



Park. Ride. Relax.



Park and Ride

Survey report

January 2018



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Executive Summary

Newcastle City Council (hereafter referred to as NCC or Council) has been trialling a park and ride service since Monday 6 November, with support from Newcastle Transport and the State Government, to alleviate traffic congestion and ease demand for parking in the CBD.

Commuters park at a designated area at McDonald Jones Stadium and board a bus into the city. The service runs Monday-Friday between 7am-9am, with buses running into the city every 15 minutes, and from 4.30pm-6:30pm, with buses running every 15 minutes returning passengers to McDonald Jones Stadium. Buses drop off and pick up at Marketown, Civic Park, Hunter Street Mall at Perkins Street, Customs House, Queens Wharf, and Honeysuckle.

Over 1,000 registrations have been received for the service to date. To inform improvements to the service and ensure it meets the needs of registered commuters, Council gained feedback from registered users via an online survey in December 2017.

In total, 243 people took part in the online survey.

A total of 23 per cent of participants stated that they use the service every day, 16 per cent use it four days a week, and another 16 per cent use it three days a week.

There were 31 respondents (13%) who said they haven't used the service yet. Of those, 23 (77%) said the reason was that the times of the park and ride service do not meet their commuting needs.

When asked if service times met their commuting needs, 56 per cent said it did meet their needs, 30 per cent said it did somewhat, while 14 per cent said it did not meet their needs.

When asked what would make the service more convenient to them, 79 per cent of those who stated the service did not entirely meet their needs indicated earlier start times in the afternoon (e.g. 3 pm), 24 per cent said later finish times in the morning (e.g. 9.30 am), and 23 per cent said later finish times in the evening (e.g. 6.30 pm).

Participants were asked to highlight on a map any additional stops they would like to see. Only 11 participants indicated they would like additional stops, the most popular location being on Wharf Road near the corner of Argyle Street.

The majority of respondents (83%) said they would prefer to receive SMS reminders about the service '*only when there was a change to the service*'.

When asked if they had recommended the park and ride service to a friend, 93 per cent said they had.

Overall, more than nine in ten survey participants (93%) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the park and ride service.

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1 Introduction

Newcastle City Council (hereafter referred to as NCC or Council) has been trialling a park and ride service since Monday 6 November, with support from Newcastle Transport and the State Government, to alleviate traffic congestion and ease demand on parking in the CBD.

Commuters leave their car at a designated parking area at McDonald Jones Stadium and board a bus into the city. The service runs Monday-Friday between 7am-9am, with buses running into the city every 15 minutes, and from 4.30pm-6:30pm, with buses running every 15 minutes returning passengers to McDonald Jones Stadium. Buses drop off and pick up at Marketown, Civic Park, Hunter Street Mall at Perkins Street, Customs House, Queens Wharf, and Honeysuckle.

Over 1,000 registrations have been received for the service to date. To inform improvements to the service and ensure it meets the needs of registered commuters, Council gained feedback from registered users via an online survey in December 2017.

1.1 Objectives

To gain feedback on:

- The level of satisfaction with the current service
- Identify issues with the service registrants feel should be addressed.

2 Methodology

2.1 Research approach

Everyone who had registered for the Park and Ride service were emailed a link to the online survey.

This activities fall under the **consult** category of the IAP2 framework endorsed in Council's [Community Engagement Framework](#).

Figure 1 Public Participation Spectrum, International Association of Public Participation



The survey questions can be found in Appendix I.

2.2 Data Collection

The online survey was conducted between Wednesday 6 December and Wednesday 20 December 2017. It was made available to registered members of the park and ride service.

2.3 Survey promotion

The online survey was promoted via email and SMS to all registered users and on the park and ride page on Council's website.

2.4 Data handling

Data handling and analysis was carried out using Sparq software by Newcastle Council's Community Engagement team.

2.5 Respondents

In total, 243 people took part in the online survey.

3 Survey Findings

3.1 Frequency of use

The table below outlines frequency of use for participating users. The highest proportion of respondents (23%) indicated that they use the survey every day. A total of 31 participants (13%) stated that they had yet to use the service.

Table 1 Frequency of use

Frequency	Users
Everyday	56 (23%)
One day per week	11 (5%)
Two days per week	32 (13%)
Three days per week	39 (16%)
Four days per week	39 (16%)
No set routine/infrequent use	35 (14%)
Haven't used the service yet	31 (13%)
Total	243

3.1.1 Reasons for not using the service

Those who had not yet used the service (n=31, 13%) were asked why they hadn't. The responses indicate that this was mainly due to the fact that the times of service operation did not meet these participants' needs.

The chart below outlines reasons people had not used the service.

Figure 2 Reasons for not using the service

Could you please let us know why you haven't used the park and ride service yet?

Total participants: 30

Times of park and ride service don't meet my commuting needs

77% (23)

I haven't needed to come into CBD

0% (0)

I have needed access to my car during the day

13% (4)

Other

27% (8)

The other reasons people provided that prevented them from using the park and ride service were:

"I ride a motorcycle, the rain hasn't prevented me from riding yet"

"I live local to the stadium but exiting the carpark isn't convenient.. can only turn left and I need to turn right..I park at wickham and walk from there atm."

