

Murwillumbah Education Campus

School Transport Plan



NSW School Infrastructure

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The NSW Department of Education is planning for a new primary school and a new high school which will be located on the same campus at the current Murwillumbah High School site.

The Murwillumbah Education Campus (MEC) will enhance public education in Murwillumbah by supporting contemporary teaching approaches and providing students with access to new, modern, flexible learning environments and facilities.

Purpose of a School Transport Plan

The School Transport Plan (STP) is a live document that is managed by a school travel coordinator which identifies strategies to increase safe travel to school. The aim being to deliver efficient, safe, and sustainable access to school during the planning, delivery, and operation of school assets. The school travel coordinator will be appointed based on an 18-month period.

1.2 About the School Transport Plan

This STP is a document that focusses on details for sustainable travel options to and from the school and proposes strategies to encourage the wider use of alternative transport.

This plan covers:

- MEC's transport facilities and conditions
- Current student and staff travel patterns
- Proposed green travel targets
- Proposed actions to achieve travel mode share targets.

This STP should be reviewed and updated annually to monitor progress towards targets and strategy successes. The proposed methodology is outlined in Figure 1.1.

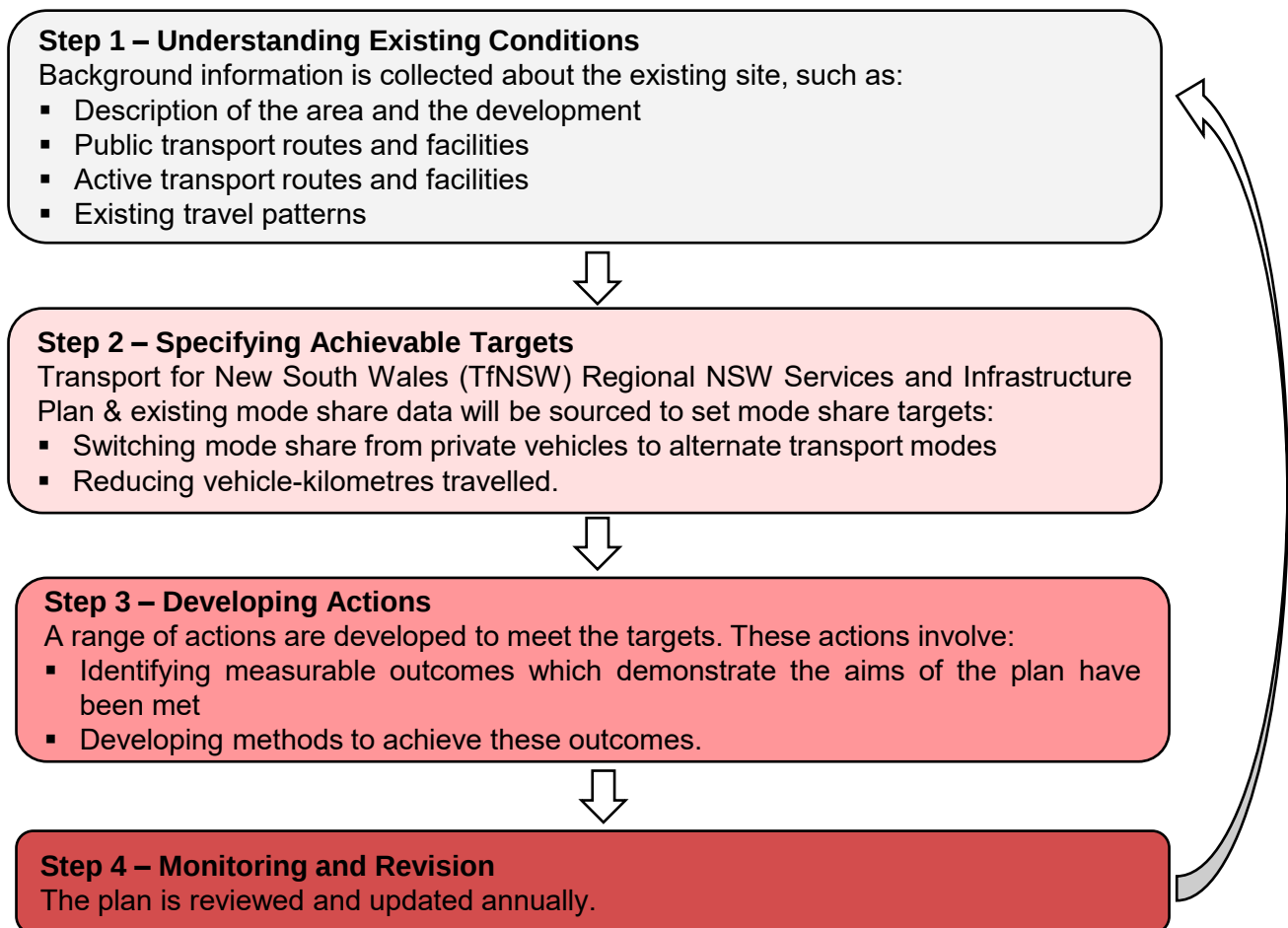


Figure 1.1: STP Methodology

2. MEC TRANSPORT INCLUSIONS

2.1 MEC Transport Facilities

The MEC will be located at 86 Riverview Street, Murwillumbah on the existing MHS site. The existing school site currently operates with around 434 student enrolments and 84 staff.

The MEC will include facilities to support:

- A maximum of 1,722 students in total
 - 582 primary school students
 - 1140 secondary school students
- A total of 129 staff for the school
 - 40 primary school staff
 - 89 secondary school staff
- A total Department of Education (DoE) regional office consisting of:
 - 340 m² of GFA office space
 - 25 staff and 7 fleet vehicles.

