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Submission Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012



Nick Griener says this is Beirut on a Friday night! He is clearly wrong.



Newcastle is a thriving city centre jumping out of its skin with new buildings, great beaches, nice harbour and train service that connects Australia to Newcastle Station, happy people and lots of awards for its excellence.

How can the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012 better that?

A minor but influential sector of Newcastle has for about 30 years tried to capitalise on the potential of Newcastle. Many would say it has been for their own financial benefit.

That group has manipulated many groups and organisation by infiltrating their ranks, by intense lobbying, by creating new groups and organisations and by feeding politicians.

Much of the information distributed has in my view been very bias and often well removed from the true facts.

One of the major groups has been the Hunter Business Chamber. This is a small group of about 800 members drawn from many parts of the Hunter and even Sydney. The Newcastle Alliance and Fix Our City have been other small but powerful lobby groups.

An examination of the key figures behind the lobby groups will find that there are about ten key figures.

The group targeted a small section of Newcastle namely the CBD area comprising the suburbs of Newcastle, Newcastle East and Newcastle West. They have shown little or no interest in other suburbs.

The Newcastle ex CBD area had suffered a major decline in commercial activity and population due to a rapidly changing Lower Hunter.

Some factors that changed the area included:-

- The decline of wool as a raw material for textiles

- The redesign of the harbour wharf layout

- The new coal export terminals

- The establishment of major suburban shopping centres at locations like Green Hills, Jesmond, Charlestown and Kotara

- The explosion in the use of the motor car

- Major changes to education and higher education.

- New Hospital locations.

- The decline of the steel industry and ultimate closure of the BHP.

- Major changes in the banking and finance sector.

All these changes resulted in the population of Newcastle LGA declining sharply by about 30,000 people and it is only in the 2011 Census that the population has returned to its previous record level. Growth is still slow but picking up with many neighbouring LGA's performing better.

The mining industry and the development of new ventures saw Lake Macquarie and Maitland continue to grow and attract new investment.

The net result of all this change was that the Newcastle peninsula was no longer the focal point of the Hunter Region Further it will never return to be the commercial focal point of the Hunter. For the NURS to suggest it will is not supported by any fact figures or justified projections.

The residential location of workers for the City of Newcastle (total LGA) for 2011 are very interesting.

Live in Newcastle and work in Lower Hunter	43,329	49.1%
Live and work in Newcastle LGA	21,894	24.8%
Live in Newcastle LGA and work in	21,435	24.3%

another LGA		
Work in Newcastle LGA but live outside	44,850	50.9%
Total Workers in Newcastle LGA	88,179	100%

Source ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011

It is very hard to imagine how the growth of Newcastle LGA and in particular the City Centre will increase by 12,600 additional residents by 2036 as stated by the NURS when the migration figures from the 2011 census period displayed the following characteristics:-

Current residents who moved at least once between 2006 and 2011	55,942
Residents who moved within the City of Newcastle	23,634
Migration from other parts of NSW	22,672
Migration to other parts of NSW	18,310
Net Migration into the City of Newcastle	4362
Migration from other parts of Australia	3,593
Migration to other parts of Australia	4,599
Net Migration into the City of Newcastle from other parts of Australia	-1006
Net Migration into the City of Newcastle	3356

The old obsolete and incomplete data and information in the very crude Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012 (NURS) certainly does not reflect the true position.

The NURS and the appendices provide no reliable information as to how population or employment will be increased in the Newcastle City Centre area. The proposed city campus is one NURS hopeful however the Newcastle Herald 16/4/2013 reports the new campus will be the product of "its business and law faculties will move entirely into the inner city bringing with them 3000 students and 200 staff members" It should also be noted that the new campus will be very much smaller than predicted with a cut to about 70% of the planned size. It is also very dependent on the rail line to connect the campuses.

This much smaller university campus follows on from the much smaller Court House now under construction. The Court house is simply a new building to replace an old city centre building falling well short of the proposed court and legal precinct referred to in the NURS.

Just moving groups of people from one suburb to another suburb of little benefit to the growth and development of the City of Newcastle.

There are considerable problems with the NURS as the document is of a very poor quality and is obviously a crude cut and paste from previous documents. Some examples of errors include:-

- The west end is described as an ideal location for bulky goods retail however it is also listed as the site for major high rise commercial activity.
- The video flyover shows a very much narrowed Stewart Avenue in the areas of Hunter St
- The NURS makes no reference to the Port Strategic plan.
- The NURS makes no reference to the Mayfield Wharf concept plan and the huge numbers of heavy lorries and B doubles that will use Stewart Avenue.
- The NURS makes no reference to the sharply crashing bus patronage.
- Crossing the rail with at grade crossings (Page 121 and 124) even though the line is cut.
- Newcastle St is in fact Bruncker Road (page 122)
- Bus routes 100, 363, 320 in the map are wrong (P123)
- Hunter St is currently restricted to 50kph not unrestricted (76)

It is absolutely obvious that many people connected with the production have little or no understanding of Newcastle and their the level of research is abysmal.

It is also a major blight on the Liberal Government who were swept into office because “the last lot were so hopeless” for their efforts to be even worse than the Labor efforts.

At the announcement of the NURS by Planning Minister Hazzard the community was told that the proposal was well documented and that there would be lots of opportunity for consultation.

Minister Hazzard said and I quote from his video “we are asking for the public to have their say and get involved” The facts are they could not because the documents were not available in hard copy and had not even been printed. It was not until mid January, almost a month later, that copies of some of the documents were available. To my knowledge there are still no hard copies of the Appendices available.

We have also been told that the fly over video has no level of accuracy. The community has been told the vision of the Wickham Station is false and that Stewart Ave is also false. This is the type of shonky and dishonest practice the Fair Trading Department prosecutes businesses for. It is also the type of activity that is of interest to the Ombudsman and ICAC especially if people involved with the process are landowners or are commercially involved.

Whilst disk copies and download copies may suit some due to the substandard design and layout work they did not suit reading on a home computer screen.

