

# Wollongong bus layover relocation

## Community consultation report

December 2023



Transport for NSW recently sought feedback from the community on potential locations for new bus layover locations in Wollongong and Shellharbour.

This follows a request from Wollongong City Council for a permanent relocation of the Wollongong bus layover, currently located on Marine Drive, to support council's future vision for Lang Park.

Transport considered all feedback received during the consultation period and assessed the overall community support and concerns. Key themes of the responses received during consultation are included in this update.

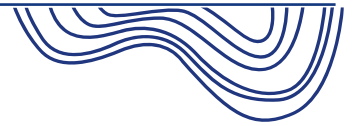
### What are we proposing?

Transport has assessed a number of sites in the Illawarra to identify the most appropriate locations for new bus layover facilities.

We are proposing the use of multiple sites to enable bus services to continue to grow and support the Illawarra region into the future.

The three preferred sites are:

- Atchison Street car park in Wollongong
- Wollongong Train Station car park
- Oak Flats Train Station car park.



## Consultation method

Consultation on three proposed bus layover locations took place from Monday 6 November to Sunday 26 November 2023.

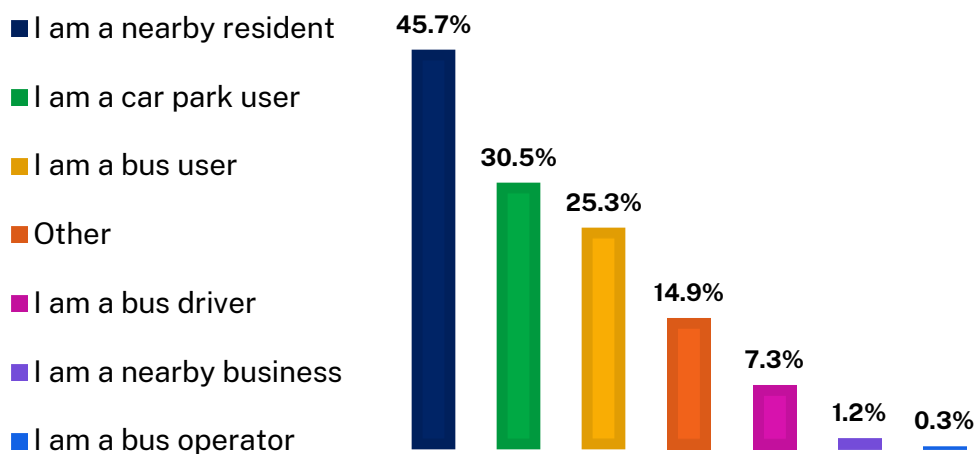
An online survey was prepared to allow the community and stakeholders to easily provide feedback. This was the primary feedback tool, which received a total of 328 responses.

The community was also invited to submit feedback via email, letter and a submission tool on the Have Your Say platform. A total of seven submissions were made during this period.

The survey was promoted on the project webpage, and participants were also able to access the survey via direct link in three Facebook posts.

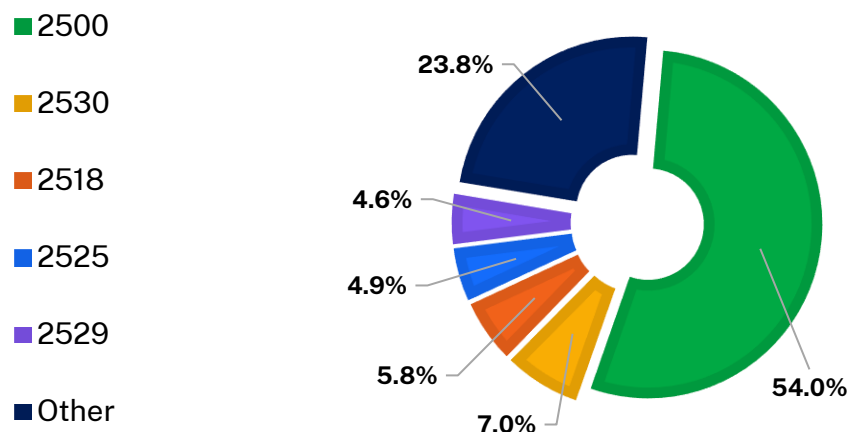
In addition, hard copies of a notification were mailed out to 4731 local addresses surrounding the Marine Drive bus layover location and all three proposed sites. The notification featured background information, contact details and a QR code linked to the survey.

