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14 November, 2012

The Hon. Brad Hazzard, MP
Level 31 Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister,

Support for the replacement of heavy rail transport into the City of Newcastle has been well documented and I believe that the option of terminating the rail at Woodville Junction has been poorly considered.

A copy of my Woodville Junction submission, originally addressed to Jodi McKay at her request, is attached.

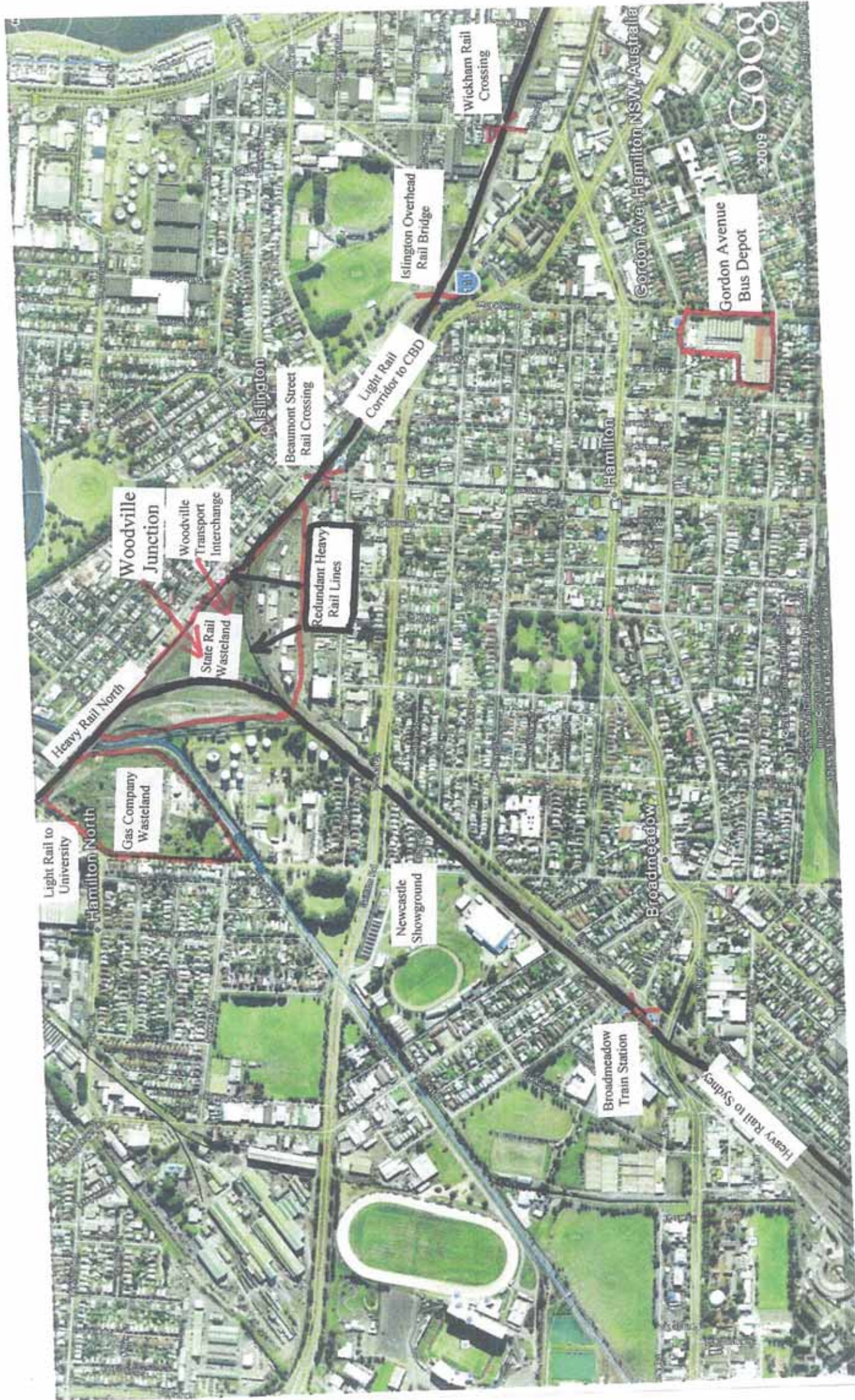
Due to the State Governments current financial situation I believe further consideration of the Woodville option rather than Wickham would be timely.

I have highlighted some areas of potential funding, applicable to the Woodville option, together with other advantages that I believe need to be brought into serious consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vic Carroll", written over a horizontal line.

Vic Carroll
Liberal Party Member



16 June, 2009

Jodi McKay MP
Member for Newcastle
PO Box 1816
Newcastle 2300

Dear Jodi,

In response to your letter of 3 June 2009 I offer my thoughts as requested.

