



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT**

**Motions**

27 September 2018

**3369 - WALLSEND COMMUTERS**

**Ms SONIA HORNERY ( Wallsend ) (13:05):**

I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that Cardiff Railway Station is one of the most heavily used stations in the Newcastle area.
- (2) Considers that there is inadequate commuter parking at and around the station.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Transport to address and improve parking issues at Cardiff Railway Station as a matter of urgency.

Dozens of commuters were slapped with parking fines during April when inspectors descended upon Cardiff railway station. Resident complaints prompted Lake Macquarie City Council to conduct a compliance exercise, and parking inspectors issued fines to drivers parked on land in Mary Street in the vicinity of Cardiff railway station. Commuters have routinely been forced to make use of non-parking areas around the station in order to catch trains to Sydney because of the utter lack of parking. In 2014, soon after the upgrade to Cardiff station, a Belmont resident commented in the Newcastle Herald:

Thank God they put the elevator at the station—they want you to go there but where the ... hell do you park?

The then member for Charlestown, Andrew Cornwell, shot down suggestions that a new car park facility be built near the station to help address this issue. But four years later the problem has persisted, causing headaches for local residents and for commuters who want to utilise the station. I do not say that the council did the wrong thing by conducting the compliance exercise, especially as it was in response to complaints from residents. However, council also did the right thing in deciding to waive the fees later, especially because there

was no signage at the Mary Street land designating it as a non-parking area and the ongoing parking crush that happens around the station every day. A resident who contacted my office said:

I get that people heading to Sydney need somewhere to park but the situation as it stands is putting too much pressure on those who live around the station.

I understand that. Cardiff station is one of Newcastle's busiest transport hubs, with hundreds of thousands of people using the station every year. For residents of Wallsend and Newcastle's western suburbs Cardiff station is the vital key point of connection with Sydney. One constituent told me:

I work in Sydney frequently. I used to be able to catch the bus to Cardiff Station. This gave me enough time to get the train and arrive in Sydney before nine—now, with changes to the local bus routes and time tables, I have no option but to drive to the station. Even before the sun comes up, there are hardly any parks around the station.

Indeed, many people travelling to metropolitan areas from the western suburbs for work, appointments and leisure pursuits rely on Cardiff station. Commuters must park on surrounding residential streets, clogging the roads and potentially leading to an increase in local crime rates compared to the State average. According to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research the rate of motor vehicle theft in the Cardiff area was 210 per cent higher than the State average from July 2017 to June 2018. The rate of steal from motor vehicle in the area was 178 per cent higher than the State average over the same period. Another constituents said:

If I come back from Sydney late, it's often a risky proposition walking to my car from Cardiff station. Cardiff is a great place, but the streets around the station are dark and more than a little scary for a woman walking alone.

We need a safe, secure car parking area close to the station. This Government has maintained the former member for Charlestown's utter lack of interest in the issue, steadfastly refusing to engage with Lake Macquarie City Council on the Glendale transport interchange. A new station at Glendale would massively reduce the pressure on Cardiff, and a modern station could be built with suitable transport linkages and parking facilities. As usual, though, this Government thinks that Newcastle ends in Hamilton. I call on the Minister for Transport to listen to the needs of Cardiff residents and Cardiff commuters. I ask this Government to take the transport needs of the western suburbs seriously. We are a rapidly growing community and we have enormous economic potential, but this potential is being untapped due to this Government's neglect. I want the Government to pay attention to our Wallsend constituents, please.

**Ms SONIA HORNERY:** I thank the member for Drummoyne for mentioning Cardiff during the last minute of his speech, which was wonderful, but at no point was I being negative. I believe that being negative does not achieve anything, so I would not express negativity. The member for Charlestown spoke particularly well and informed the House of some really important facts. She mentioned that more than 300,000 commuters use Cardiff station each year. She also mentioned that more people want to use it, but they are frustrated by the problems they have getting public transport to the station. Some of the new bus timetables have forced people to drive their cars to the station instead of catching public transport, which is actually what they want to do—and what local Labor members want—but they are unable to utilise public transport. People who find themselves in that predicament are being forced to park their cars in suburban streets.

I know that there is land available for car parking spaces. I am simply asking the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to closely examine the problem and tell us what can be done to get more people using that wonderful train service. Obviously, in the longer term we want to see a better service from Newcastle to Sydney: We all want our Federal colleagues to work on achieving that because it is so important. The member for Lake Macquarie spoke eloquently, as he always does, and mentioned what I refer to as the Glendale interchange. I acknowledge that he refers to it as the Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange. It is horses for courses, but the point he made is that the interchange is really important. The member for Charlestown and the member for Lake Macquarie mentioned the Glendale transport interchange because of its importance in providing better commuter experiences in public transport in the long term for people who live in the western suburbs of Newcastle, Charlestown and the Lake Macquarie areas. The interchange will be essential for them and for me.

The problem is limited access to parking at Cardiff. That problem is exacerbated when, logically, the people who live near the station are becoming fed up with commuters parking in their area and limited parking space being available for residents. That is fair enough. Council has been forced to do something about it, but imposing limits on on-street parking does not solve the problem. I understand why the council did that, but it does not solve the problem of limited parking being available in the area, which we want the State Government to address. That is really important because ultimately we want to get people out of their cars and onto public transport, which will make everyone better off. Certainly, if more people used public transport, the number of accidents on the M1 would be reduced. I commend the motion to the House.