Mr Hazzard also stated that there had been considerable discussions with stakeholders leading up to the announcement. Mr Hazzard stated “ they had spoken with everyone who has strong views” A major community group Save Our Rail had not been consulted at all. After the announcement Mr Hazzard invited SOR to visit

his office which they did. At that meeting The Minister had firmly agreed to attend a workshop hosted by SOR and to date he has failed to fulfil that promise. (Draft Workshop proposal Appendix A)

A major issue with the documentation is “what the hell is Newcastle”? Is Newcastle the region with either 650,000 residents or 550,000 residents depending on what areas you include. Is Newcastle the combined Lake Macquarie LGA plus the Newcastle LGA (350,000) Is it the Newcastle Local Government area 150,000 residents is it the CBD area about 4000 people or is it the Suburb with about 1700 people.

Confusion reigns. The NURS documents do not even know what term they are talking about and there is no Glossary.

The confusion about Newcastle is rife within the public service and MP's. The drafters of the Transport Master Plan have become highly confused due to the absence of an adequate Glossary.

In the Transport Master Plan the following terms are used when referring to the Hunter Region.

- City centre
- centre
- CBD
- Hunter
- Hunter-Newcastle
- Lower Hunter
- Newcastle
- Newcastle City
- Regional City of Newcastle
- and several other similar words use to describe the Hunter region and parts thereof.

To make matters worse the words are not used consistently and I am sure many would have great difficulty to explain what is meant.

In order that I and others can understand the Transport Master Plan, The Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012 and other documents these terms must be defined, included in the Glossary and the correct word used in the text.

Let's us be absolutely clear. Newcastle (including Newcastle East and Newcastle West) is a suburb containing about 3000 people. Yes 3000 people. Stockton has more residents and Mayfield about three times the population.

The NURS is in my view seriously in breach of the New South Wales 2021 Plan.

The Plan that according to Premier O'Farrell that was the basis of “responsible economic management requires sound strategic planning coupled with rigorous financial discipline”. The Premier also said “to deliver on community priorities.” AND “

Like all good plans, continued consultation will be undertaken to make sure it remains relevant to citizens' needs, and continues to strengthen our economy"

I believe the NURS is in serious breach of the 2021 Plan and in particular goals

- 1. Improve the performance of the NSW economy**
- 2. Rebuild State finances**
- 3. Drive economic growth in regional NSW**
- 7. Reduce travel times**
- 8. Grow patronage on public transport by making it a more attractive choice**
- 9. Improve customer experience with transport services**
- 10. Improve road safety**
- 13. Better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage**
- 14. Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing supports that meet their individual needs and realise their potential**
- 16. prevent and reduce the level of crime**
- 18. Improve community confidence in the justice system education**
- 15. Improve education and learning outcomes for all students**
- 19. Invest in critical infrastructure 20. Build liveable centres 21. Secure potable water supplies**
- 22. protect our natural environment**
- 23. Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments**
- 24. make it easier for people to be involved in their communities**
- 25. Increase opportunities for seniors in NSW to fully participate in community life**
- 26. Fostering opportunity and partnership with aboriginal people**
- 27. Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities**
- 28. Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters**
- 29. Restore confidence and integrity in the planning system**

30. Restore trust in State and Local

31. Improve government transparency by increasing access to government information

32. Involve the community in decision making on government policy, services and projects

There is no evidence provided in the document or supporting documents as to how these goals will be achieved. Instead there is a major list of evidence to support the total failure of the NURS to achieve the 2021 Plan goals.

Even in kindergarten a record like this would be deemed a total failure.

Member for Newcastle has also demonstrated disregard for the 2021 Plan and the fundamental principles of being a Local Member.

The Throsby Community leaders met with Tim Owen and raised with him the importance of the 2021 Plan and his apparent lack of desire to adhere to the State plan. The leaders wanted to rewrite the 2021 Plan in terms of the Newcastle Electorate. Mr Owens declined. Appendix 2.

Mr Owen as a Member of Parliament has a responsibility to represent his electorate openly, honestly and with transparency. It seems very clear that he has instead represented his own views and the views of his close associates. He has not been able to provide any evidence to support his claim that the community desire is that the rail line should be truncated in the absence of light rail. For example he has been unable to provide any evidence to support his oft quoted claim that he door knocked the electorate and they wanted the line cut.

It has also become very obvious that information provided to Ministers and others by Mr Owen cannot be substantiated by supporting facts and quality un-bias information.

An example of Mr Owens misrepresentations must be his address to Parliament in February 2013. I lodged a formal complaint with The Premier that Mr Owen mislead Parliament. Appendix 3.

Mr Owen often appears to consider himself the Minister for the Hunter as that was also the past Members responsibility.

Mr Owen's extremely low opinion of Newcastle has greatly hindered its progress. He left his office splattered with graffiti for months and even had moustaches painted on his face in his window display for weeks.

At a meeting in July 2012 Mr Owen described the Newcastle Mall as shit. I was horrified and sent him the following email.

Hi Tim,

When we spoke yesterday you made the comment that the "Mall was sh..t!"

After we left you Joan and I went up to the Mall for a look and were very pleasantly surprised.

The place was a traffic jam, lots of people about, trade in progress and plenty of smiling people.

It was the best I have seen the Mall in 30 years!

I think you and many others are selling the locality extremely short.

I think also that many do not accept the reality that The Mall is only a few square metres in a very small suburb.

Sure there is much that can be done to make the suburb better just as there is in other suburbs like Waratah, Stockton and Lambton.

Can I give you ten suggestions to move the Mall forward.

- 1. Stop all the negative comment and start homing in on all the great features and positives.*
- 2. Open up the roadway and increase the parking. (one way traffic westward with 45 degree nose in angle parking all the way down one side.)*
- 3. Castrate the area and remove all the balls. The balls look like droplets from a concrete truck and add nothing to the safety or quality of the area. (Sandstone (lookalike) blocks and seating would give a look of quality).*
- 4. Remove the traffic movement from cross streets.*
- 5. Give the place a full on wash and pressure clean.*
- 6. Get out the paint brush and give the area a loved look.*
- 7. Install lots of lights to give the area an evening trade.*
- 8. Have all business open at least 8am to 8 pm 7 days per week*
- 9. Encourage the locality to be the "Tourism Trade Centre" of Newcastle.*
- 10. Use the rail line to import at least 3000 visitors per day. (People will rebuild the CBD developers just make concrete structures).*

If you want to flesh this out or come for a walk up to the fabulous vibrant energy centre I will show you how to make it really hum for very little money and lots of profit.

Oh and pull down the construction fence that ruins the vista of the Post Office.