It appears that the heavy rail to Newcastle may eventually be terminated at Wickham, although, no doubt, the NSW Government will have some concerns about the provision of the necessary funding.

The following thoughts are based on the possibility of that eventuality and the fact that many Novocastrians believe that the more politically acceptable and more cost effective option for your Government is not termination at Wickham, but provision of a proper transport interchange at Woodville Junction.

Having studied the Hunter Development Corporation Newcastle City centre Renewal Report to the NSW Government I believe that their "Assessment of transport options" has missed the most important fact that the availability of Government funding is the key to the whole project, and it also demonstrates some political naïveté.

To dismiss the Woodville Junction option by stating that...

*"The option of terminating the rail line at Broadmeadow or Woodville Junction was also assessed but eliminated. The removal of the rail line back to Broadmeadow (Woodville Junction) **potentially offered the greatest operational cost savings to government**, however, it was not the preferred option in terms of realizing the vision for the CBD and supporting other catalyst projects."*

ignores the political reality of the funding priorities of Government.

It's a little like stating that establishing Central Station at Railway Square would have retarded the "vision" for the Sydney CBD.

The strength of the "anti heavy rail removal" argument hinges on the suspicion that your Government will sell off much of the rail corridor for high rise development. Such suspicions could be said to be reasonably well founded.

The Woodville Junction option would be much more politically acceptable due to the fact that the majority of land sales, by your Government, could be targeted to the large area of waste railway land encompassed in the Woodville triangle and possibly the large adjacent area of gas company wasteland.

Sale of the high value Gordon Avenue bus depot land for residential development would also generate substantial funding.

Termination at Woodville Junction would result in significant cost savings for the NSW Government by way of...

- Utilising a huge area of Government owned centrally located railway wasteland.
- No land acquisition costs.
- A new world class transport (train, bus, coach and light rail) interchange would be on the main Sydney/Northern heavy rail loop.
- Light **rail** from the Woodville Transport Interchange to Newcastle Station (and beyond) would help mollify the "Save our **Rail**" proponents.
- Relocation of the Gordon Avenue bus depot to the Woodville transport interchange.
- Easy access to main roads as removing the NE and SE heavy rail links to the CBD via Hamilton Station would allow easy vehicle access from Donald Street and Maitland Road to the Woodville interchange.
- Broadmeadow train station could become redundant thus creating more Government savings.
- The Islington overhead road bridge would be redundant and could eventually be demolished.
- Elimination of maintenance requirements for unsightly overhead rail wires and heavy rail lines.
- Elimination of the Beaumont Street, Railway Street and Stewart Avenue (vote losing) level crossings.
- Re-connecting all the inner suburbs, not just Honeysuckle/CBD, currently split by the heavy rail line.
- Utilising the existing Hamilton, Wickham, Civic and Newcastle train stations as light rail stations.
- The sale of large areas of existing waste land to developers for....
 - Interstate coach terminal.
 - Commercial long term and day parking stations.
 - Accommodation buildings.
 - Light industrial development.
 - Private enterprise rail and coach maintenance.
 - Commercial (Food, travel, McDonalds etc.)
 - Etc. etc.

Much of the savings and proceeds of land sales could then be directed to fund a more environmentally friendly alternative public transport system into and from the city along the existing heavy rail corridor. I think you would agree that environmentally friendly light rail (tram), to Newcastle rail station and beyond, would be the preferred option and may provide the opportunity to establish a public/private or wholly private operation.

Motorists could be attracted by cheap all day parking at Woodville compared to expensive alternatives in the CBD.

A light rail (tram) link could be extended, alongside the northern heavy rail line, to Newcastle University linking it to the proposed new Newcastle CBD campus. In time further light rail (tram) links could extend from the central Woodville Junction interchange to many other suburbs.

By contrast...

Termination at Wickham would necessitate significant NSW Government expenditure for...

- Considerable land acquisition costs in a relatively high cost city fringe area, for a new multi-platform train station and additional rail lines at Wickham.
- Land acquisition costs for new coach and bus terminals (hopefully more adequate than the existing.)
- Continued maintenance of at least two level crossings and the heavy rail and overhead wiring from Broadmeadow to Wickham.
- Maintenance of the Islington overhead road bridge.
- Continued expenditure on all the existing bus services into the city.

together with the lack of opportunity for revenue producing sales of Government assets (unless utilising the politically unpopular option of selling off areas of the transport corridor).

And, providing the Wickham terminal was relocated west of Stewart Avenue, this would still leave the voters with the appalling, vote losing level crossings at..

- Railway Street Wickham
- Beaumont Street Hamilton.....

and produce

- No reduction in the volume of private vehicles and buses into the Newcastle CBD with the resultant traffic gridlock and parking problems.
- Encouragement for some current train commuters to drive rather than change to buses at Wickham.

Just a few thoughts.

Regards,

Vic Carroll