

Speaking Notes for Mark Georgeson
1 March 2023

My evidence has a purpose of addressing the classification of the Johnsonville Rail Line as 'rapid transit', and the walkable catchment of the Johnsonville Metropolitan Centre.

Johnsonville Line a Rapid Transit Line

My evidence refers to a hierarchy of statutory documents that are relevant to the identification of the Johnsonville Rail Line as a rapid transit line, including the GPS, the NPS-UD, the NLTP, the ONF and the RLTP.

It is my view that the Johnsonville Line meets the criteria of rapid transit under these documents.

Mr Wharton on behalf of WCC continues to confirm the same in his supplementary statement, concluded at his Paragraph 33.

There is more discussion in the supplementary evidence and other parties' presentations of the ONF. It is clear to me that the Johnsonville Rail Line should be classified as PT1, which supports the Johnsonville line being classified as a rapid transit service. It is a dedicated corridor, carries 1700 people in each peak and has 4 services per hour (15 minute frequencies) in the peaks [refer Table 2-1 of the Programme Business Case linked below], meeting the criteria of rapid transit as Class PT1.

One document I didn't refer to in my evidence is the Wellington Rail Programme Business Case, of July 2022 (<https://www.gw.govt.nz/document/19937/wellington-rail-programme-business-case-wellingtons-strategic-rail-plan-july-2022>). It presents Wellington's strategic rail plan and provides an investment pathway for achieving regional rail growth. It includes moving to 15-minute frequencies on the electrified network, which includes the Johnsonville Line [refer inclusion of "*off-peak service frequency improvements to 4tph enabled on all lines*" in the implementation programme at Figure 10-2 on Page 92]. This further confirms its function as a rapid transit service.

Walkable Catchment

I support the view that a 10-minute walkable catchment should be regarded as a minimum for Johnsonville.

Ms Hammond, in her evidence on behalf of WCC, provides substantial detail of the methodology and research to developing a walking model for Wellington.

In Section 6.1 Ms Hammond applies the modelling to Johnsonville as a test case. Figure 15 presents the modelled 10-minute catchment and Table 8 the results, which show average distances of about 600m covered to the boundary. This is less than the 800m typically associated with a 10-minute walk I refer to at Paragraph 7.2 of my evidence, and takes into account other influencers including variable walking speeds and slopes.

Based on this modelling, a 15-minute catchment would extend approximately 900m, not the longer 1200m referred to in standard literature and by others. I take the point made by Ms Hammond that the generally assumed industry standard walking speed for the average person of 5km/h was too fast to represent the average pedestrian and that account also needed to be made of the environment including road crossing points (and wait time) and slopes.

In my view 900m as interpolated from the Wellington walking model is not indifferent to the usually-adopted 800m catchment, and lends to a 15-minute walkable catchment being supported.

WCC PDP Hearing 1: Joe Jeffries Speaking Notes 1 March 2023

The Stride and Investore submissions made three submission points relevant to these hearings that I have provided evidence in support of.

1. The first point relates to the classification of the Johnsonville rail line as rapid transit for the purposes of implementing the NPSUD:
 - a. In my view the definition of rapid transit needs to be viewed within the context of the NPSUD. It's not only a matter of whether it meets some objective standard of "rapid transit" but whether it also qualifies in light of the NPSUD's purpose and objectives. Key among these are:
 - i. Contributing to well-functioning urban environments.
 - ii. Enabling more people to live in areas of high demand, well serviced by public transport.
 - iii. Improving housing affordability by supporting competitive land and development markets.
 - b. To state it more broadly the NPSUD is about removing barriers to housing in good accessible locations, and location needs to be viewed in the context of the wider Wellington region not just Wellington City. Providing greater development opportunities on the Johnsonville line reduces the need for dwellings in less accessible parts of the region, not just other parts of Wellington City.
 - c. The Johnsonville line also meets each of the key aspects of the NPSUD definition of rapid transit (frequent, quick, reliable, high capacity, public transport, permanent route largely separated from other traffic) which has been well covered by the reporting officer and the evidence of Mark Georgeson. In my view the term "quick" within the definition, in particular, needs to be viewed in total travel times rather than moving speed. It is notable that travel times on the Johnsonville line are shorter than trips to most of the stations on the Hutt valley and Kapiti lines.
2. Secondly – I support the recognition of the regional significance of the Johnsonville Metropolitan Centre as a major live work hub under the strategic objectives, second only to the Wellington CBD in the centres hierarchy.
 - a. There are only two centres with this Metropolitan Centre status, and the other, Kilbirnie, is much more severely constrained by natural hazards than Johnsonville.

3. My third and final point relates to the walkable catchment of the Johnsonville metropolitan Centre for implementing the intensification requirements of the NPSUD. Given the sub regional significance of the Johnsonville Centre, and the range of services and amenities it is able to provide, it is important to provide for a commensurate level of development.
 - a. According to the MfE guidance on implementing the NPSUD:
 - i. 800m should be considered a starting point for a walkable catchment, the draw of certain amenities will influence how far people are willing to walk to access them, and is likely to influence the size of a walkable catchment.
 - ii. Accordingly, while I support the notified zoning of high density residential in Johnsonville as a minimum, I also consider it appropriate to provide for a walkable catchment within 15 minutes of the Johnsonville centre, noting that the council's proposed 10 minute catchment is significantly less than 800m as it takes into account constraints such as hills.