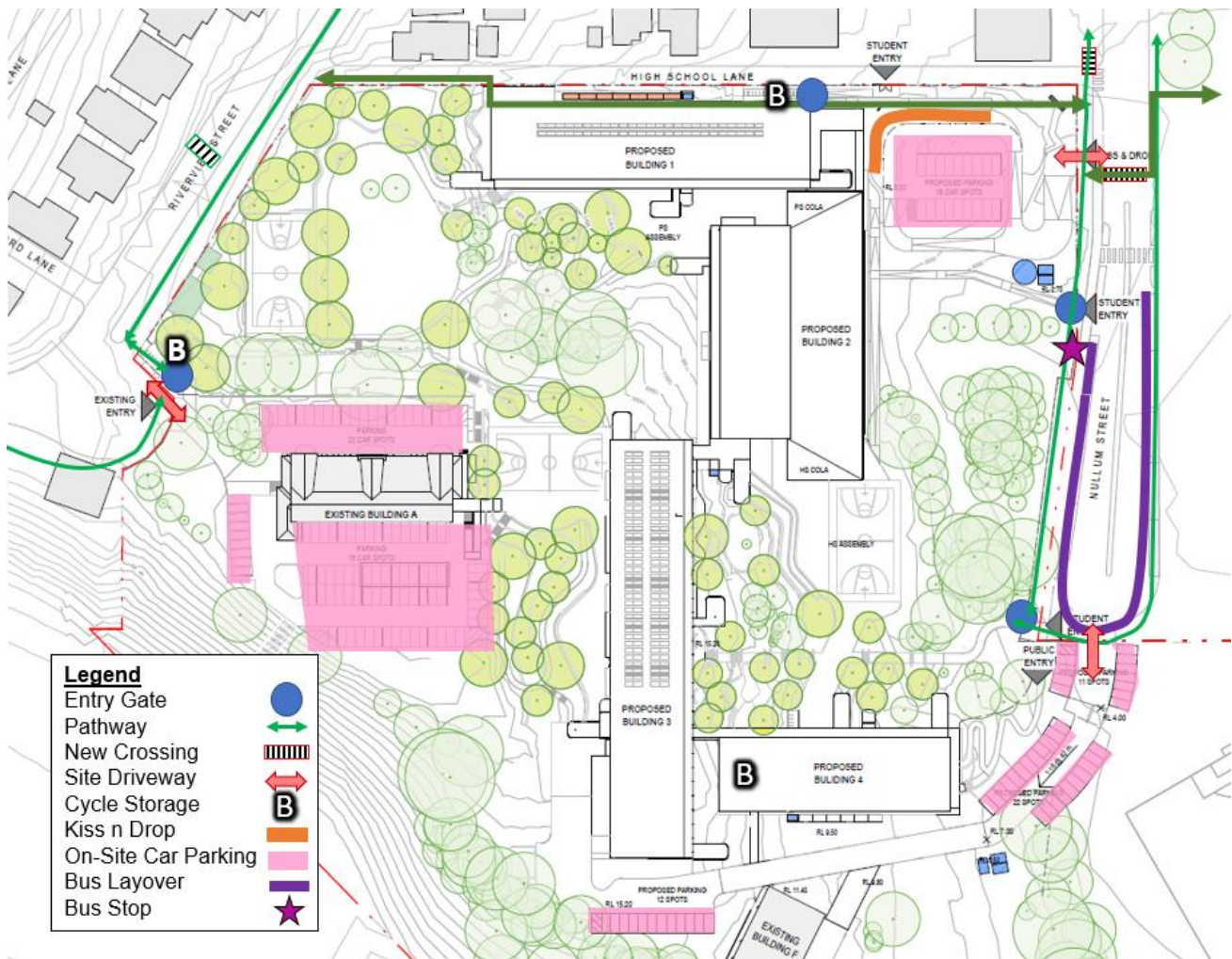
It is noted that while the DoE office is on the campus its staff are understood to not form part of this STP or initiatives.

The MEC will include three separate vehicular crossovers as follows:

- One via Riverview Street to off-street staff car parking areas
- One via the southern end of Nullum Street to off-street staff car parking and servicing areas
- One via the north eastern corner of the site via Nullum Street to the off-street kiss'n'drop facility.

Pedestrian access to the subject site is provided at two locations on Riverview Street and Nullum Street.

The MEC transport facilities is shown in Figure 2.1.



Source: Architectus

Figure 2.1: MEC Transport Facilities

As shown, the network of pathways and crossings provide connections to the Murwillumbah town centre in the north and surrounding residential areas.

Students can receive free or subsidised public transport travel to and from school through the School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS). The scheme is managed in the form of a paper bus pass and eligibility is dependent on the age and distance the student lives from school.

The site is serviced by both public and school bus services. These services are operated by Surfside Bus Lines as well as local services provided by Murwillumbah Bus Co, Gosels, Parsons and Singh's which service other primary and high schools within the Murwillumbah and Tweed Heads region.

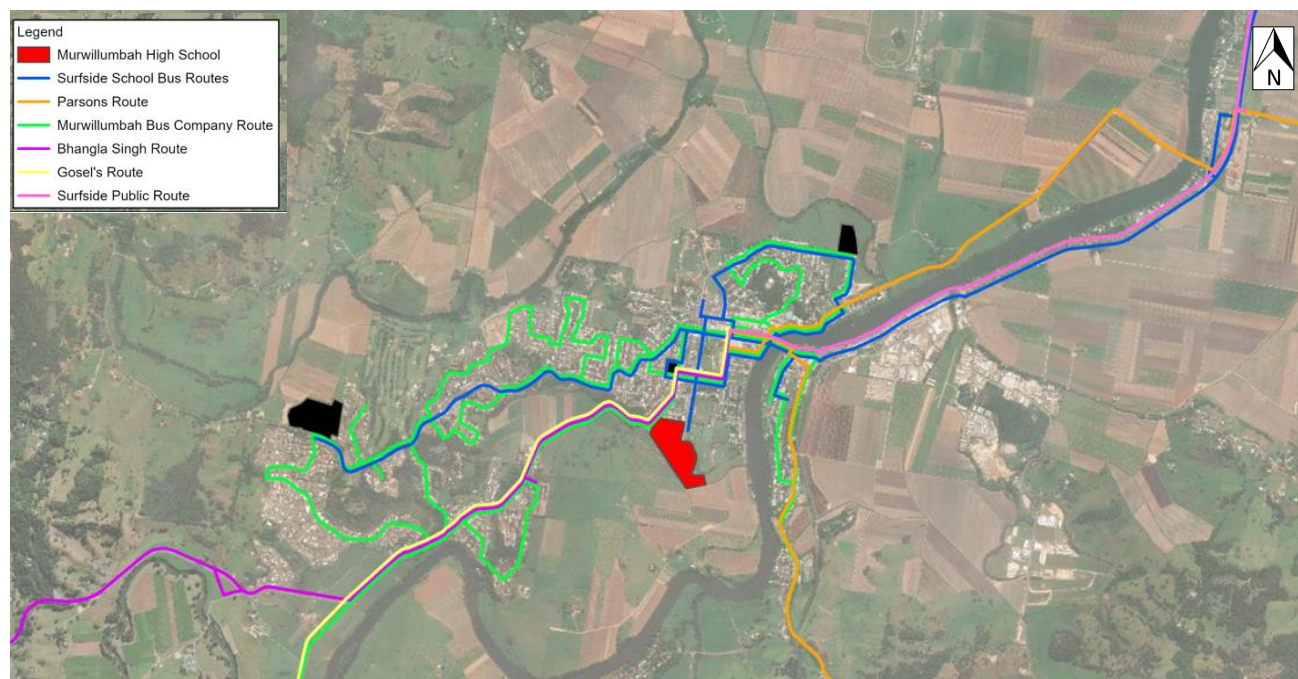
A substantial bus interchange facility and road space allocation on Nullum Street currently exists which allows various bus services from across the various Murwillumbah schools to interchange (see Figure 2.1)

