



# Two More Trains For Singleton

*Campaign for additional daily passenger rail services from Newcastle to Singleton*

## **Submission – SSI 9775, New Maitland Hospital (Stage 2 main works)**

Two More Trains for Singleton has reviewed the environmental impact statement and transport impact assessment for the New Maitland Hospital on exhibition and makes the comments below. Two More Trains for Singleton is a community group representing the public transport interests of Upper Hunter residents and users of the new hospital.

The group has made submissions to the NSW Government seeking additional passenger rail services to connect Singleton with Maitland, and Newcastle and with major public infrastructure such as New Maitland Hospital. It has proposed that New Maitland Hospital be served by a new railway station, similar to the new station constructed to access the University of Newcastle at Warrabrook.

This submission highlights inadequacy of public transport access to the New Maitland Hospital, and specifically passenger rail connectivity. Design of the facility must ensure that effective and direct public transport access can be provided from the railway line in the future, including a future Maitland Hospital railway station. This would complement and support future improvement to passenger rail transport services in the Hunter Region.

### **Overview of comments**

More emphasis should be given to public transport accessibility and alternatives to private car transport. As a rural referral hospital, the fastest and safest way for many users and workers to access the hospital will be by rail from Upper Hunter towns including Singleton. Many staff would use train services to travel to work as travel times are significantly faster than by car or bus.

It is disappointing that little attention has been given in the exhibited EIS to promoting the use of public transport to access the New Maitland Hospital and specifically rail access, given that it is located within 300 metres of the existing railway line. This proximity makes it the most rail accessible major hospital site in NSW.

Applicable regional and state plans promote improved public transport accessibility:

- Hunter Regional Plan 2036 (Direction 4 – Enhance interregional linkages to support economic growth, and Direction 26 – Deliver infrastructure to support growth).
- Draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 (Strategy 1 – Integrate land use and transport planning, and ‘develop a master plan for the new Maitland Hospital and align local plans to promote a diverse health precinct providing pedestrian, cycling, road and public transport connectivity and accessibility for workers and visitors’).
- Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan 2018 and Greater Newcastle Future Transport Plan (provide ‘station upgrades and integration between stations and surrounding land uses to support increased public transport travel, to reduce private vehicle travel’).

The design of the proposal and the Transport Impact Assessment fail to give adequate attention to long term public transport needs and potential access. Distance to the railway line and to a nearby potential future nearby Maitland Hospital railway station must be minimised, and suitable pedestrian and bicycle links provided to Victoria Street Station in the short term.



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## Transport Impact Assessment

The passenger rail network underpins future local and regional public transport accessibility. Section 5.5.11 of the EIS is totally deficient in defining public transport opportunities and initiatives. A development of this scale, significance and consequence must be designed in conjunction with an effective public transport network and has potential to be transformative.

Unfortunately, the design of the development is car based, and the Transport Impact Assessment focuses almost exclusively on cars and road traffic impacts, contrary to regional planning objectives outlined above. The Assessment notes “there remains potential for improved utilisation of public transport and associated provision of sustainable transport infrastructure”. This potential is not identified or discussed – a significant deficiency.

The application fails to consider opportunities presented by the close proximity (<300m) to a potential future railway station, and requirements to improve access to Victoria Street Station in the interim. For a development of regional significance this is an unforgiveable and short-sighted error, and the design should allow for, and provide direct access to a future Maitland Hospital station.

## Green Travel Plan

The Green Travel Plan referred to in EIS Section 5.5.12 and Appendix E is tokenistic, trivial and inconsequential. This fails to recognise the significance of making public transport accessibility an essential element of the project design.

While the proposals in this Plan are welcome, actions are unlikely to be achieved in practice. The most effective way to achieve sustainable and active transport to the New Maitland Hospital is to provide direct, safe and comfortable links (eg shaded pathways) separated from roads and traffic. This has not been achieved in the design.

## Proposal

The following proposals should be incorporated in an amended design for the new Maitland Hospital to improve accessibility to passenger rail services and public transport:

1. Provide separated, and covered pedestrian access on the northern and western sides of the buildings linking to walkways and bicycle paths to link to railway stations.
2. Provide a bridge/walkway over Metford Road to separate pedestrians and cyclists from vehicles.
3. Request Transport for NSW undertake a concept design for a layout for a New Maitland Hospital Railway Station, and linked pedestrian and disabled access to integrate with the final hospital layout and building design.
4. Identify bus route options and preferred routes for linking the hospital to Victoria Street Station, not relying on existing bus routes.
5. Provide shade for pedestrians and cyclists along connecting routes accessing the site.

## More information

For further information or details concerning this submission, please contact Two More Trains for Singleton by email – [2moretrains@gmail.com](mailto:2moretrains@gmail.com) or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/pages/Two-More-Trains-for-Singleton](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Two-More-Trains-for-Singleton)

**Two More Trains for Singleton – 8 August 2018**