## Who we heard from



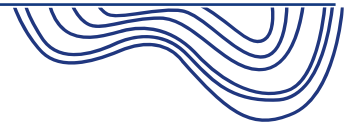
### What best describes you?

45.7 per cent of people who completed the survey were nearby residents and 30.5 per cent were people who regularly use these car parks.



### What is your home postcode?

54 per cent of people who completed the online survey live in the 2500 post code and seven per cent live in the 2530 post code.

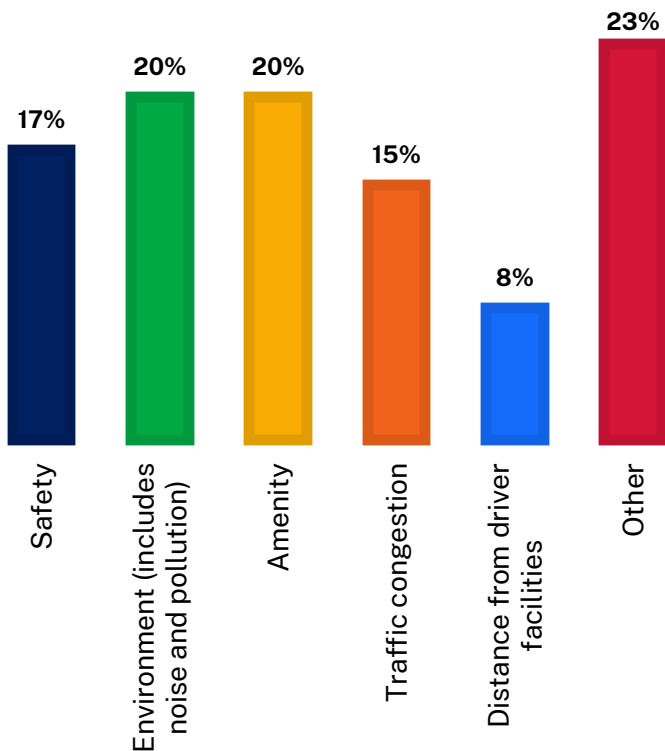


## Marine Drive

The Wollongong bus layover relocation project is being carried out in response to a request from council for the permanent relocation of the existing Wollongong bus layover, currently located on Marine Drive.

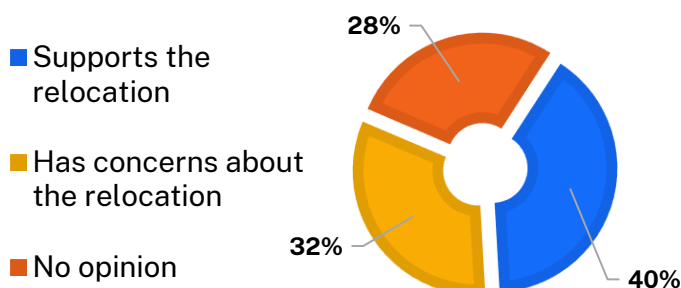
The relocation will support council's future vision for Lang Park, which includes the addition of 77 car parking spaces after the bus layover has been moved.

### What matters to you



### Comments supporting the relocation

The community was generally positive about the bus layover relocation from Marine Park.



Responses raised concerns about the existing layover distracting from the amenity of the foreshore.

The majority of these comments believed that the natural beauty of Wollongong's beaches should be enhanced by additional gardens and playgrounds.

Other responses included safety concerns, the negative environmental impacts of buses idling, and converting the bus layover to additional car parking spaces for better community and tourist access to the foreshore.



### Other comments about the relocation

A key concern about the relocation from Marine Drive was that the current bus layover location is ideal. This was balanced with many comments mentioning the space required upgrades to facilities and amenities to meet bus drivers' needs.

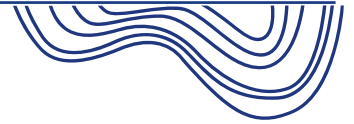
The community highlighted that the current location does not create congestion as it is outside of Wollongong's CBD.