The primary schools within the region have staggered start and finish times which allows bus services to collect students prior to high schools. These bus services provide short, localised routes as well as connecting to other services at the Nullum Street interchange (MHS).

The current bus network and operation results in buses passing through Murwillumbah town centre's road network and traffic pinch points during morning and afternoon periods. It was observed that buses would undertake numerous journeys between schools during these periods.

There is limited information regarding bus timetables and routes from all service providers and given a number of routes overlap, the bus services will benefit from a holistic review of all service providers that will service the MEC as well as connect to other neighbouring schools.

Figure 2.2 shows the public and school bus routes for the existing four schools. It is noted that not all school bus providers currently have documented bus routes and timetables.



Source: Based on available current route data, Additional services may be available through operators. Further changes to the bus routes servicing MEC under development.

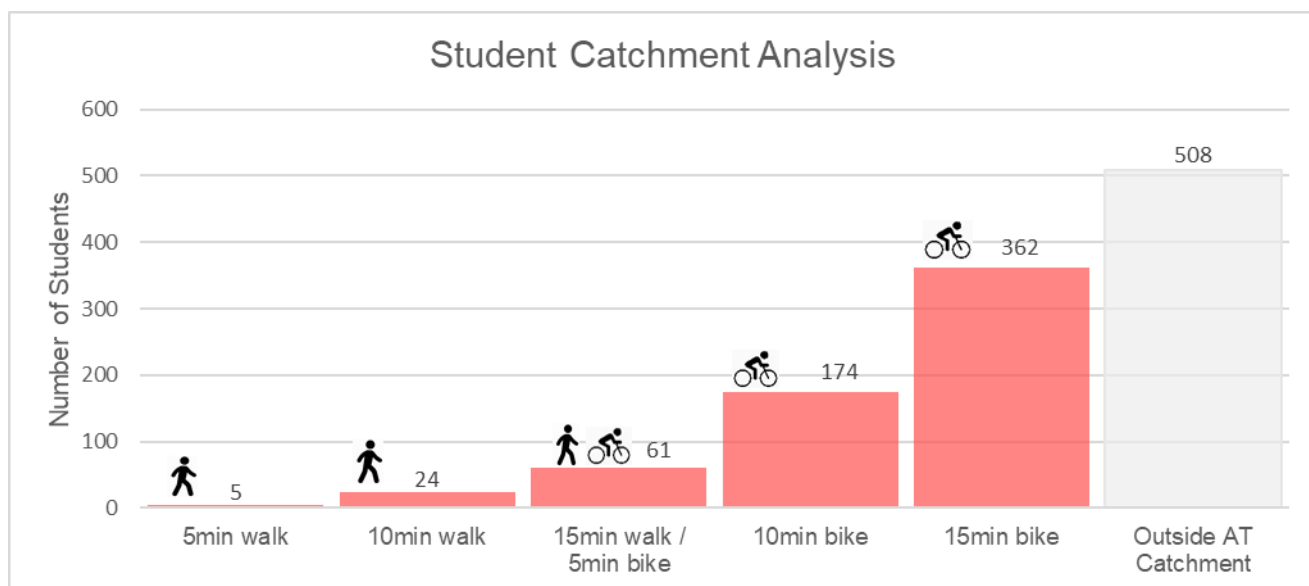
Figure 2.2: Existing Public and School Bus Routes

The school bus services operate as hail 'n' ride so students are able to get on the bus at any location on the route in lieu of bus stop infrastructure. Based on the information provided, the following is noted regarding the bus services:

- 308 students (23%) live within 400m of a bus stop
- 881 students (88%) live within a 400m of a bus route.

2.2 Catchment Analysis

Depersonalised student data provided by SINSW was used to determine the number of existing students within key walk and ride catchments and is shown in Figure 2.3.



Note: Existing students data for Wollumbin High School, Murwillumbah High School, Murwillumbah Public School and Murwillumbah East Public School

Figure 2.3: Student Catchment Analysis

Approximately 7% of students currently live within a 15-minute walking catchment and 42% live with a 15-minute ride catchment to MEC. This demonstrates there is the potential to increase active transport mode share specifically riding.

2.3 Transport Mode Share

A student and staff travel mode share survey was undertaken to determine the existing travel behaviours. The mode share split of students is provided in Figure 2.4.