Rick Banyard.

I have no record of a reply.

The NURS and the truncation of the rail service into Newcastle Station is promoted as being of benefit to the region however Mr Owen, other MP's, the NURS and the Transport Masterplan provide no evidence to support the proposals.

By contrast the NSW Transport Masterplan workshop held in Newcastle City hall very overwhelmingly in the presence of the Transport Minister supported the retention of the rail line into Newcastle Station however in an act of dishonesty failed to despite many written protests record the details with accuracy.

Similarly the NURS information sessions at City Hall both overwhelmingly called for the retention of the rail line however this was again not recorded accurately because "the session was about the NURS and the rail line was a cabinet decision"

There is considerable evidence to suggest that the very hard working and high quality Minister for Transport has "been rolled".

I have repeatedly asked "rail line cutters" to provide three quality reason supported by facts as to why the rail line should be cut. To date not one person has been able to do that. I note the NURS has not been able do document with proof sound reasons as to why the Newcastle City Centre and the Hunter is better with the rail line gone. The Herald almost daily has letters explaining why it should stay.

The transport solutions to provide a seamless transport mode that marry with the 2021 Plan would seem even more difficult than impossible. Problems with Steward Ave, Railway St and Beaumont St coupled with major wharf heavy vehicle traffic and extra cars and delivery vehicles attempting to use narrowed roadways will cause massive crippling gridlock not only in the City Centre but extending deeply into the suburbs. This will result in people moving out of the City Centre and huge patronage losses to public transport. Some of the HDC examined reports indicate patronage losses as high as 60%. Even a 10% loss will be disastrous.

The infrastructure funding issues are certainly questionable.

ICAC may well be very interested in how the people were selected and appointed to the Hunter Infrastructure fund and how the fund has allocated its funds. The HIIB has not provided a response to reasonable questions. Appendix 4

The HDC would also have a number of serious questions to answer as the organisation has failed to meet its objectives.

On the occasion of their 20th birthday I wrote them the following letter.

Rick Banyard
cdcopy@hunterlink.net.au
4th June 2012

The CEO
HDC
Newcastle

hdc@hdc.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir,

Honeysuckle has just turned 20.

This sent me searching the HDC web site .

When the Honeysuckle Corporation first commenced it embarked on a number of projects.

With the initial funding one of those projects was nominated as the construction of a transport interchange at Newcastle Station.

The Honeysuckle Development Corporation formulated six key objectives for the Honeysuckle Urban Renewal Project, which were confirmed in March 1993 pursuant to the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974.

The transport objective stated:-

"To facilitate the development of a more effective and efficient public transport system, which better links the CBD and the suburbs and provides a more comprehensive CBD network for commuters."

Two of the seven broad objectives of the Honeysuckle and Environs Area Strategy were to:

- Help improve the use of existing transport and other infrastructure in the CBD and inner suburbs, and
- Encourage reduced car usage by local residents.

The Building Better Cities Agreement set out six area outcomes for the project:

- Better integration of physical planning, social planning, economic development, infrastructure investment and environmental management
- Accelerated urban consolidation
- Reduced reliance on private cars
- Reduction in regional structural unemployment
- Effective demonstration of integrated consolidation strategies applied in a regional centre context, and
- Improved urban environment compatible with heritage.

In section 5.2.10 of the Building Better Cities Report by Castlereagh it states:-

"During the almost 14 years since the NSW Government changed its policy position and committed to the retention of the rail to Newcastle Station, dozens of significant studies and reports have been prepared and discussed. The resources of both the government and the community have focused on the issue of public transport to and around the city centre. Options varied from constructing additional crossings through to terminating at Woodville Junction."

"The most recent analysis completed by Parsons Brinckerhoff on behalf of the Hunter Development Corporation concluded that termination of the rail should be a Wickham west of Stewart Ave."

Can you tell me "who" or "what" was responsible for the NSW Government policy not being adhered to by the HDC?

Given that it is NOT Government policy to terminate the rail line can you explain how has the HDC funded the reports listed in the "Publication" section of the HDC web site?

If the HDC produced the reports focused on removing the rail line were there also cases produced to retain the rail line? Where are these to be found?

Has the HDC ever produced a fully costed alternative for transport east of a termination location? If so why are these not on the list of HDC publications?

It would seem to me that the failure of the HDC to actively pursue the transport goals and objectives as originally intended and as laid out in Government Policy 14 years ago has caused considerable amount of infrastructure construction and change to occur. The HDC claims this has been of benefit to Newcastle.

Can the HDC explain how this benefit is demonstrated in terms of people? The HDC publication list provides no information to demonstrate the gains from the transport interchange at Newcastle Station and the "help provided to improve the use of existing transport" Where can I locate this information?

The renewal report document contains a considerable number of photographs of infrastructure items however shows the area completely denuded of people. Except for the posed photos there are simply almost no people in photos. Can you tell me how the Honeysuckle project has been of net benefit to Newcastle in people terms?

Rick Banyard

To date these questions remain unanswered.



A vibrant dynamic alive city is not a series of 9 to 5 offices relocated from other parts of the City Centre! (This is a non posed mid morning working Thursday)

The NURS promises more of this!



If you removed the people from Darling Harbour it would look just like Newcastle !

Plenty of flash concrete and not a person in sight!

Newcastle needs a people plan not a NURS!

Conclusion

The Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012 will be a total failure as there are no plans, no costings and no evidence that any of the vague ideas in the documents have any hope of being achievable.

Whilst some people will voice support I believe they have very little understanding of what has been proposed or is what it entails due to the almost non-existent consultation and extreme lack of detailed information.

The Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012 is based on very old thought lines that the suburb of Newcastle is in ruins. That is simply not true and the reality is that Newcastle City Centre is a place that the citizens of the area like, the tourists and visitors like. Newcastle would not be winning awards and World recognition if we hated the place and our tourists and visitors detested it.

Newcastle is a great place that suffers from being ill named and grossly insulted by some of our community leaders. Newcastle is not “shit” or “Beirut.”

Newcastle has resisted having change forced on it by the Newcastle City Council and the Government. Many of their efforts have resulted in large vacancy rates and abandoned outdoor space. The community itself must be the driver.

The efforts and lengths that those that want to cut the rail line have gone is truly amazing. Their efforts have been supported by the failure of the Government to deliver accurate and reliable patronage statistics.

