

CONNECT. SHAPE. DELIVER.

Western
Sydney
Leadership
Dialogue

New Bus Services in Western Sydney

TRANSPORT FOR NSW HAVE YOUR SAY SUBMISSION

29 September 2024

Submission on New Bus Services in Western Sydney

SEPTEMBER 29 2024

POSITION

Advice of new bus services that “are designed to unlock growth in Western Sydney” as described by the Have Your Say website is welcomed.

Under the Western Sydney City Deal between the State, Commonwealth and Local governments, there was a commitment to establish rapid bus services from the key centres of Campbelltown, Liverpool and Penrith prior to the opening of the Western Sydney International Airport.

It is also noted that there has not been any clarification of the previously announced (Western Sydney City Deal) commitment to connect the new airport via rail to Glenfield, which would connect the airport precinct with Kingsford Smith Airport and the Sydney CBD on the T8 Airport & South Line.

The proposed duration times of the services to and from Liverpool (55 and 67 mins), Penrith and Mt Drutt (60 mins) and Campbelltown (66 mins) are noted. We expect that these travel times are unlikely to improve, considering the lack of supporting infrastructure, other than potentially at the origin and destination sites.

It is clear that the proposed services cannot be described as either rapid nor frequent. This combination will likely make the service unattractive, especially to those with access to a private vehicle. Additionally, we hold serious concerns that such gradual delivery approaches may result in the abandonment of the development of actual rapid point-to-point services ahead of the planes flying in and out of Western Sydney International Airport in less than two years. A sentiment echoed by the NSW Bus Industry Taskforce.

While these services will provide a temporary solution as the workforce continues to grow around the Airport and Bradfield, efforts to ensure proper connectivity, especially with Sydney’s fast growing South West must continue at accelerated speed.

The Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue continues to support the funding for key linkages between the South West and the Airport, including the Fifteenth Avenue Smart Transit (FAST) Corridor proposed by Liverpool Council and in advocating for the Airport Metro to be connected into Campbelltown LGA.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- The proposed bus services will be neither frequent nor rapid enough to entice patrons away from driving between these locations.
- Stakeholders are concerned that this gradual delivery approach connecting key regional centres with Bradfield and Western Sydney Airport, while temporarily filling a service gap, could impact on the future delivery of actual rapid point-to-point services due to a perceived lack of demand.
- Efforts to ensure long-term, fast and accessible connectivity must continue at an accelerated speed. The proposed services should be considered a temporary solution.

ABOUT THE DIALOGUE

The Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue is a regional advocate and think tank dedicated to advancing the interests of Greater Western Sydney. It facilitates collaboration between government, business, and community leaders to address the region's challenges and opportunities.

The Dialogue promotes sustainable development, infrastructure investment, and policy innovation to enhance the quality of life for GWS's residents. Through research, events, and strategic partnerships, it aims to shape a prosperous future for the region.

The Dialogue's partners include several Councils (Local Governments), Community Housing Providers, Residential Property Developers, Employers of essential workers and others involved in the planning and delivery of housing. The Dialogue regularly consults with its partners in the development of policy positions. Housing supply, affordability and liveability, and regional economic prosperity are issues regularly raised by partners.

SPOTLIGHT ON CAMPBELLTOWN

Context

Campbelltown is the designated Metropolitan Centre of the Macarthur region and is supporting nearly 50% of population growth in the Western Parkland City. The wider Campbelltown City Centre is key to driving local economic growth, which is vital in supporting the availability of high value, close to home jobs for future residents, in conjunction with the development of industry at Bradfield.

Catalysing local jobs is critical to enable productivity pay-offs through reduced commuting times, as well as enabling families to enjoy the local amenities which communities in the Macarthur region enjoy. The economic success of Greater Western Sydney depends on tipping the balance of more high quality jobs being created especially as it's expected to house more than half of the city's population within the next 10 years.

It is appreciated that the proposed bus services are designed to link key centres with Western Sydney International Airport, while supporting the scale of growth of the region. However, there are significant concerns that the nature of these proposed services will not deliver the economic and productivity outcomes required to ensure that the region and its community can take full advantage of the opportunities that will flow off the back of Western Sydney International Airport and Bradfield.

840 Route

At present, the 840 route travels between Oran Park and Campbelltown Hospital. The proposed route amendment is to extend it to instead run through Oran Park between Leppington and Campbelltown Hospital and increase its frequency.

This will connect the route to two different heavy rail lines, including the T8 line at Campbelltown and Macarthur Stations, and the T2 line at Leppington station. It is noted that there is a current bus route from Oran Park to Leppington (858). There is no information currently available as to whether there will be consequential changes to the current 858 service due to the 840 route extension. This is an important detail for the community considering there are some key variations in the routes.

845 Route

The proposed service between Campbelltown and the Western Sydney International Airport (845), while providing a connection between the Airport and wider precinct and Campbelltown, represents a clear failure to deliver the rapid bus service that was initially proposed.

Access in and around the precinct and in particular the volume of traffic on Narellan Road continues to be a critical inhibitor to the productivity of Campbelltown City Centre and its Health and Education precinct.

Campbelltown City Council's recommendation that consideration of routes to utilise the northern (Farrow Road) access to Campbelltown station to mitigate a key challenge of capacity on Narellan Road over the railway line is supported by the Dialogue.

The 845 bus route will be using this already highly congested route between Campbelltown and Narellan, and we are not aware of plans for supporting infrastructure, such as dedicated bus lanes and preferential traffic light phasing.

This service is likely to be continually unreliable due to several factors. The proposed service has a 30 minute frequency, with journey time of 66 minutes and an excessive number of stops (e.g., six at Narellan alone).

This combination will not make the service attractive, much greater convenience and reliability are required to convince car-dependent residents to make the switch. Once these patterns are set, then they are hard to change. Local, slow, indirect and infrequent services inevitably have low patronage due to a poor quality of service.

Stakeholders hold concerns that this, in turn, would provide the basis for there not being demand for the promised 'rapid bus' service. We do not want to see gradual delivery approaches that result in the abandonment of higher stages after observing low uptake of initial services.

CONCLUSION

Although the proposed services will deliver a link between Mt Druitt, Penrith, Campbelltown and Liverpool and Western Sydney International Airport, they will not deliver the economic and productivity outcomes expected by the community and delivering on the promise of Western Sydney International Airport and Bradfield.

These proposed bus services very much need to be just the first small step in delivering the necessary links. The Dialogue will continue to also advocate for metro rail connectivity between Western Sydney Airport, Bradfield and South Western Sydney.

Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue


The Dialogue is a not-for-profit, community initiative leading a national conversation about Greater Western Sydney.


The Dialogue facilitates interaction between key opinion leaders, across industry, government, academia and the community, to inform public policy debate and to advance a Western Sydney regional agenda through research, analysis, advocacy & events.

If you would like to know about partnering with the Dialogue, please email info@westernsydney.org.au requesting our company credentials or an event sponsorship prospectus.

 @WSLDialogue

 @BestoftheWest

 westernsydney.org.au

 (02) 8318 8028