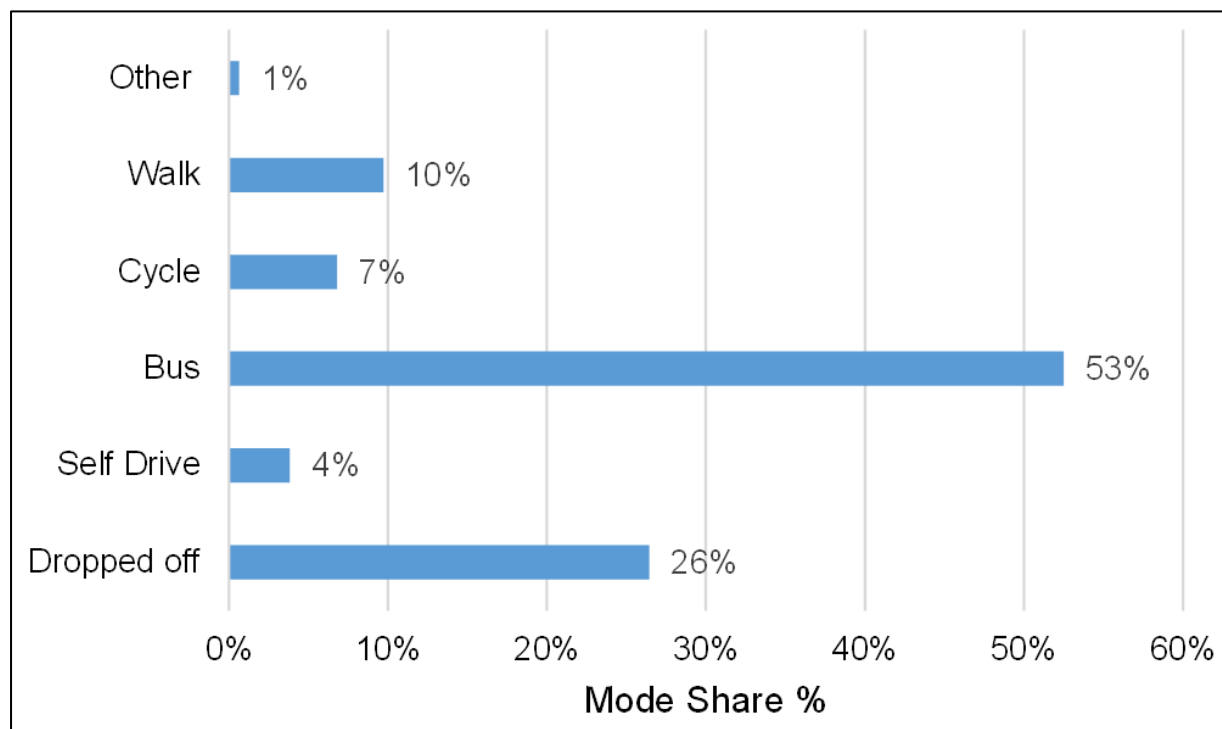


Figure 2.4: Student Travel Mode Share

As shown, buses are generally well used by students and with the amalgamation of the existing schools, bus routes could be consolidated and provide the opportunity for new routes, service efficiency improvements and/or additional services.

The improvements would need to be facilitated through a Bus Operational Plan. Active transport participation, particularly cycling, could be increased given there is approximately 7% of students living within 1.2km walking catchment (i.e. 15-minute walk) and 42% of students within a 3.6km cycling catchment (i.e. 15-minute ride) to the school.

It is noted currently 4% of high school students drive to school however this is expected to increase throughout the year as senior students obtain a drivers license. Approximately 55% of year 12 students intend to drive to school by the end of each school year.

The mode share spilt of staff is provided in Figure 2.5.

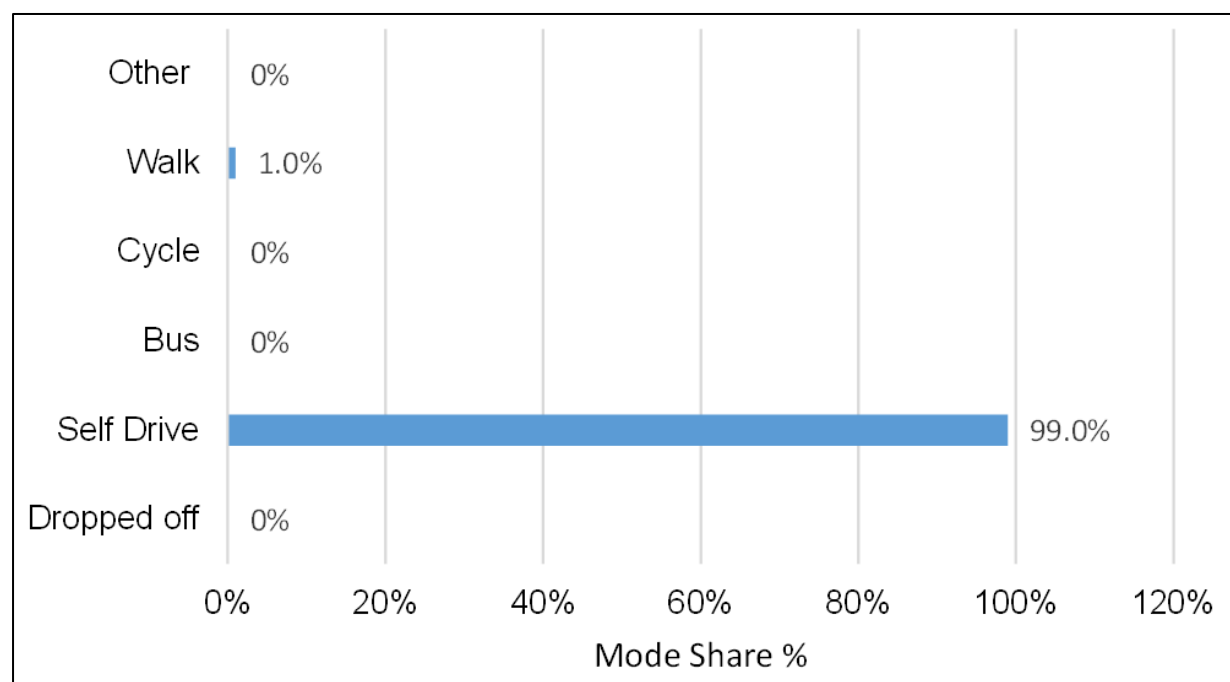


Figure 2.5: Staff Travel Mode Share

As shown, most staff currently drive to school, and there is limited alternate transport participation. It was identified in the survey that staff who drive to school typically participate in before and/or after work events for which there is no convenient and available transport option aside from private vehicle.

Further, unlike students, staff are not employed based on their place of residence and do not have to live within the school's enrolment catchment. In turn, there may be no other transport options available for the entire trip from home to work and alternate modes of transport are not convenient.