The O’Farrell Government came to office to fix the “problems” of the previous Labor Government however in Newcastle’s case has failed to deliver. This failure has seriously slowed down the renewal activities of the City Centre. The Post Office, the Empire site are two examples.

The answers to the majority of issues in the City Centre are very easy and simple to fix. Importantly major improvements could be achieved with a very small amount of funding simply by doing what is listed in the 2021 Plan Goals and doing what the Premier in that plan stated. “to deliver on community priorities.” AND “Like all good plans, continued consultation will be undertaken to make sure it remains relevant to citizens’ needs.

Finally the Government claims to be very short of funds. Given that the removal of the rail line, the development of a totally new transport system and extensive infrastructure and planning works it is likely that the cost of the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy could easily be several billion dollars it is very difficult to comprehend how that sort of funding could be spent, let alone justified, on one 4000 people suburb of the Hunter Valley

Things to do

- Fix the buses
 - The buses in Newcastle and the Hunter are absolutely pathetic with patronage in the order of 1 person per kilometre travelled. It simply cannot get much worse.
 - I could fix the buses for almost zero dollars.
- Promote the trains
 - The trains into Newcastle Station have a capacity of about 170,000 seats per week and can draw from a population base of many millions who reside within about 3 hours of Newcastle.
 - The only cost is the cost of promoting the facility



These tables, these businesses and all this waterfront area is quality new infrastructure just waiting for people. This is morning tea time on a beautiful autumn Thursday morning.

These business people are going broke fast!

How does "The NURS" help them:-

- *Establish more opposition?*
- *Make it harder for people to get there?*
- *Reduce parking even more?*
- *Encourage a cruise liner? (but this was a cruise liner day with one about 400m away!)*



This is nice new high quality A grade office space right on the foreshore. There are many vacancies and most of the street level trading space is empty or going broke fast.

Again this footpath is totally deserted and there is no sign of grounds of people clawing at the rail line fence to get to the other side.

THE REAL PROBLEM THE NEWCASTLE URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGY 2012 FAILS TO ADDRESS IS THAT THERE ARE NO PEOPLE.

The answer is the Intercity rail service.

The very thing the Libs want to cut!

(Not even the last Labor government was that stupid)

- Small business establishment grants
 - Just like every suburb in New South Wales Newcastle could do with more businesses as businesses create trade, economic activity and employment.
 - Small business establishments targeted to meet tourism and visitor needs would rapidly repay investment into such projects.
 - The initial batch of 100 grants would be \$10,000 start up with \$5000 at the end of 9 months and at 12 months
- Remove land tax
 - Sydney boarding houses and residential property close to the centre of Sydney is exempt from Land Tax.
 - Make the Sydney provisions also apply the Newcastle City Centre area.
 - Land tax exemption is a tool to encourage affordable housing.

- Rename the area Port Newcastle City Council
 - The name Port Newcastle instantly sends a picture of a harbour, beaches, recreation, fun, development and a must to visit. Port Macquarie, Port Stephens, Port Douglas, Port Arthur. Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Port Pirie, Port Moresby, Port Jarvis, Port Stanley and even Port Rickaby.
 - This would also allow the Lower Hunter to find its real identity.
 - Port Newcastle LGA would propel the area forward and provide a real brand.
 - The confusion would be eliminated and the total area called the Newcastle Region.
 - The cost would be very little and the benefit huge.

- Redevelop political boundaries
 - In Newcastle we have two Newcastle electorates a Charlton Electorate , A Port Stephens Electorate that encompasses Newcastle Suburbs and we are now proposing a Waratah electorate the is part of Newcastle. All totally confusing.
 - Naming the electorates to reflect the areas within the electorate will simplify funding and grant applications to Newcastle, Newcastle, Newcastle and parts of Newcastle.

- Open up the rail line
 - Introduce street running
 - Build new crossings
 - Replace fences with water barriers
 - Build crossings that make money
 - Appendix 6 provides a long list of options.

- Turn on the lights
 - Lighting is critical to any area for safety, for vibrancy and for signifying economic activity.
 - Much of the City Centre of Newcastle is poorly lit even in the day time.
 - Trees are overgrowing many lights.
 - Modern bright attractive lighting can save money by using new technologies and design.
 - Newcastle City Centre would receive a major boost by simply turning on the lights!
 - Lop the trees
 - Change the globes
 - Use bright white lights
 - Encourage business owners to light up for safety and stimulous.

- **Fix the City Centre up with some basic cleaning and maintenance**

- Remove graffiti
- Give the place a good wash down
- Fine heavily for litter offences
- Plant a few flowers
- Provide clean and tidy toilets
- Remove old and obsolete signage
- Fix the fences



The foreshore fence

- Remove the shade cloth so we can connect with the harbour.



A real harbour barrier

- **Fix the Attitude**

- The NURS is a very negative document as it talks about fixing everything.
- The way forward is to build on the strengths of the good features and make them even better.
- Moving the best features forward drags all lesser things forward
- Poor quality buildings and businesses light up as great opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs
- Fixing good things always gives a greater impetus than to fix bad things.
- Fixing good things is cheaper than fixing bad things.

- **Let Newcastle be Newcastle**

- Newcastle is not London, Parris, Gerneoa, Beaudeux, Vancouver or Beriut.
- Newcastle is not NSW's second largest city
- Newcastle is not a major city.

- The facts are Newcastle is a couple of small suburbs in the City of Newcastle which in turn is only the second largest City in the Hunter Region and about number 50 in NSW.
- Newcastle is unique, it is a great place and it has lots of potential. As such it should operate, grow and flourish on its own assets.
- Build on the features of this great place
- Reward people for their efforts
- **Health and dust issues will strangle Newcastle to death.**
 - T4 Coal Terminal is not compatible with Newcastle's future.
 - Ammonium Nitrate manufacture and storage is not an acceptable risk for the future Newcastle
 - Coal train haulage is too big a price to pay for a harmonious and healthy community.
 - The economic and employment benefits of these and similar enterprises to Newcastle is grossly overstated.
 - The health and dust impacts are only now just starting to be realised.

