

From: A B Cole <ab_cole@tpg.com.au>
To: <urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au>
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Subject: Submission re Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy - Part 1

Submission re Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy
by
Anthony B. Cole
P.O. Box 808
Newcastle NSW 2300

This strategy/plan/fantasy condemns itself -- so obvious and demonstrable are its deficiencies.
Apart from its resting on inaccurate, wrong, incomplete, and out of date 'information' which I will leave to others to detail, its most glaring deficiency is that it is founded upon voodoo sociology and voodoo economics.

The renewal of a city is not simply a structural matter of demolition and construction, it is principally a functional matter, that is, the renewal of a city's functions -- the restoration, revitalisation or creation anew of a city's *raison d'être*. The essence of a city is its functions. The strategy/plan confuses the renewal of buildings with renewal of the functional life of the city. Proper consideration of how to renew the functional life of the city would have, no doubt, led to a very different strategy/plan. Simple renewal of buildings does not lead to renewal of a city. As far as this current strategy/plan is concerned, there is, by and large, no demonstrable known to be valid mechanism connecting the physical alterations proposed with the functional renewal of the city. The only link between the physical alterations proposed and true renewal of the city is that which is known technically as magical thinking -- a kind of wishful irrational fantasy thinking which is seen at times in small children, some primitive peoples, and psychotics.

We should not be surprised that this strategy/plan rests on magical thinking, for consideration of its many obvious defects and shoddy construction suggests that indeed it was never intended seriously as a strategy/plan, but was rather produced as a propaganda marketing hoodwinking exercise designed to produce a rationale for giving builders and developers a bonanza opportunity in Newcastle at the expense of the occupants and users of the city and its facilities.

To my mind the worst aspect of this strategy/plan is the entirely unnecessary cutting of the rail line into Newcastle. The reasons for keeping irreplaceable railway line infrastructure and corridors are so well known and accepted internationally it is almost an insult to the reader to argue them here.

If developers wish to build on land which is not undermined, where various stations and the interconnecting rail tracks are located, they could build above the stations and tracks, as is done in places such as Chatswood and North Sydney. The government would be spared the great true expense which removal of the tracks and stations and provision of alternative public transport would entail and could make money from such a scheme. And with such a scheme: (a) the current access to the harbour foreshore could be easily maintained, and (b) the worsening of traffic

congestion which removal of the rail line would produce would be avoided.