It is important to note, the current mode share of students and staff is consistent with other regional areas.

3. TRANSPORT POLICIES, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

3.1 Policy and Objectives

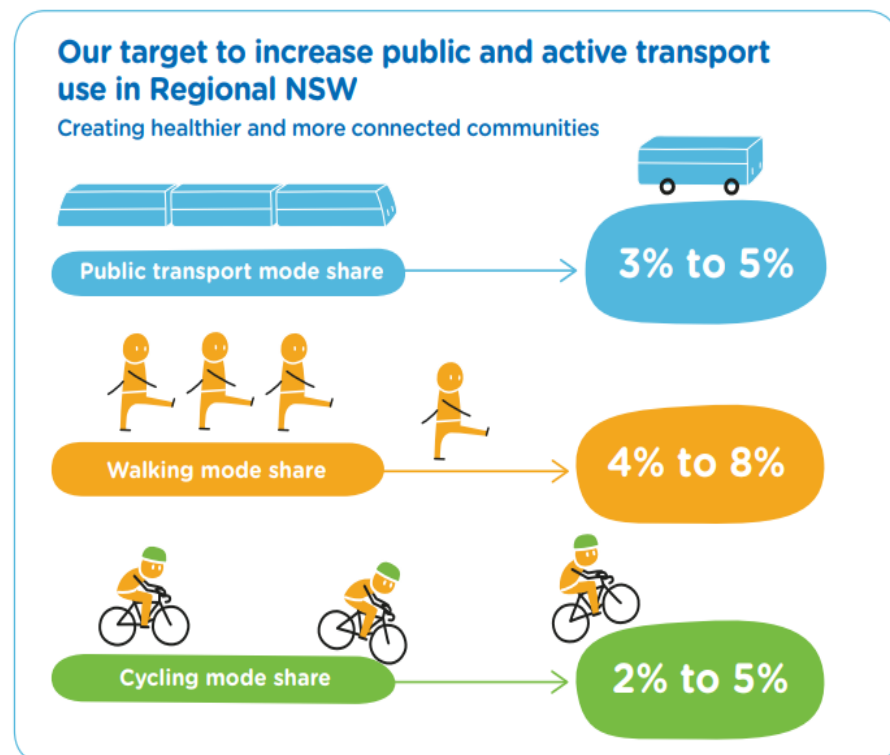
The overarching transport policy for MEC is to “*improve pedestrian and student safety*”. This will seek to increase participation in alternate transport modes, namely public and active transport, and increase daily physical activity which has a strong correlation to improved education results.

The SINSW STP *Practice Note* was used to adopt objectives specifically relevant for MEC and will drive the direction of the STP.

The 4 key pillars and objectives for school travel is summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Transport Objectives

Safe	Efficient	Sustainable	Collaborative
To minimise pedestrian and vehicle conflict	To reduce local traffic congestion and parking impacts	To increase sustainable transport mode share to school	To identify opportunities to work with state and local government transport agencies
To identify and implement new transport and safety measures as required	To ensure required infrastructure and operations are delivered prior to occupancy	To minimise car parking and kiss'n'drop provision on site To integrate the school transport facilities within the nearby community	To share identified travel demand and transport opportunities early in the process



Source: Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan

Figure 3.1: Regional NSW Mode Share Targets

3.2 Targets

The mode share targets for MEC have been developed considering the transport targets from the *Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan* (2018), the existing staff and student travel mode surveys and the catchment analysis. It is noted the staff mode share targets directly relate to the regional targets and the student mode share targets have been derived from the catchment analysis. Importantly, students live within multiple transport catchments and have multiple transport options available. That is, students live within a walking catchment and within the cycling and bus catchments.

Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 details the future mode share targets for MEC.

Table 3.2: MEC Primary School Mode Share Targets

Travel Mode	Existing Mode Share	Regional Mode Share Targets / Catchment Analysis*	STP Mode Share Targets	Change
Staff				
Private Vehicle	99%	82%	82%	-17%
Walking	1%	8%	8%	+7%
Cycling	0%	5%	5%	+5%
Bus	0%	5%	5%	+5%
Student				
Private Vehicle	60%	21%**	35%	-25%
Walking	4%	14%	5%	+1%
Cycling	2%	69%	10%***	+8%
Bus	34%	76%***	50%	+16%

* Catchment analysis proportions do not add to 100% for students due to overlapping catchments

** The proportion of students do not live within 400m of a bus route

*** The proportion of bicycle parking facilities at the school

Table 3.3: MEC High School Mode Share Targets

Travel Mode	Existing Mode Share	Regional Mode Share Targets / Catchment Analysis *	STP Mode Share Targets	Change
Staff				
Private Vehicle	99%	82%	82%	-17%
Walking	1%	8%	8%	+7%
Cycling	0%	5%	5%	+5%
Bus	0%	5%	5%	+5%
Student				
Private Vehicle	30%	40%**	24%	-6%
Walking	10%	7%	7%	-3%
Cycling	7%	42%	10%***	+3%
Bus	53%	59%***	59%	+6%

* Catchment analysis proportions do not add to 100% for students due to overlapping catchments

** The proportion of students do not live within 400m of a bus route

*** The proportion of bicycle parking facilities at the school

3.3 Actions

3.3.1 Overview

Several actions proposed to achieve the transport objectives and mode share targets are provided below. There is likely to be other actions not mentioned in this document to achieve the transport objective.

As this document is intended to be 'live' and updated regularly, it is recommended that these actions be introduced at any time.

3.3.2 Staff Carpooling

Staff carpooling can reduce the number of private vehicle trips by reducing the number of drivers and increasing the number of passengers. This could be undertaken informally (i.e. co-workers) or formally by online registers. Historically, the Northern Rivers Carpool supported carpooling initiatives within the Northern Rivers area. However, the service is now administered by the Community Carpooling Association Incorporated (CCAI) which support a number of online carpooling registers.

The School Travel Coordinator will monitor and assess the opportunity to introduce staff carpooling which will be implemented if feasible and if there is sufficient interest. A school-based carpooling register could assist in arranging staff carpooling initiatives. It is also recommended that dedicated car parking spaces for carpooling vehicles only are provided in a convenient location to further encourage staff to carpool. Pavement stamps are typically used to show the dedicated spaces, as shown in Figure 3.2.

