

From: Zaphiero Cerny <zephie@ozemail.com.au>
To: <urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au>
CC: [REDACTED]
Date: 25/02/2013 11:50 am
Subject: Newcastle Renewal Strategy

The Manager of Urban Renewal
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
NSW GOVERNMENT

Thank you for organising the Community information sessions at Newcastle city hall on Wednesday 29th February. However I was disappointed that the panel did not address the questions raised about the cutting of the Newcastle Railway services.

The blame of the demise of The Mall cannot be blamed by the railway. Around the world cities embrace infrastructure and build around and above railways. In Newcastle the rise of the suburban shopping centres with free parking heralded the decline of the inner city retail. However change is happening with the steady growth of new apartments, a cafe culture is emerging and every month a new eatery opens up. It is no coincidence that Lonely Planet listed Newcastle in its top twenty places to visit. In their daily lives Asians and Europeans who rely primarily on public transport embrace a visit to a city with fabulous beaches and a railway that makes it accessible in one journey without the need for changes. Tourism from these continents will be of a great benefit to the future local economy.

Some of my other concerns are:

1. The strategy is hoping to discourage private car usage to the East end by reducing traffic lanes in Hunter street and providing no additional parking. Yet it provides only one (ingoing) transit lane for buses and does not make use of the rail corridor. Peak hour traffic is already a problem and people will need to leave the city by bus as well.
2. The strategy that aims to increase the inner city population by 12,600 fails to appreciate that part of the desirability of living here at present is a direct rail link to Sydney! Many of our new residents are retirees who with ageing will favour and need public transport.
3. No plans were given for the strips of rail land between the proposed road crossings. Will these really remain as public land?
4. The proposal for an interchange at Wickham is not comprehensive in its assessment of costs and for access and its impact on businesses and residents of that area which has grown considerably in recent years.
5. How does the corporation propose to establish the East end and Hunter Mall as a shopping precinct?
6. At a cost of \$340million to close the railway for 3 stops, the cost of an overpass bridge for Stewart Avenue would be a better outcome.

If we have to loose our rail after 20 years of protest, at least give us a well thought out and thoroughly planned outcome.

Newcastle may be better served with a traffic hub at Broadmeadow and the existing rail corridor being retained as an attractive and uncongested way to travel to the East end.

Yours Sincerely,
Zephie Cerny