducing road fatalities
- District Plan Actions: 5; 6; 9; 24; 26; 27

Community views on the issue – Community Strategic Plan

Residents are fed up with the constant delays and missed connections caused by the unreliability of the Southern Highlands Train Service.

Most daily commuters bypass the service altogether and opt to drive to Campbelltown then catch the train into Sydney.

The community have articulated, through the CSP, concerns regarding the lack of public transport infrastructure and this has been identified as one of the chronic stress issues impacting upon the resilience of the Wollondilly community.

Concerns relating to public transport initiatives and rail services are articulated in the Looking after our Community, Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure core themes of the adopted Community Strategic Plan.

The themes also articulate a number of outcomes and strategies that reinforce the community views on the issue of public transport and rail capacity. Commentary includes the following:

- Wollondilly's poor public transport network on high school students who are often highly dependent on parental transport
- The lack of a TAFE or locally based university is compounded by the lack of reliable public transport to tertiary institutions in other locations.

- Most resident workers experience significant travel times because Wollondilly is relatively isolated and public transport is poor.
- The challenge for Wollondilly is to achieve greater provision of public transport and active transport options (cycling and walking) to encourage people to reduce private vehicle usage where possible. Public and alternate transport arrangements are relatively poor compared to more urbanised areas, with limited bus services and infrequent diesel train services that terminate at Campbelltown.
- There are issues with the unreliability of passenger train services on the Southern Highlands line given that freight trains using this line are prioritised over passenger trains. Many in our community are reliant on this poor public transport network to access work, education or other needs such as health and social services. This is a particular issue for the sections of our community who have high levels of need but limited access to private transport (e.g. the aged, youth, people with disabilities).

The CSP Strategies that are relevant include;

- Strategy GR4 – Liveable Communities

Plan for and enhance Wollondilly's liveability by encouraging great places to live with communities that are resilient, safe, affordable, healthy, well connected and retain their unique characters.

- Strategy GR5 – Wilton New Town

Create a new walkable and connected community supported by integrated public transport and matched by sustainable long-term local employment growth.

- Strategy GR8 – Advocacy

Advocate strongly for the interests of Wollondilly and its community in relation to planning and economic development outcomes and improved public transport services.

- Strategy IN5 – Advocacy

Advocate strongly for the interests of Wollondilly and its community in relation to infrastructure outcomes.

- Strategy CO3 – Social Planning

Undertake strategic social planning approaches regarding community needs and issues, particularly in relation to future population growth.

Outcomes – what do we want?

- Infrastructure that delivers upon the expectations and needs of our growing community.
- Improved transport connectivity between Wollondilly, the Illawarra, greater western Sydney and the Southern Highlands
- Improve transport outcomes for disadvantaged groups and individuals in the community
- Completion of the Maldon Dombarton line to relieve pressure on both Picton and Appin roads, providing an alternative to heavy vehicle movements.
- Communities that are healthy, happy and feel safe
- Public transport that provides access to jobs, housing, services and recreation, and opens up peripheral and isolated regions