Appendix 1

Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012 Workshop ver 5

Date Third or Fourth week of Feb

Time 9:30am to 430 pm

Venue Newcastle City Hall ? (or Panthers)

Chairperson Graham Boyd

Scribe Melissa Kilkelly

Attendance

Government	Community Leaders	Save Our Rail Nominees
Minister Brad Hazzard	Mayor McCloy	Joan Dawson
Chief of Staff	Tim Owen	Kim Cross
Offsider	Robyn Parker	Rick Banyard
Bob Hawes	Richard Anicich	Zane Alcorn
Planning	John Hayes	Shannon Byrne
Planning	Susie Bradley	Jeane Gravalin
Minister Gladys Berejiklian	Peter Schaddock	Darrell Harris
Chief of Staff	Lyn Kilby	Garry Zimmerman
Minister Duncan Gay	Bobbie Antonic	Peter Sansom
Chief of Staff	Howard Dick	George Paris
Peter Blackmore	Ron Brown	Terry Gravalin.
Railcorp	Jodie Harrison	Peter Morris
STA	Harold Johnson	Michael Micevski
CityRail	Sonia Hornery	Graeme Tychsen
Minister George Souris	Greg Piper	Peter Brandscheid
Chief of Staff	Vision Aust (James Bennet)	Therese Doyle (Councillor)
Minister Gallagher	Disability access (TBA)	Ann Harding
	Doug Lithgow	Heather Richards (Nusa)
	David Horkan	Fiona Britten (Portside Local)
	RTBU (Steve Wright)	Belinda Jane Davies (Mercury)
	Trades Hall Council (Gary Kennedy)	David Lord /Kevin Parish
	John Sutton	Wayne Horton
	Sharon Grierson	John Hayes

(This list is still being developed. Suggestions welcome)

Agenda

Morning Session Planning

9:30	Welcome and introduction of attendees	by SOR & chairperson
9:40	Session objectives	by chairperson
9:45	Planning Ministers opening remarks	By Minister Hazzard
10:00	Planning Presentation of the Urban design proposal	by Planning
10:30	The Urban Renewal SEPP core details and principles	by Planning
11:00	Is the plan achievable and will it work.	by Planning
11:30	Question Time	by Chairperson

List of issues to be covered during this session by the relevant presenter.

- What is the impact on the rest of the LGA and the Hunter Region?
- What is in the plan that changes the demand factor?
- Current Government actions involve the removal of people and jobs to move out of the City Centre. Will the growth be additional to reinstating those lost since the Liberals took office?
- The member for Newcastle has rejected community initiatives to establish goals and targets for the Newcastle Electorate and LGA that are consistent with the state plan. Will the SEPP develop these goals and targets?

Lunch 12:30 to 1:00

Afternoon Session

1:00	Session objectives	by chairperson
1:15	Public Transport Ministers opening remarks	By Minister Berejiclian
1:30	Roads Ministers opening remarks	By Minister Gaye
1:45	Transport Presentation of the Urban design proposal	by Planning
2:00	Transport core details and principles	by Transport
2:15	Statistical and modelling basis and traffic studies used	by Transport
2:45	Why is this plan achievable and why will it work	by planning/transport
3:00	Question Time	
4:00	Day summary	
4:15	Closing remarks chairman and SOR	
4:30	Close	

List of issues to be covered during this session

- The 2010 Bitzios report page 107 on “a balanced scenario” states there is a need for 1900 extra car spaces however the Newcastle Urban Renewal Report aims to limit additional parking to 500 spaces. Who is correct?
- What is the impact on traffic and amenity of the impediments to Stewart Ave, to Railway St and to Beaumont St traffic and pedestrian movements if the rail line is truncated at Wickham west of Stewart Ave?
- How will the buses be fixed?
- How will the transport provided be better than the existing transport mix.

List of Attendees and their areas of interest.

Brad Hazzard	Minister For Planning
????????	Chief of Staff to Minister Hazzard
????????	Advisor to Minister Hazzard
Bob Hawes	CEO Hunter Development Corporation
????????	Officer Planning
????????	Officer Planning
Gladys Berejiklian	Minister for Transport
Chief of Staff	Chief of Staff to Minister Berejiklian
Duncan Gay	Minister for Roads and Ports
????????	Chief of Staff to Minister Gay
Peter Blackmore	Hunter Infrastructure Fund Chair and Maitland Mayor
??????	Railcorp
??????	STA
??????	CityRail
George Souris	Minister for Tourism
????????	Chief of Staff to Minister Souris
Mayor Jeff McCloy	Mayor Newcastle. Property Council and Developer
Tim Owen	Member for Newcastle
Robyn Parker	Member for Maitland and Environment Minister
Richard Anicich	President Hunter Business Chamber, business person
Michael Gallagher	Minister for the Hunter and Police & Emergency Services
Susie Bradley	Community leader, self employed small business lady, long involvement in Newcastle planning issues as a resident representative.
Peter Schaddock	Architect. Small business operator within Newcastle City Centre
Lyn Kilby	Community leader, major linkages with a large number of community groups. Long term involvement with Newcastle planning issues.
Bobbie Antonic	Small business operator Newcastle City Centre for about 14 years. Major links with community groups and youth.
Howard Dick	University Professor in transport and economics. Major involvement with the Hunter Independent Public Transport Inquire.
Ron Brown	Traffic Engineer. Cycle way's movement leader. High level of

	community involvement
Jodie Harrison	Mayor Lake Macquarie
Harold Johnson	Mayor Dungog Shire.
Sonia Hornery	Member for Wallsend.
Greg Piper	Member for Lake Macquarie and past long term Mayor of Lake M.
James Bennet	Vision Aust
???????	Disability access
Doug Lithgow	Parks and Playgrounds Movement ,
David Horkan	Long term community leader,
Steve Wright	Rail Tram and Bus Union
Trades Hall Council (Gary Kennedy)	Trades Hall Council CEO, Hunter Development Corporation Board. Regional Development Hunter Board
John Sutton	Ex University media lecturer, past councillor NCCC, freelance journalist
Sharon Grierson	Federal Member for Newcastle
Joan Dawson	President Save Our Rail. Community leader Hunter Commuter Council member
Kim Cross	Vice President Save Our Rail Legal officer. Maitland resident and daily commuter
Rick Banyard	Vice President Property Owners Association, Community leader, long involvement in Newcastle planning issues as a resident representative. Extensive Small business activity. Hunter Commuter Council member
Zane Alcorn	Architect, small business operator, strong connections with young people.
Shannon Byrne	University student
Jeane Gravalin	CBD property Owner
Darrell Harris	Respected public transport advocate. Hunter Commuter Council member
Garry Zimmerman	City Rail employee, active community member
Peter Sansom	
George Paris	Secretary Save Our Rail. Executive Hunter Tomorrow, member Hunter Commuter Council, involved with pensioner groups.
Terry Gravalin.	CBD Property owner. Retired Communications officer
Peter Morris	
Allan Squire	Transport for Business Development
Michael Micevski	
Graeme Tyhsen	
Peter Brandscheid	
Therese Doyle (Councillor)	Newcastle City Council Councillor
Ann Harding	
..... (Nusa)	University Students Association leader
Fiona Britten (Portside Local)	Community leader Stockton, Small business operator, Proprietor of small community newspaper.
Belinda Jane Davies (Mercury)	Journalist. Strong ties with young people
David Lord	Central Coast Commuter Council Chair. Extensive rail transport activity.
Kevin Parish	Chair NSW Commuter Council. Chair Hunter Commuter Council
John Hayes	Retired Corporate manager, Catholic Church Management team.