We were also told the location is ideal for the route structure of current bus services, which often start and end at the entertainment centre.

### A sample of comments from respondents:

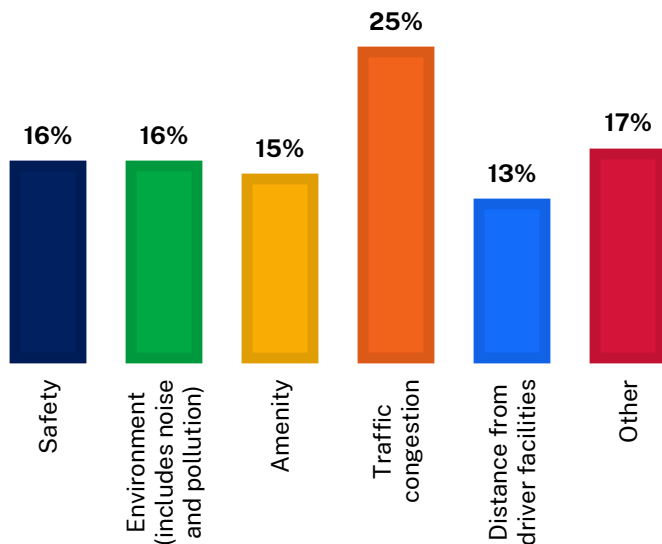
*"The toilets need a significant upgrade with the amount of drivers on break and when the public events happen access to a clean toilet is not always guaranteed."*

*"The current location is ideal for the purposes of route structure, however the provision of amenities will always be challenging. It is a picturesque location, and no one wants their waterfront views challenged by parked buses."*



# Atchison Street car park

## What matters to you



## Comments supporting the site

Key themes from the positive comments we received include:

- the site is located close to the Wollongong city centre
- potential to improve connection between bus and train services
- the large space available
- improved access to facilities.

## Other comments

The most common theme in response to the Atchison Street car park site centred on the loss of car parking in the Wollongong CBD.

Repurposing this site would result in the loss of paid car parking spaces, however there are alternative paid and free parking options within walking distance of the site.

Atchison Street car park is also located close to Wollongong Train Station and bus stops, which would improve the community's access to alternative forms of sustainable transport.

Comments also questioned what facilities would be available for bus drivers, security for bus drivers particularly at night, the potential for increased congestion in the area and concerns about noise.

## What facilities would be available for bus drivers?

Work to convert this site into a bus layover would involve providing new facilities for bus drivers to rest and rejuvenate between shifts, including bathrooms, kitchen facilities, and space to relax.



## Would bus drivers be safe at night?

Converting this site into a bus layover would involve providing appropriate lighting and security measures to ensure drivers have a safe space to rest between shifts.

## What about increased congestion and noise?

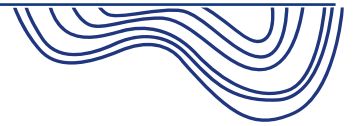
Transport will continue to work with bus operators to optimise bus routes, minimising the number of bus movements through the area while ensuring there is no reduction in bus services or coverage.

We will continue to actively look for opportunities to improve services for the community and investigate ways to minimise noise when planning the bus layover at this site.

