

From: "Mark Bergamo" <mbergamo@hunterml.com.au>
To: <urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 4/19/2013 1:09 pm
Subject: Impending closure of Newcastle rail line

To whom it may concern

I write to express my grave concerns about the closure of the rail line at wickham on the Newcastle line.

As a newly arrived family who have moved to Tighes Hill, we considered a major component of our home purchase to be the offer of public transport options. A principal form of this is the train to Newcastle CBD from Hamilton Station.

That is on a personal level. On a broader community level, I certainly do not believe the closure of the rail line is going to alleviate pressure on car traffic, but rather increase it. It will also put more stress on the CBD for greater car parking requirements as well. I also have little faith in stated government ambitions for greater buses after the closure of the line. Who wants to get off a train and then get on a bus at wickham to go into the city?

Further, with a focus on resuscitating the life of the city, if we have a policy of encouraging more residents in the city, then why are we moving away from the great European cities' models of public transport which revolve around rail? Are we encouraging these residents to have to drive out of town to Maitland to go to work?

I believe in healthy built environments which encourage quality of life, a focus on a thriving cultural centre where community, commerce and people come together to rival the great urban areas of the world. Rail is a fabulous symbol and practical movement of civilised, environmentally conscious planning. Don't take this away from Newcastle.

Regards

Mark Bergamo
Indigenous health project officer

Sent from my iPad