	Head of Correct Planning and Consultation for Mayfield Group, Transition Newcastle, CTag member.
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Appendix 2

New South Wales 2021 Plan for the Newcastle Electorate

Prepared by Rick Banyard

The NSW Government has produced a 2021 Plan and this document extracts from that plan the issues and targets for the Newcastle Electorate.

The aim of the 2021 Plan is to make NSW number 1 by 2021.

The aim for the Newcastle Electorate must be achieve or better the 2021 Plan as it applies to the Newcastle Electorate.

The Newcastle Electorate can achieve outstandingly in all of the five 2021 Plan strategies

- Rebuild the economy
- Return quality services
- Renovate infrastructure
- Strengthen our local environment and communities
- Restore accountability to government

To achieve the 32 goals from the 2021 Plan and they are expresses in terms of the Newcastle Electorate.

Rebuild the Economy

1. Improve the performance of the Newcastle Electorate Economy
2. Rebuild the Newcastle Electorate finances.
3. Newcastle Electorate will assist to drive economic growth for our neighbouring regional electorates.
4. Increase the competitiveness of doing business in the Newcastle Electorate.
5. Place downward pressure on the cost of living in the Newcastle Electorate.
6. Strengthen the Newcastle Electorate skills base.

Return Quality Services

7. Reduce travel times within the Newcastle Electorate.
8. Grow patronage on public transport within the Newcastle Electorate.
9. Improve customer experience with the Newcastle Electorate transport services.
10. Improve road safety in the Newcastle Electorate.
11. Keep Newcastle Electorate people healthy and out of hospital.
12. Provide world class clinical services for the Newcastle Electorate with timely access and effective infrastructure.
13. Better protect the Hunter Electorates most valuable members and break the cycle of the disadvantages.
14. Increase the opportunities for Hunter Electorate people with a disability by providing supports that meet their needs and allow them to realise their potential
15. Improve education and learning outcomes for all Newcastle Electorate students.
16. Prevent and reduce the level of crime in the Newcastle Electorate
17. Prevent and reduce the level of re-offending in the Newcastle Electorate
18. Improve community confidence in the Newcastle Electorate justice system.

Renovate Infrastructure

19. Invest in critical infrastructure for the Newcastle Electorate
20. Build liveable centres within the Newcastle Electorate
21. A secure potable water supplies for all residents of the Hunter Electorate

Strengthen the Newcastle Electorates local environment and communities

22. Protect the Newcastle Electorate's natural environment
23. Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments
24. Make it easier for Newcastle Electorate people to be involved in their communities
25. Increase opportunities for Newcastle Electorate seniors to fully participate in community life
26. Fostering opportunity and partnership with Newcastle Electorate Aboriginal people

27 Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities within the Newcastle Electorate.

28 Ensure the Newcastle Electorate is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters.

Restore Accountability to Government

29 Restore the Newcastle Electorate's confidence and integrity in the planning system.

30 Restore the Hunter Electorates trust in State and Local Government as a service provider.

31 Improve government transparency by increasing access to government information for the Newcastle Electorate.

32 Involve the Newcastle Electorate's community in decision making on government policy, services and projects.

To deliver change Newcastle Electorate will

- Target new jobs
- Build new infrastructure
- More land available for housing and jobs
- Grow critical industries and investment
- 20% reduction in red tape
- Improve public sector efficiency
- Boosting skills and qualifications

Appendix 3

Rick Banyard

14 Bell St

Maryville

cdcopy@hunterlink.net.au

0419993867

Mr Barry O'Farrell

Premier of NSW

L40 Governor Macquarie Tower

1 Farrer Place Sydney 2000.

Dear Premier O'Farrell,

I wish to lodge a formal complaint related to Tim Owen AM MP.

The Member for Newcastle very seriously misled Parliament on the 21st February 2013 in a speech associated with a motion by the Member for Wallsend related to Newcastle.

I asked Mr Owen to explain his Hansard statements and he refused to provide the details.

I have attached a copy of the relevant section from Hansard and a copy of my correspondence with him. Attachments 2 to 6.

You, and your Government, have told the community that you want to be a better Government. You put forward "A Plan to Make NSW Number One NSW 2021" That Plan contains 32 Goals and a number of targets.

It would seem that Mr Owen is not prepared to follow the Governments plan as by seriously misleading Parliament he breaches, as a minimum,

principles related to goals 3, 7, 8, 9, 18, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32. I have also provided a copy of your goals. (Attachment 1)

It should be noted that previously community members drew Mr Owen's attention to the fact that he was operating outside of the 2021 Plan. Further the community requested that Mr Owen develop the goals and targets for his Electorate that linked the Electorate and State plans. Mr Owen refused to do this.

It would seem totally reasonable for the Member of Newcastle to be censured or otherwise dealt with, made to publically apologise to the people and organisations he defamed and to make a parliamentary statement correcting the misrepresentation.

I note also that members Cornwell and Baumann also made statements at the same time as Mr Owen that many consider also mislead the Parliament.

I believe that Mr Owen's actions provide a very strong case for all the information provided by Owen to the Parliament, to Ministers and to other officers and servants to be very closely scrutinised before any action is taken to close the rail line or make significant changes to Newcastle City Centre.