Monitor and Review

Review the uptake of carpooling annually by monitoring staff car park occupancy and staff travel surveys.



Figure 3.2: Staff Car Pooling Example

3.3.3 Walking Bus

A School Travel Coordinator will monitor and assess the opportunity to introduce a walking bus which will be implemented if feasible and if there is sufficient interest. This will allow a group of students to walk safely to school whilst been supervised. Multiple walking buses could be arranged for different directions (i.e. north, south, etc.). Typically, students are accompanied by a parent. The walking bus provides an efficient way for students to participate in active transport while having the safety of a group. Once walking bus groups are created, it is recommended to be advertised to students and parents and a register be developed to assist in managing number of students and available parent leaders.

Monitor and Review

A survey could be extended to the parents to monitor uptake, feedback, and identify any organisational issues with implementing a walking bus. A review is proposed to be undertaken at the end of each school term.



Figure 3.3: Walking School Bus

3.3.4 Student and Staff Bicycle Parking

Bicycle/scooter/skateboard parking infrastructure for students is required to further encourage a modal shift away from private vehicle. In aiming to achieve the mode share targets outlined in Section 3.2 it is recommended to provide 34 storage spaces in proximity to the primary school and a total of 114 storage spaces for the high school, with 57 spaces located off Riverview Street and 57 spaces off Nullum Street.

In addition to student bicycle parking it is recommended that 13 staff bicycle parking spaces and end of trip facilities be implemented to cater for the potential cycle demand. Cycling routes and information should also be provided to staff, students, and parents to promote the use of additional bicycle parking facilities. The staff and student bicycle parking facilities should be provided in separate locations.

Monitor and Review

Monitor the usage of the additional bicycle parking facilities to understand the increase in cycling as a mode share. Gain student and staff feedback on cycling and its facilities in an annual travel mode survey.



Figure 3.4: Example of Skateboard Parking Facilities

3.3.5 Active Transport Infrastructure Upgrades

A number of active transport infrastructure upgrades have been identified as part of the Traffic Impact Assessment for MEC. This additional infrastructure will provide a continuous and safe network for students and staff. The following upgrades proposed as part of the masterplan include:

- New pedestrian crossing on Nullum Street south of High School Lane
- Improved pedestrian crossing on High School Lane
- 148 student bicycle/scooter/skateboard parking
- 13 staff bicycle/scooter/skateboard parking
- Pathway upgrades on High School Lane.

These upgrades are shown in Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6.