"Location of Park is not on my usual route to work and is the busier option with more traffic. So far, I have chosen to travel my usual route and attempt to find a park - most days that works"

"I may have to leave work outside of the service due to caring for children"

"I currently have a parking space in the CBD available to me. I registered as this space was to be unavailable but this has not yet eventuated"

"I live in Charlestown, if i drive in i park in Bar beach and take a walk in. I don't think i'll use the park and ride as i'm happy walking."

"Too much to carry"

"Not in use when big functions are on"

3.2 Service times

The table below outlines suitability of the times of the service (every 15 minutes between 7:00 and 9:00am and 4:30 and 6:30pm) for users' commuting needs. The results indicate that 56 per cent of respondent felt the service met their needs and 14 percent did not (n=11).

Table 2 Service times

Suitable	Users
Yes	135 (56%)
No	34 (14%)
Somewhat	74 (30%)
Total	243

3.2.1 Altered service times

Those respondents who said the service did not, or only somewhat, met their needs, were asked what would make it more convenient for them. The chart below provides these responses and indicates that the most popular change would be earlier start times in the afternoon (79% of these participants selected this option). Note: participants could select more than one option, therefore the results do not add to 100%

Figure 3 Altered service times

What would make the service more convenient for you? (select all that apply)

Total participants: 108

Earlier start times in the morning (e.g. 6am)

21% (23)

Later finish times in the morning (e.g. 9:30 am)

24% (26)

Earlier start times in the afternoon (e.g. 3pm)

79% (85)

Later finish times in the evening (e.g. 6:30 pm)

23% (25)

More frequent stops

10% (11)

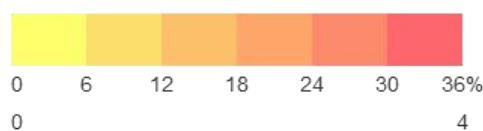
3.2.2 Additional stops

Participants were asked to highlight any additional stops they would like to see on a map. A total of 11 participants provided a response. The results below show the additional stops these users would like to see added to the service and indicate that the most popular spot would be on Wharf Road near the corner of Argyle Street.

Figure 4 Additional stops

Please use the map below to highlight where you would like additional stops.

Total participants: 11



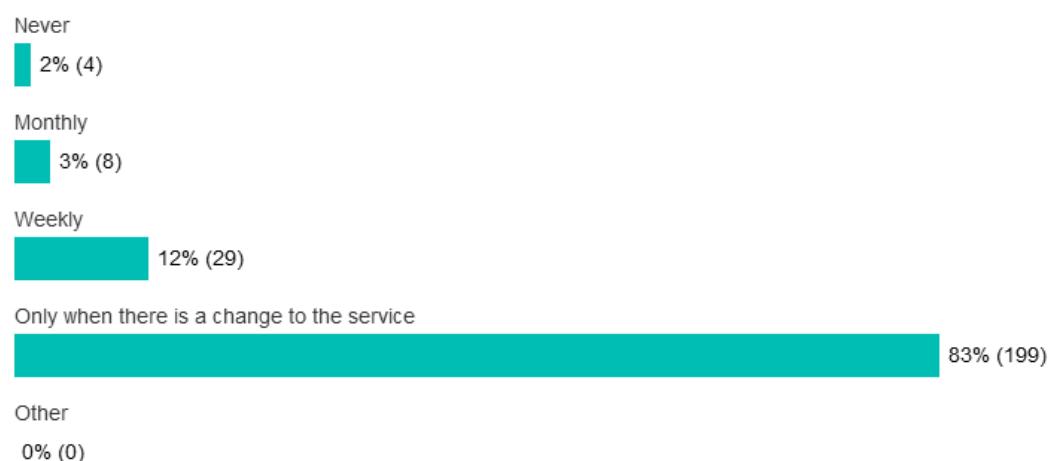
3.3 SMS reminders

Respondents were asked how often they would like to receive SMS reminders and emails. The chart in Figure 5 on the following page indicates that the majority (83%) of respondents would prefer to receive notifications '*only when there is a change to the service*'.

Figure 5 SMS reminders

How often would you like to receive SMS reminders and emails?

Total participants: 240



3.4 Recommended *Park and ride* to a friend

Participants were asked if they had recommended *Park and ride* to a friend. The results in Table 3 indicate that more than nine in ten participants have recommended the service to someone.

Table 3 Service recommended to a friend

Recommended	Users
Yes	224 (93%)
No	16 (7%)
Total	240

3.5 Overall satisfaction

Overall, more than nine in ten survey participants (93%) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service, 5 per cent neither and 2 per cent dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Figure 6 Overall satisfaction with the park and ride service

Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the park and ride service?

Total participants: 212



3.6 Any other feedback

Participants were asked to provide any additional feedback to help improve the service.