New South Wales is sick of "Eddie and his mates". Please make sure NSW is squeaky clean and totally upfront.

Due to Owen's disregard for the facts the decision making structure is unsound.

I look forward to prompt and decisive action in line with your 2021 Plan.

Rick Banyard

Attachment 1

NSW 2021 Plan - 32 GOALS

REBUILD THE ECONOMY

1. Improve the performance of the NSW economy
2. Rebuild State finances
3. Drive economic growth in regional NSW
4. Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW
5. place downward pressure on the cost of living
6. Strengthen the NSW skill base

RETURN QUALITY SERVICES

Transport

7. Reduce travel times
8. Grow patronage on public transport by making it a more attractive choice
9. Improve customer experience with transport services
10. Improve road safety health
11. Keep people healthy and out of hospital
12. provide world class clinical services with timely access and effective infrastructure Family & community services
13. Better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage
14. Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing supports that meet their individual needs and realise their potential

Police & Justice

16. prevent and reduce the level of crime
17. prevent and reduce the level of re-offending
18. Improve community confidence in the justice system

Education

15. Improve education and learning outcomes for all students

RENOVATE INFRASTRUCTURE

19. Invest in critical infrastructure

20. Build liveable centres

21. Secure potable water supplies

STRENGTHEN OUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES

22. protect our natural environment

23. Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments

24. make it easier for people to be involved in their communities

25. Increase opportunities for seniors in NSW to fully participate in community life

26. Fostering opportunity and partnership with aboriginal people

27. Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities

28. Ensure NSW is ready to deal with major emergencies and natural disasters

RESTORE ACCOUNTABILITY TO GOVERNMENT

29. Restore confidence and integrity in the planning system

30. Restore trust in State and Local Government as a service provider

31. Improve government transparency by increasing access to government information

32. Involve the community in decision making on government policy, services and projects

Attachment 2 My email of the 4/3/13 to Tim Owen.

From: cdcopy@hunterlink.net.au [mailto:cdc copy@hunterlink.net.au]

Sent: Sunday, 3 March 2013 9:08 PM

To: Tim Owen

Subject: Letter about Hansard record.

letter attached

Memo to Tim Owen Member for Newcastle

From Rick Banyard

Hello Tim,

In Parliament your local member put forward a motion about the Newcastle rail line and the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012.

You obviously did not agree with her and that is your right however it is your responsibility to represent your electorate.

I have read the Hansard record and I am very concerned at many of the statement you made during your speech.

1 In your speech you state "An examination of any of the independent studies for the Hunter region will show that in each case the vast majority of Hunter residents support removal of heavy rail and replacing it with a rapid transport system. Every independent study that has been done shows that".

Can you provide the details of "every independent study" to which you referee?

2 In your speech you state The protest that took place on Tuesday was supposed to involve the vast majority of Hunter residents expressing their anger about the Government curtailing heavy rail" and "replacing it with a better transport system that suited the urban design of Newcastle"

Can you provide any proof to support you statement about the purpose of the rally?

Can you provide any proof to support your statement about a "better transport system that is suited to the urban design of Newcastle"?

3 In your speech you state "Only 80 people turned up to that rally"

Can you provide any proof that the number was 80 when the numbers most reported was 250 to 300.?

4 In your speech you state "Mr James McIntosh said in his big briefing in Newcastle and suggested that it would ruin property prices in Newcastle"

Can you provide any proof to support your claim?

5 In your speech you state "Only seven people turned up to that meeting. What a great show that was"

Can you provide any proof to support your claim?

6 In your speech you state "I doorknocked the vast majority of people in Newcastle and they told me that they want this to happen."

Can you provide any proof to support your claim?

Can you provide the survey methodology and the peer reviewed results?

7 In your speech you state The urbanisation of Newcastle will be one of the best redevelopments in the history of any harbourside city in this country. I note the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012 makes no such claims and provides no proof to support your claim.

Can you provide any proof to support your claim?

8 In your speech you state "this Government will build one of the best transport interchanges with retail and residential that will be seen on the east coast of this country"

Can you provide any proof to support your claim?

9 In your speech you state "It will be magnificent". Given that according to Bob Hawes and Stephen Enticott the works have not yet been scoped, the truncation point finalised and the site or sites not yet committed,

Can you describe what is ment by magnificent and can you provide any proof to support your claim?

10 In your speech you state "There will be eight new access points across the rail line".

Can you explain why you did not inform Parliament that Save Our Rail had provided in the order of thirty options for crossing the rail line?

11 In your speech you state "This is about a rapid public transport system operating out of a well-designed interchange that will take commuters further around the city of Newcastle than they have ever been"

Can you provide any proof to support your claim?

12 In your speech you state "These redevelopments in Newcastle, which have never been seen before, will make Newcastle one of the most wonderful harbour cities in the world."

Can you provide any proof to support your claim?

I look forward to your prompt response.

I will forward your response to Premier O'Farrell on the 15th of March 2013

Rick Banyard

Attachment 3 Response from Tim Owen

From: [Tim Owen](#)
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 8:13 AM
To: <mailto:cdcopy@hunterlink.net.au>
Cc: [Nina Djosic](#)
Subject: RE: Letter about Hansard record.

Give it a break Ric. I made it clear I was going to fight for this despite the protestations of a minority (you included). We are going ahead with this plan to build a city for the future and the younger generations of the Hunter, and that is the way it is. It will be fully detailed through the implementation group and articulated to the community and additional input sought as we go. Transport, planning, business and community are represented on that group.

If you have anything positive to add to the plan you can submit online.

Regards

Phone: (02) 4926 1126 Fax: (02) 4926 2134
Electorate Office: 414 Hunter Street
Newcastle NSW 2300
Parliamentary Office:
Phone: (02) 9230 2635 Fax: (02) 9230 3092
Email: tim.owen@parliament.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.timowenmp.com.au

Attachment 4 My response to Tim Owen's reply

From: cdcopy@hunterlink.net.au [mailto:cdc copy@hunterlink.net.au]

Sent: Monday, 4 March 2013 9:19 AM

To: Tim Owen

Subject: Re: Letter about Hansard record.

Thank you Tim.

I take it that this is your response and I can now forward it to the Premier.

I am certainly not part of a minority as claimed by you and will strongly present what I believe is best for Newcastle and the Hunter.