## A sample of comments from respondents:

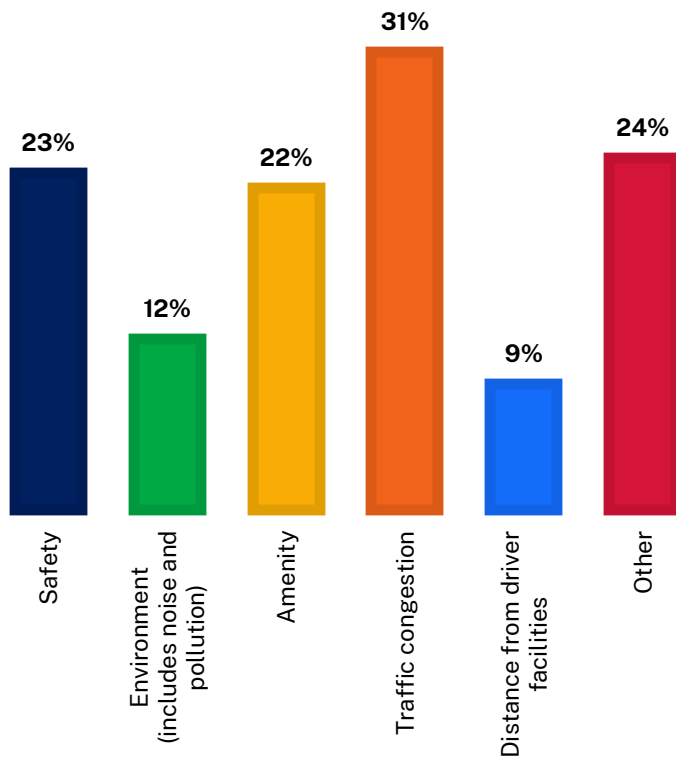
*"That site is already congested enough, adding this bus layover site will make it worse."*

*"This appears to be a viable solution as we should reduce reliance on CBD parking and incentivise public transport to work."*



# Wollongong Train Station car park

## What matters to you



## Comments supporting the site

A number of community members were happy to hear our plans to improve connections within Wollongong's public transport network.

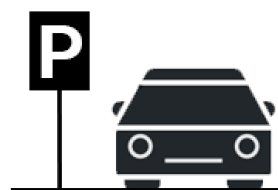
Other positive comments for this location included:

- the provision of nearby facilities
- the minimal impact a bus layover would have on traffic
- the minimal impact a bus layover would have on Wollongong residents.

## Other comments

The most common concern received for this site was about the loss of unpaid car parking spaces.

Work would involve converting Lowden Square into a one-way loop and upgrading the existing car park to maintain some of the existing car parking spaces besides the Teachers Health Centre.



The Wollongong Train Station car park is located near existing bus stops as well as the train station, improving the community's access to alternative forms of sustainable transport.

There is also alternative paid and free parking within walking distance of this location, including the commuter car park on the western side of the station.

The community also raised concerns about:

- the effects a bus layover would have on traffic congestion in the area
- the loss of drop off spaces for train passengers
- the small amount of space available.

## Where do the extra buses go when they can't fit here?

The Wollongong Train Station bus layover would be designed for six bus parking spaces and would co-exist with two other bus layovers at Atchison Street car park and Oak Flats Train Station car park.

## How would the routes change?

Transport will continue to work with bus operators to optimise bus routes and ensure there is no reduction in bus services. We will actively look for opportunities to improve services for the community.

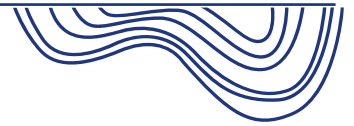
## Would there be sufficient driver facilities?

Drivers would have access to the existing facilities at Wollongong Train Station. We expect this site to cater for short duration layovers, with longer duration layovers using the Atchison Street site.

## A sample comment from respondents:

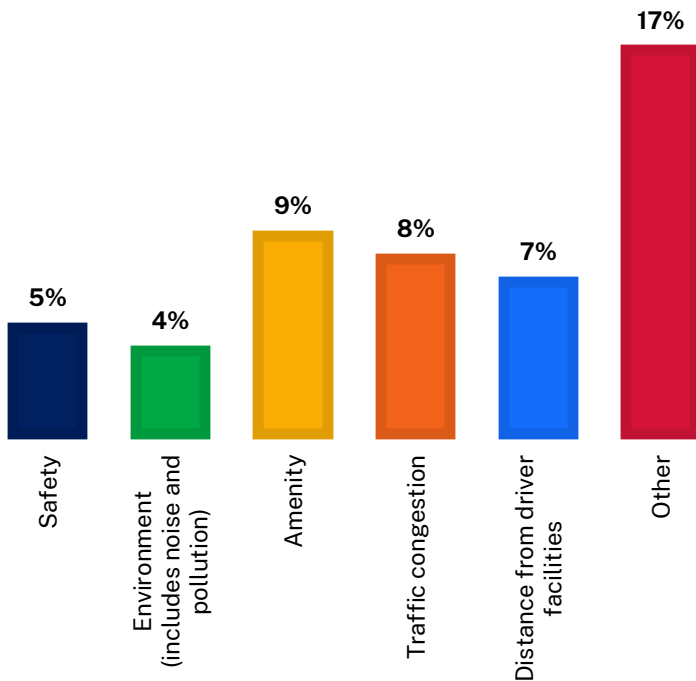
*"This seems to be the best option, it's super handy for public transport and would be a benefit to travellers coming off the train."*