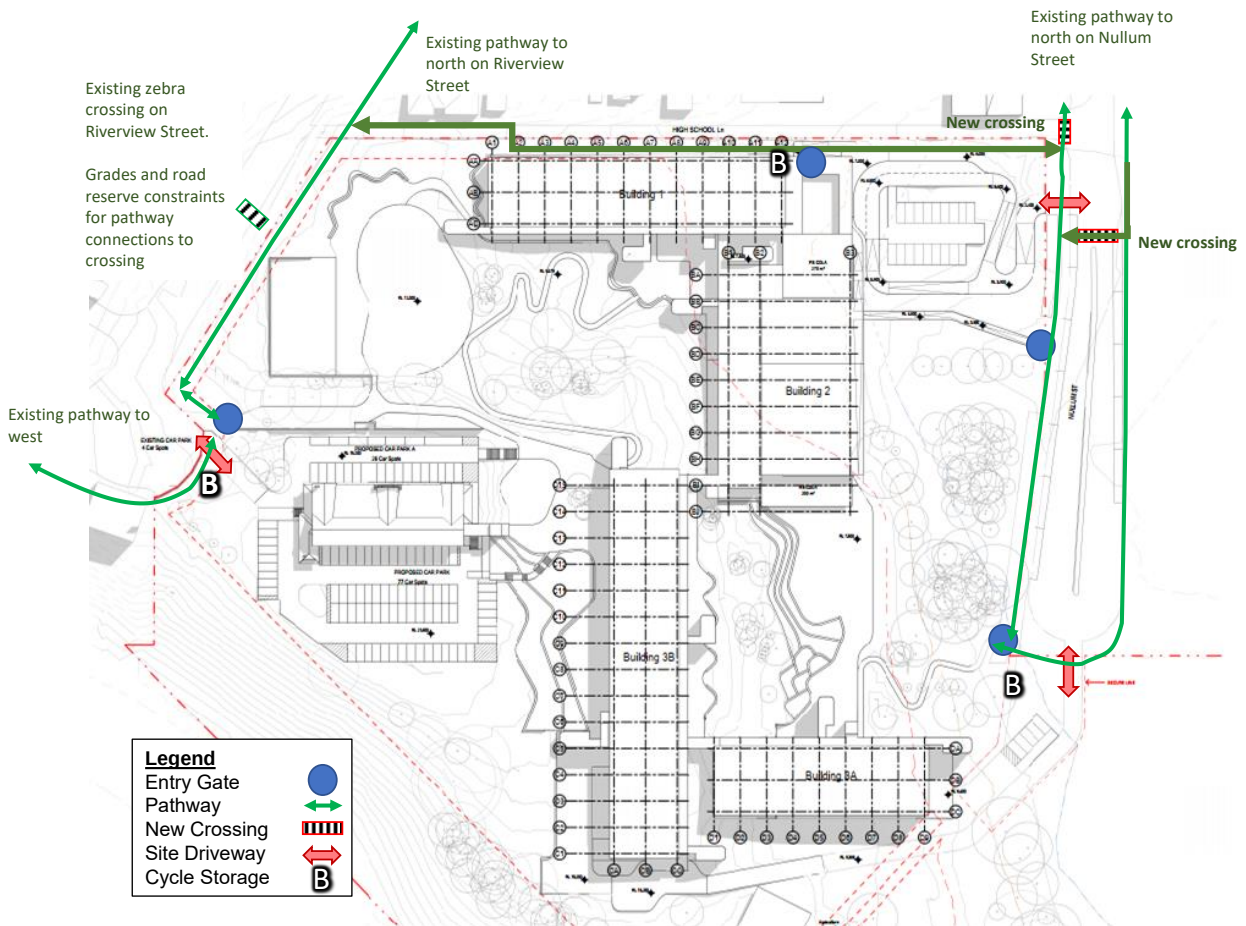


Figure 3.5: Active Transport Infrastructure Upgrades

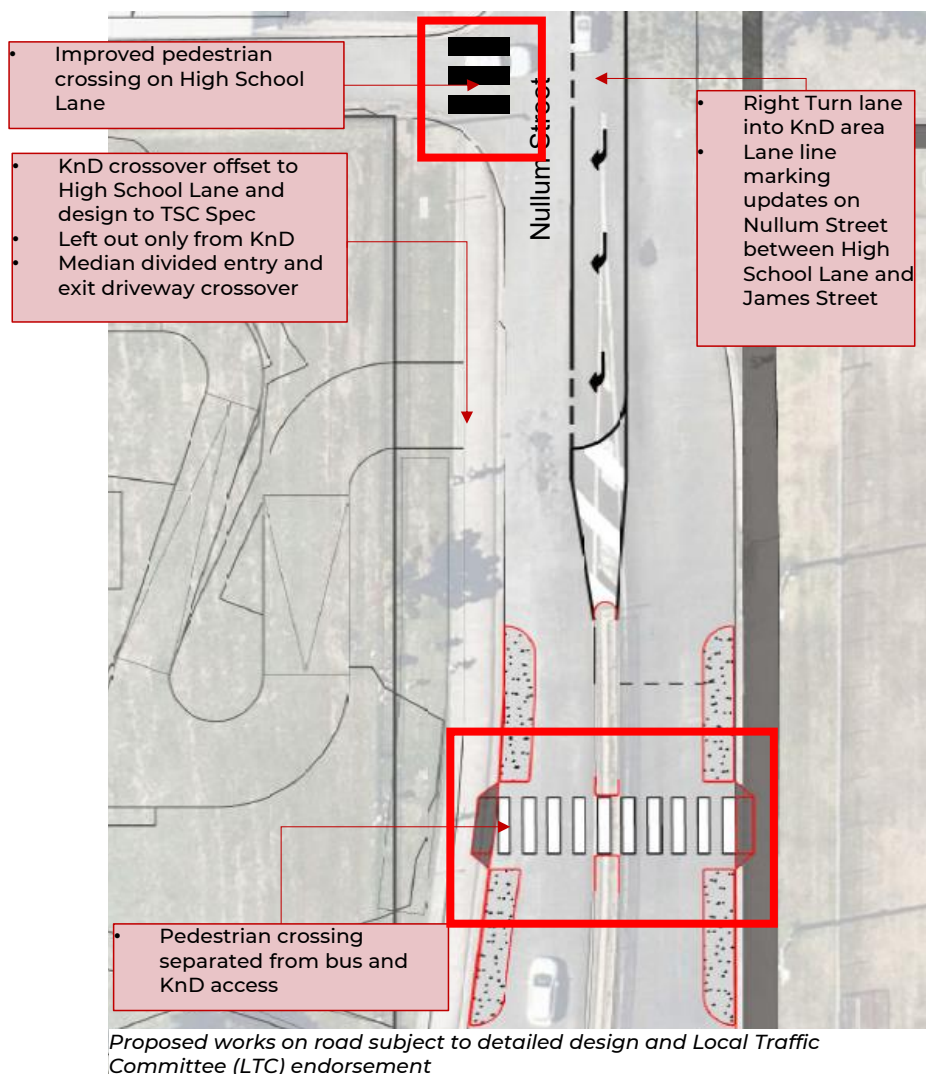


Figure 3.6: Pedestrian Crossing Facility on Nullum Street

Monitor and Review

It is recommended that the usage of these additional facilities and any other key desire line are monitored by supervising staff and in an annual mode share survey as discussed in Section 5.

3.3.6 High School Students Park and Stride

Although students will be encouraged to utilise alternative transport modes, a number of senior (year 11 and 12) students would be expected to school based on the travel mode surveys outlined in Section 2.3.

SINSW generally does not provide parking for senior students on site, which is consistent with their policies to reduce private vehicle utilisation and discourage existing students to park on site. In addition, any further parking provision on site would impact available space for educational and recreational purposes as well as introduce additional traffic movements within high pedestrian activity areas on and around the school grounds.

Alternative to on-site parking, SINSW seeks to use available existing public parking facilities within the surrounding precinct.

This action also supports a park and stride mode share with students required to park further away and walk the last 400m to school.

It is recommended an education program regarding safe driving to school is implemented in conjunction with the proposed upgrades.

Monitor and Review

Monitor the usage of the high school student park and stride in an annual travel mode share survey to determine demand. Review traffic operations around the school in consultation with the Local Traffic Committee (LTC). Monitor the efficiency of safe driving to school programs.

3.3.7 Kiss'n'drop Facility Management

A KnD facility is proposed on site to be accessed via a new dedicated right turn facility. The KnD includes a median divided driveway crossover accommodating right-in/left-out movements only.

The facility will include seven (7) KnD bays positioned adjacent to the primary school forecourt and can accommodate a total of 210m of queueing including the bays and storage lane on Nullum Street. The facility also includes 18 car parking spaces that will be used by primary school staff. The kiss'n'drop bays will also allow for visitor parking use between 9:30am – 2:30pm.

The proposed KnD facility is shown in Figure 3.7.