I will however do it using facts and the truth.

I believe it is totally reasonable if my local member represents my electorate in Parliament that he presents the facts and the truth and if called upon can deliver the evidence.

Rick

Attachment 5 Tim Owens final response to me

From: [Tim Owen](#)

Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 9:25 AM

To: 'cdcopy@hunterlink.net.au'

Subject: RE: Letter about Hansard record.

Go for it Rick!!

Kind Regards

Phone: (02) 4926 1126 Fax: (02) 4926 2134

Electorate Office: 414 Hunter Street

Newcastle NSW 2300

Parliamentary Office:

Phone: (02) 9230 2635 Fax: (02) 9230 3092

Email: tim.owen@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.timowenmp.com.au

Appendix 4
Peter Blackmore

Chair
Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Board

Dear Peter,

I write to you formally as Chair of the Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Board.

Could you advise responses to the following questions:-

1. Where can I and other members of the public view the list of allocations made from the fund?
2. Where can a list of the applications for funding be viewed?
3. Where can a list of applications for the most recent round be viewed
4. With relation to the allocation of funding for the Newcastle rail line truncation can you :-

advise how the application details may be viewed ?

what was the basis of the approval and what were the terms and conditions

given that the application was based on truncation west of Wickham did those connected with the Hunter Business Chamber and HDC declare a pecuniary interest and exclude themselves from the evaluation process and voting?

Advise how the goals of NSW 2021 Plan were considered?

5. Given that the NSW Transport Master Plan has not yet been completed and that the process of formulating the Hunter Transport Master Plan has not yet been commenced can you explain why such a major transport project could be considered by your committee in the absence of these documents

I look forward to your response,

Rick Banyard

Appendix 5

Attachment six Hansard Transcript

Mr TIM OWEN (Newcastle) [10.20 a.m.]: Well, well, well, here we are with the do-nothing politicians from the do-nothing political party. It is unbelievable. An examination of any of the independent studies for the Hunter region will show that in each case the vast majority of Hunter residents support removal of heavy rail and replacing it with a rapid transport system. Every independent study that has been done shows that.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will cease interjecting.

Mr TIM OWEN: The protest that took place on Tuesday was supposed to involve the vast majority of Hunter residents expressing their anger about the Government curtailing heavy rail and replacing it with a better transport system that suited the urban design of Newcastle. Only 80 people turned up to that rally. Last night the member for Wallsend referred to what Mr James McIntosh said in his big briefing in Newcastle and suggested that it would ruin property prices in Newcastle. Only seven people turned up to that meeting. What a great show that was. I doorknocked the vast majority of people in Newcastle and they told me that they want this to happen.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock and the member for Canterbury will come to order.

Mr TIM OWEN: That is the way it is and that is why I am on this side of the House. For the benefit of those opposite, let me reveal what this Government is doing. This Government is involved in the urban renewal of Newcastle. It is changing the face of Newcastle after 20 years of pathetic neglect by those opposite. I will start at one end of Newcastle and move to the other end. After all the fanfare of the previous Labor Government, the GPT Group—which had promised to do this and that—stopped and walked out the shop. I made a promise to get it back and to ensure that it invested a large amount of money in the urbanisation of Newcastle. This Government brought Landcom, urban development representatives and the GPT Group to the table. The urbanisation of Newcastle will be one of the best redevelopments in the history of any harbourside city in this country.

Let me move further down the line. The new legal precinct was given priority in the forward estimates. Despite all the big talk from Labor, nothing would have eventuated as a result of its \$94 million commitment to Newcastle. Let me move further down the line to the University of Newcastle. Those opposite promised the world but did absolutely nothing. This Government has committed \$25 million to bring the law and business faculties of the University of Newcastle into town. Moving further to the west end, this Government will build one of the best transport interchanges with retail and residential that will be seen on the east coast of this country. It will be magnificent. There will be eight new access points across the rail line to open Newcastle to the harbour, which also will be magnificent. Dr Steffen Lehmann, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation Chair on Sustainable Urban Development for Asia and the Pacific, from the University of Newcastle, had this to say:

The major urban regeneration development (the Honeysuckle development) was started in 1992—

by the Greiner Government, I might add—

with the NSW State Government's "Building Better Cities" program, and today it is almost completed. It has redeveloped 50 hectares of derelict land and buildings along Newcastle Harbour, adjacent to the city centre.

Despite many attempts, the "Honeysuckle" precinct remains an isolated fragment cut-off from the historical city centre by the railway corridor, only weakly connected to the existing city through overpass footbridges, which have never worked well—

And they never will. Dr Lehmann continues:

There is now increasing pressure for an overall urban vision, removal of the railway line, and to deliver a robust framework for future large development investments ...

That development investment is needed and required in Newcastle. This Government is addressing that need. Let us compare what this Government is doing with what the former Labor Government did over the past two decades. It did only four things: it replaced a two-lane bridge with a two-lane bridge which was useful and most successful. The former member for Newcastle, Jodi Mackay, bought a post office, paid twice the price that a developer had promised to pay and had no intention of doing anything with it—it was an election ploy. She paid \$3 million or \$3½ million for something that was worth nowhere near that amount. She knocked down an old rambling hotel and promised that the Labor Government would bring government departments into Newcastle, but she had no intention of doing anything like that. The final thing that she did was to put up a tent at Dyke Point, which was wonderful. That was Labor's pathetic commitment to the city of Newcastle over the past two decades.

This Government has stepped up to the plate and it will deliver urban change in the city, despite the fact that those opposite and the people to whom they are pandering—the loony Left and The Greens in Newcastle—are in the majority. I respect people's opinions. I have talked endlessly to those who want the rail line to remain. I have explained what this Government is doing. This is about a rapid public transport system operating out of a well-designed interchange that will take commuters further around the city of Newcastle than they have ever been. This public transport system is designed to suit the new urban development of the city of Newcastle. This Government is committing hundreds of millions of dollars to the city.

Mr John Robertson: How many?

Mr TIM OWEN: Hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr John Robertson: Where are they in the budget?

Mr TIM OWEN: They will be there. The Leader of the Opposition should talk to the urban developers who are investing huge amounts of money. These redevelopments in Newcastle, which have never been seen before, will make Newcastle one of the most wonderful harbour cities in the world. The people of New South Wales and the people of the Hunter can thank this Government for doing that.