



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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

**Private Members' Statement**

7 May 2019

**WALLSEND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Ms SONIA HORNERY ( Wallsend ) :**

Mr Assistant Speaker, I congratulate you on your new role: I am sure you will do very well. The growth of Wallsend is creating transport chaos. The major arterial roadways in the western suburbs of Newcastle—Newcastle Road, Lookout Road and Lake Road—are beyond capacity with thousands of new homes being built at Fletcher and in my area, where we definitely have transport chaos. In peak hour Newcastle Road is a car park. Just one accident on Lake Road freezes our western suburbs' road works for hours. Even on a good day traffic on Lake Road is bumper to bumper.

The brilliant solution of Roads and Maritime Services was to reduce the speed limits on those roads. The problem is that bumper-to-bumper traffic means traffic is travelling at slow speeds, yet accidents occur. To my disappointment Roads and Maritime Services would not reveal the reasons that the speed was reduced. I believe that it was its pretend solution to our traffic gridlock. The Government should start building and expediting roads before any other plans.

Car commuters in the western suburbs lose thousands of dollars a year by being banked up on roads when trying to get to the city. More housing is being built in the western suburbs, but reliable public transport and park and ride facilities are not being provided, particularly at the John Hunter Hospital. We used to have good public transport park and ride facilities to the former stadium, and it was very successful. We need to find solutions and make sure that Roads and Maritime Services immediately expedites roadworks, particularly the Newcastle Inner City Bypass.

A New Lambton constituent put it in stark terms:

*I work in Wallsend, and in the morning when I'm coming in to work Newcastle Road is often total gridlock. Getting through the Jesmond roundabout takes forever. I would catch the bus, but the system is too unreliable—especially early in the morning—and I need to be at work by eight.*

I am pleased that works are set to begin on stage 5 of the Newcastle inner city bypass from Rankin Park to Jesmond, but it is only the start of what is required to make Wallsend's traffic management successful. An integrated, broad-based transport plan is not only necessary but also urgently needed. We must act now before the situation becomes untenable, as it has in parts of Sydney. We cannot afford the piecemeal infrastructure that is occurring at the moment, with only small sections of roads being built—just like the cycleways in the western suburbs where streets are built that do not have cycleways and put cyclists back on the roads again. At times people in the western suburbs are too afraid to cycle—just like me when I travel from Jesmond to Wallsend—because it is scary.

Yes, we need more infrastructure—and we need it to work. As I have stated many times before, the Glendale interchange is the most significant regional project that needs to be built. Another important project is the M1 extension from Beresfield to Raymond Terrace, which will ease congestion from Maitland to Beresfield and Tarro. Once complete, stage 5 of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass will be instrumental in fixing the traffic chaos around the John Hunter Hospital and Lookout Road. It is a nightmare for workers to get to and from the John Hunter Hospital.

But that is not enough: Innovative solutions are required. Unfortunately, the Government has suspended funding for the popular park and ride facility, which took commuters—many of whom live in Wallsend—from the Hunter Stadium at Broadmeadow into the Newcastle CBD. At the moment Newcastle City Council is funding that project because it has been so successful. It is interesting to note that the Governor spoke about the importance of connectivity. We need to have connectivity in regional areas, too. Those regions where people do not vote Liberal—where they vote Labor—need and deserve infrastructure as well. Thousands of new homes are being built in the west, and we need better infrastructure in those areas, including better public transport to get people to and from those areas and schools.