

8 November 2019

Response to DPIE

University of Newcastle
University Drive
Callaghan NSW 2308

Attn: Carole Mandicourt-Jones

Dear Carole,

Re: Honeysuckle City Campus Development Concept Plan – Response to Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Comments

The following document has been prepared in response to feedback from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment outlined below:

The Department supports the long-term targets for mode sharing and minimising private vehicle usage, however further consideration is required on the mechanisms to achieve this and how parking demand will be met during the transition period.

The Transport Access Strategy should explore options for transport improvements to support the development as well as on and off-site car parking options in the short and medium term.

There are a number of existing and future mechanisms that will assist in achieving the long-term mode share targets outlined within the Transport Access Strategy (TAS). This includes services implemented by the University, as well as improvements to public transport, cycling infrastructure and increased residential development within the city.

- As previously outlined the projected higher density population within Newcastle will provide further opportunities to increase active travel in the city, in particular appealing to future staff/students for HCCD.
- Future public transport opportunities will deliver improved transport options in and around the city, thus increasing public transport usage.
- The construction of the Newcastle Bus Interchange will provide improved connectivity between heavy rail, light rail and buses.
- The City of Newcastle has plans to improve cycling infrastructure in the city, including the provision of cycle lanes along Hunter Street which will allow for better connectivity to the future campus. This can ensure those who are happy to cycle to campus or in the city in general are not discouraged due to the lack of formal facilities.
- The existing New Space to Callaghan shuttle sees high patronage, with this service to be expanded to accommodate HCCD.



Recent surveys undertaken by Seca Solution staff on the shuttle service indicated that of the 663 interviewees over two days, 51% of those travelling between the city and Callaghan had walked to the shuttle bus stop. The vast majority of these lived in the Newcastle CBD and surrounding suburbs with the highest demands from Cooks Hill. This supports the overall TAS developed by Seca Solution which was based on the assumption that staff and students living within the active travel zone would choose to use modes other than private vehicle. Further investigation of this data and ongoing surveys may be justified however this is indicative of the behaviour anticipated in the TAS.

The staged development of the HCCD will enable the desired mode share targets to be achieved progressively over time. In recognition of the importance of the transitional period, it is noted there is capacity for accommodating commuters who may choose to remain reliant on private vehicles as their primary travel mode, with these outlined to follow. It is recognised that the cost of parking within the city centre shall be a detractor for a large portion of future HCCD demands and will be a driver in these users shifting towards sustainable travel modes, aiding in the shift towards the target mode share.

- Current oversupply in the Civic West

As detailed in the prior response, the University has use of the Civic West Carpark, with 150 carpark spaces being available to University staff/students to use at a rate of \$10 per day. Demands for this facility have varied but are consistently underutilised with absolute peak usage in 2019 (through to May) being 102 users (68% occupancy).

This indicates there is spare capacity with this car park being within walking distance of the HCCD should this parking be required to support additional travellers who use private vehicles in the short term

- The existing parking on-site can be retained in order to service the needs of the campus and the wider community.

The early stages of the campus development also allow for the University to continue to make available the carpark near the old Civic Station. This commuter parking area previously associated with the heavy rail station has operated in recent times as a paid public parking area, however, now forms part of the new campus site. By enabling this area to be available in the short term the University acknowledges that the city is in a state of transition with new residential developments still being built and so there is still demand for private vehicle use rather than city based trip containment. This parking will support the community as a whole while more opportunities for people to live, work and study in the city develops and mode shift progresses.

The existing Wright Lane Public Car Park is managed by “Care Park”, with in the order of 172 spaces available for public use. Parking is time-controlled on all days between 9am – 5pm, with a mixture of 2P, 4P and 8P parking available as shown below. Car park pricing is; 0 – 1 hour = \$3, 1 – 2 hours = \$6, 2+ hours = \$8.50.



- The shuttle bus services will be expanded to cater for demands associated with HCCD.

Data collected by the University has determined a large number of users of the existing service between Callaghan and New Space either live on campus or in the city and therefore walk to the shuttle. As such, despite the high utilisation there is still ample parking available at Callaghan to support future park and ride for HCCD.

There are two designated Park and Ride parking areas at the Callaghan campus. One is located at Car Park 2b, with approximately 120 bays, whilst the other is located in Car Park 14 with approximately 215 bays. These areas are serviced by the nearby shuttle pick up points. Recent observations have determined the parking in Car Park 14 is very underutilised and has capacity to accommodate increased use of the park and ride service. The University is committed to continuing to monitor the parking utilisation and availability to support the shuttle service.

The shuttle service is an effective way of commuting to the city and present a more cost effective option for those who travel from areas with less accessibility in relation to public transport.

The overall planning for the site will allow for adequate infrastructure to accommodate travel by alternate modes to private vehicle, including provision of set down/pick up areas for taxis/uber/kiss 'n' ride as well as connections to pedestrian/cycle infrastructure. During the concept stage the extent of these is yet to be determined, however the staging of the development will allow for the assessment of the above infrastructure as part of each approval, ensuring the needs of each stage are met. This could include the provision of temporary infrastructure where required eg bike storage.

It is in the interest of the University to ensure appropriate services and facilities are provided to support the attainment of the desired mode share targets, including:

- Appropriate provision of bike storage.
- The provision of suitable pedestrian access, including suitability for mobility impaired staff and students.
- High quality public transport connectivity between bus and rail services (heavy and light) that service the wider region.
- Appropriate set down for light vehicles e.g. taxi, ride share etc.
- Proactive promotion of alternatives to private vehicle use.

The use of motorcycles over cars does not reflect a sustainable travel choice and is not intended to be given priority over active transport measures through the provision of on-site parking.

The University is constantly monitoring the shuttle bus and bike hub usage, as well as the overall trends in parking and public transport in order to ensure appropriate facilities are available and services provided to aid in the shift toward sustainable travel. This monitoring is conducted to allow for the creation of the most appropriate and effective alternative measures to reduce reliance on driving and parking. In the case of bike parking for HCCD, parking provision shall reflect the cycling mode share target for the campus based on the planned campus population on site at each point in time. This shall be reviewed as the staging progresses to ensure appropriate supply to cater for the existing and growing demands in cycling.

There is scope to improve the uptake of the alternative travel measures through higher engagement of students/staff and improvements in the promotion of such services, in particular the park and ride service discussed above.

The way in which the existing and future opportunities are promoted is being assessed by the University, with the goal to achieve maximum outreach. This is a key pillar in the planning for HCCD in order to achieve the target mode share outlined in the TAS. The University is committed to ensuring access to up to date information on alternative travel modes is available to staff and students on the University website.



Overall, the conception of the TAS for the HCCD took into consideration the future of the city and the University, taking into account the above key mechanisms for change. The University can also be a major contributor and lead the way in achieving the City of Newcastle's objectives in regard to becoming a smart sustainable city. The staged implementation of HCCD will allow for a progressive shift, along with improved transport and opportunities for city-based trip containment.

Yours sincerely,



Tyler Neve

Traffic Engineer