A total of 155 responses were provided. The most frequent responses were:

- Happy with the service (27%, n=62)
- Timing of buses inconvenient (22%, n=52)
- Staff and drivers are friendly and helpful (13%, n=31)

Feedback included:

"I commend the council and McDonald Jones Stadium for this service. I travel up by car from the Central Coast every day and I find the relax on the bus into Honeysuckle and back again is fantastic. All of the staff I have encountered are extremely professional, helpful and engaging people, and I have nothing but praise for them all. Since Honeysuckle became an official stop everything is as I could desire. Thank you!"

"The biggest issue is the King St congestion in the afternoon. The times I have used it I have arrived at the bus stop near Perkins St at approx 5.05. The bus has not arrived until after 5.30. With the trip to the stadium then the drive home to Kotara I don't get home until after 6pm. By contrast I can walk to a free carparking area - Fort Dr, Horseshoe Beach, King Edward Park - then drive home via Memorial Drive and Pacific Highway and get home usually by 5.40. This difference is vital as I have to get kids to activities often by 6. The service is fine, but for me the fact that the buses can't do the trip quickly enough to maintain the 15 minute frequency kills its usefulness for me."

"Adding the extra stops through honeysuckle was a smart choice. Since doing that I have seen numbers on the bus increase. Only issue I have found is that despite the commuters using the park and ride the travel times during the peak evening slots are not 15 minutes. This is only due to the still large amounts of traffic trying to manoeuvre through the light rail detours. A guide as to approximately

"what time the busses would be at each stop both inbound and outbound would assist in commuters time management. Otherwise I'm thrilled to have this service offered!"

"I am extremely pleased with the service - it is great to finally have a cost effective mode of transport and parking for those who work in the City. The only thing I would suggest is potentially having an earlier start in the afternoon, 4pm perhaps? Thanks"

"I have used the service since day 2 and am very pleased with the service. I plan to continue using the service into the future and have promoted it to co-workers. Would you please consider drop off at Cnr King and Watt street (inbound), with pick up (outbound) on king street before Bolton Street. Lots of workers around that area seem to currently use the service. Thank you"

"While the weather is nice the walk to the bus and the open waiting area is good. However with rain, cold and wind it would be helpful if the bus pick up and drop off point want quite so far away from the car park. Apart from those couple of ideas I absolutely love this service and have told load of others to try it as well. Thank you."

"A stop near corner of watt st and king st (where it was stopping when customs house stop was out of action) would be great, as there seems to be more businesses in this area than near customs house.

Also some more signage on the bus stops to tell people that the park and ride stops there and approximately what times. Currently this is not obvious, I waited 20 minutes for the bus to arrive at customs house yesterday afternoon and started getting concerned I was in the wrong spot."

"This is a fantastic service and has made my work day so much easier! There is nothing I would change and I hope this service continues forever!"

"Loving the service. Everyone is so friendly and lovely. Always smiling and happy, which is lovely to see (not too many out there).I love the freedom of not having to pay for parking everyday. Thank you for introducing to Newcastle. Very Satisfied."

4 Appendix I - Online Survey Questionnaire

Introduction

Newcastle City Council's Park and Ride service has been operating since Monday 6 November. You have registered for our service and we would like your feedback about the service so far.

Frequency of use

Single Choice Question: Drop Down

How often, on average, do you use the park and ride service?

- Everyday
- One day per week
- Two days per week
- Three days per week
- Four days per week
- No set routine/infrequent use
- Haven't used the service yet

Why not used

Multiple Choice Question

Could you please let us know why you haven't used the park and ride service yet?

- Times of park and ride service don't meet my commuting needs
- I haven't needed to come into CBD
- I have needed access to my car during the day
- Other

Why not used

Open Ended: No Validation

Could you let us know what other reason has prevented you from using the park and ride service?

Service Times

Single Choice Question: Drop Down

Do the times of the service (every 15 minutes between 7:00 and 9:00am and 4:30 and 6:30pm) meet your commuting needs?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Altered service times (for responses other than yes)

Multiple Choice Question

What would make the service more convenient for you? (select all that apply)

- Earlier start times in the morning (e.g. 6am)
- Later finish times in the morning (e.g. 9:30 am)
- Earlier start times in the afternoon (e.g. 3pm)

- Later finish times in the evening (e.g. 6:30 pm)
- More frequent stops

Additional stops map

Highlighter

Please use the map below to highlight where you would like additional stops.

SMS reminders

Single Choice Question: Drop Down

How often would you like to receive SMS reminders and emails?

- Never
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Only when there is a change to the service
- Other

How often SMS

Open Ended: No Validation

Please let us know how often you would like to receive reminders

Recommend Park and ride to friend

Single Choice Question: Drop Down

Have you recommended the park and ride service to anyone?

- Yes
 - No
-

Overall satisfaction

Single Choice Question: Slider

Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the park and ride service?

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

Any other feed back

Open Ended: No Validation

Could you please provide us with any other feedback that could help improve the service?

END SURVEY