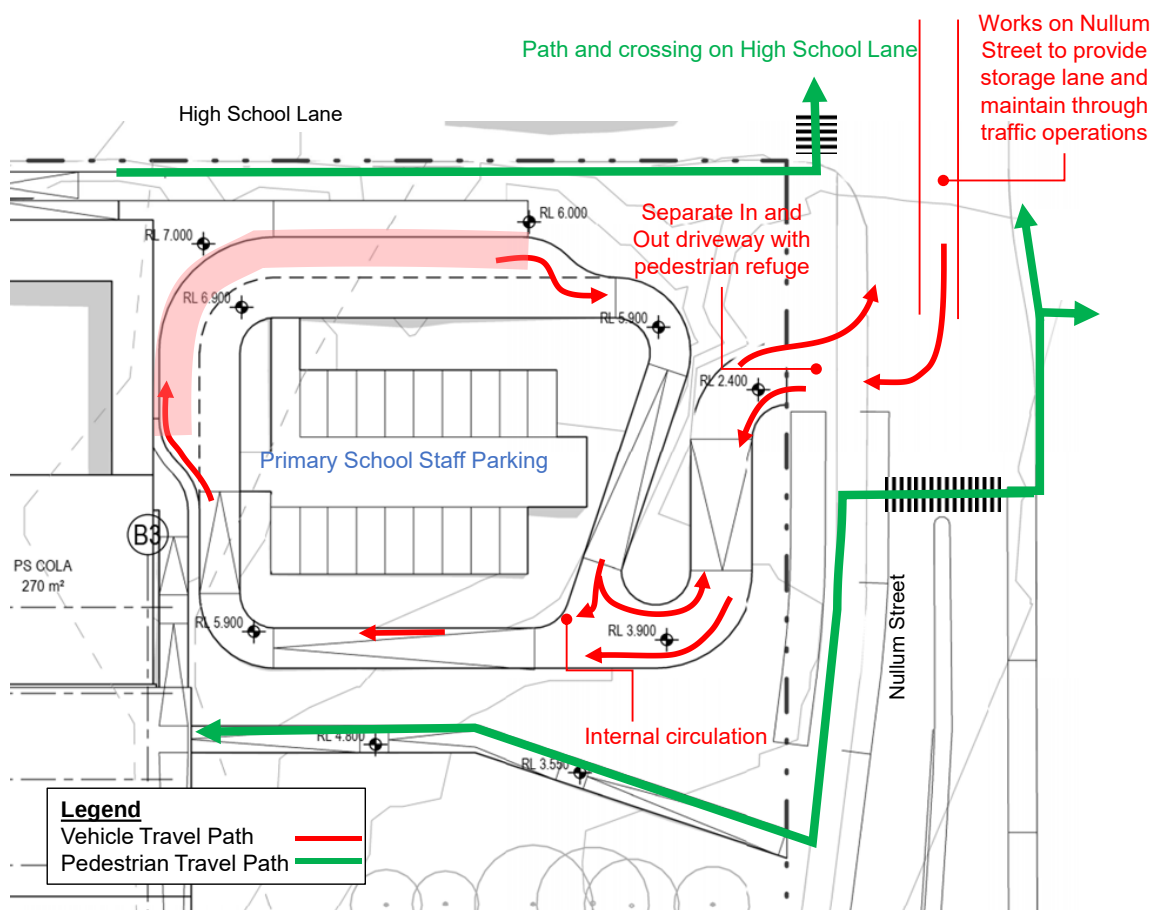


Figure 3.7: Kiss'n'drop Facility

The KnD facility should be managed during peak periods to facilitate safe and efficient use. Typical management of a KnD facility would include:

- Provision of a name card (student surname) to parents / carers to be displayed on the dashboard or passenger sun visor of cars
- Staff located along the pedestrian area of the kiss'n'drop

- The first staff member's role would be to direct vehicles through to vacant bays (with a traffic controller baton or similar)
- Other staff members' role would be to communicate with the students and direct them to their parents / carers as they arrived.

Monitor and Review

Monitor the usage and efficiency of the KnD facility and gain student, parent and staff feedback in an annual travel mode survey.

3.3.8 Bus Operational Plan

Bus planning for the MEC will be critical to the operational success of the new school. TfNSW has agreed with SINSW that a Bus Operational Plan and working group will be formed and will be responsible for the facilities and operational planning ready for day-of-opening. This will also include detailed consultation with transport operators on the existing operations and required improvements to support the MEC.

The combination of the four schools provides the opportunity to consolidate bus routes which is expected to increase the efficiency of the public transport travel mode and allows for the potential to provide new routes.

While this process will be undertaken following SSD approval, preliminary work by SINSW and TfNSW is beneficial to the bus planning process.

The bus operational plan is expected to include, but not be limited to the following:

- Develop a Nullum Street Bus Interchange Operations Plan and Reference Guide
- Common Service Route maps and integrated timetabling across all service providers (MEC and other schools)
- Bus Service updates based on new 'combined' student catchments
- Bus Service information to be included on TfNSW's Journey Planner for all service providers
- MEC as well as public interface improvements via the School's and TfNSW's website
- Contract updates and journey planning information ready for day-of-opening
- External bus interchange locations identification and facilities
- Investigations in consultations with TfNSW and Council.

Monitor and Review

The working group should review the Bus Operational Plan to assess the bus route capacity, efficiency and service times including access and availability of information.

4. TRAVEL ACCESS GUIDE

4.1 Overview

A Travel Access Guide (TAG) should be provided to students upon enrolment and before the start of the school year to inform the available transport modes. The TAG summarises the school's location, access locations, transport facilities and the most direct transport options. This document also provides links to other external information as required (i.e. bus route and timetable information). A preliminary TAG has been prepared for MEC and is provided in **Appendix A**.

5. MONITOR AND MANAGE TRAVEL DEMAND

5.1 Monitor School Travel Plan

An annual student and staff travel mode share survey undertaken by the School Travel Coordinator should be implemented to collect current data and assist in decision making. This data can be compared against the mode share targets identified in Section 3.2. The STP can be updated to align with the results of the mode share survey and potentially include additional actions. The annual student and staff travel mode share survey aims to gain feedback and provide realistic actions targeted specifically for MEC staff and students.

Communication between state and local government agencies will be required to collaborate policies where possible. Tweed Shire Council's (Council's) policies including the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) and Bike Plan could include the STP's actions to better integrate MEC's transport facilities within the nearby community.

It is noted Council does not currently have a Bike Plan and could be beneficial in implementing strategies for the region and the school. The School Travel Coordinator will be required to submit progress reports to the Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment.

The following template can be used to accurately monitor and review actions annually.

Action Name (i.e. Staff Carpooling)	
Target Date	
Current Status	
Updates Required	
Revised Target	
Date for Review	

6. FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Potential Funding Options

The available funding for active and public transport projects is reliant on Council's budget allocations and successful grant applications through State and Federal Government programs. Potential funding options include:

- SINSW Infrastructure Programs
- Collaborations with other State Government departments (e.g. TfNSW)
- Section 94 Contributions
- Council Rates
- Planning Agreements
- Reallocation of existing funds within Council's budget
- Cycleway grants
- Commonwealth Government grants.