# Oak Flats Train Station car park

## What matters to you



## Comments supporting the site

The community was generally positive about the Oak Flats Train Station car park and acknowledged the site currently provides sufficient car parking facilities which would minimise the impact of implementing a bus layover.

Other positive comments included improved public transport connectivity due to its proximity to the train station, the ability of the layover to cater for southern routes and the minimal impacts this site would have on the Wollongong city centre.

## Other comments

We heard the community is concerned about the loss of disabled car parking spaces at this location. During the work to convert this space, the affected disabled parking spaces would be relocated close to the entry of the station.

Other concerns include:

- the distance from Wollongong city centre
- the lack of facilities available to bus drivers
- the effects a bus layover would have on congestion in the area.

## Isn't it too far away?

While the site is located some distance from Lang Park, it would service drivers on routes in the Shellharbour area.

The bus layover at this site would co-exist with the bus layovers at Atchison Street car park and Wollongong Train Station car park. Buses on routes further north would not be expected to layover at this location.

## What facilities would be available to bus drivers?

Bus drivers would be able to access the existing bathroom and breakroom facilities at the station. We will continue to review the operation of these facilities to ensure they are accessible to bus drivers at all times.

## How would the layover affect congestion on Pioneer Drive?

We don't expect the number of buses using this site to increase significantly as existing bus services could start and end here, rather than in Wollongong.

This means there would not be a significant impact on the operation of Pioneer Drive or the intersection with New Lake Entrance Road.

## A sample of comments from respondents:

*"This is an example of how the whole bus network can be redesigned to create better connections with the trains, making this train station just one, among many, to have frequent buses stopping by."*

*"Least amount of spaces for buses but also requires least amount of infrastructure changes. Still plenty of commuter parking at that location. I think this is also a good option."*

## Alternative location suggestions

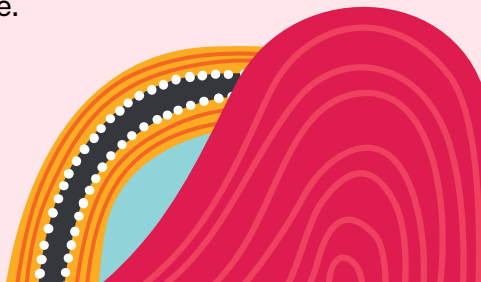
We thank the community for their suggestions of alternative bus layover locations received as part of this consultation, including:

- JJ Kelly Park
- Swan Street
- Greenhouse Park
- The bottom of Mount Ousley
- McCabe Park.

Transport worked with Wollongong City Council, local bus operators and the Transport Workers' Union to assess more than 20 locations for suitability of a bus layover, including all of these options.

The assessment process considered customer outcomes, layover capacity, vehicle access, route coverage, adjacent land use, driver safety and access to facilities.

The process resulted in the identification of the three preferred sites, with the remaining options being identified as unsuitable.



# Next steps

Transport will be progressing with the development of these three bus layover sites following the recent community consultation.



## Contact us



[southprojects@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:southprojects@transport.nsw.gov.au)



[www.transport.nsw.gov.au/wollongong-bus-layover](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/wollongong-bus-layover)



**PO Box 477  
Wollongong, NSW 2500**



If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450**

Design and planning work on the new layover sites will progress in 2024, including detailed bus service and operational planning to permanently relocate the bus layover to the new sites.

The project is proposed to be delivered in a staged process, with the Atchison Street car park site developed as the first priority.

Transport will continue to work closely with Wollongong City Council, local bus operators and the Transport Workers' Union during this process.

The community will be kept informed as the project progresses.