

## Susan Kiprovich

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**From:** Craig <doogs2009@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, 17 December 2012 9:52 PM  
**To:** Public Hazzard's Office Email  
**Subject:** Protest - Removal of Newcastle Railway Line

Dear Mr Hazzard

I am writing as a personal protest against your recent decision to intervene in the Newcastle City railway issue, and in particular, against your initiative to order the removal of the railway line between Wickham and Newcastle Station.

You are making the wrong decision, and this protest aims to convince you and Transport NSW to strongly reconsider the planned proposal.

Mr Hazzard, I have long held the opinion that you have always been a responsible parliamentary representative for the people of NSW, in whatever portfolio you have overseen. I used to reside in your north shore electorate of Dee Why, NSW, and over the years you have made good decisions that always had the best interests of your constituents in mind. Now, as an adopted Novocastrian, I have learnt of your decision to cut the railway up here and I am immensely disappointed in your decision to do so. You have not considered the best interests of the people in this regard.

In fact, it is my opinion which I share with many other Novocastrians, that the decision to cut the railway line from Wickham is purely financially motivated and is aimed at pleasing the rich and greedy developers who have wanted to get their hands on that parcel of harbour front land for many years. If we are right about this, that it is a money-driven decision, then you have made a wrong decision and I implore you and the government to change its mind.

The negative impacts of the removal of the railway line between Wickham and Newcastle Station are far reaching and significant, both in the short and long term:-

- The cost of ripping up the existing infrastructure will be enormous and that money can be better spent of fixing the roads in the Newcastle CBD, especially Hunter/Scott Street, and Tudor Street. The proposed cost of \$120 Million dollars will blow out beyond all expectations, and it is not money well spent in my opinion.
- The railway line into the city has a proven benefit for tourism and aides in the transit of passengers into Newcastle for major events like Surfest, Fat As Butter, and events like the recent Luis Palaus Christian Music Festival, not too mention many others.
- Commuters, tourists and local travellers do not want to have to use multiple transit options if they are travelling into the city, Your proposal would mean they would have to get off a train and onto a bus or light rail. The north coast train which terminates at Casino is a classic example of how thousands of passengers each year are inconvenienced by having their journey interrupted by having to transfer to buses. Passengers don't want this, and can you blame them?. They are settled into their journey then they have to be disembarked prematurely to use another mode of transport. Tell me how that helps people and tourism?

- The rail link into the city is actually a selling point for Newcastle. The fact that people know they can get into Newcastle quickly and with ease, actually makes more people want to come into the great city and foreshore of Newcastle. Removing that link will detract people from coming into the city which is already under threat of dying.
- Think of the elderly and disabled citizens, they will be put at great inconvenience and their journey will be made more uncomfortable by no longer being able to disembark in the city. Public transport is already a big challenge for some of these members of the community. Your proposal will exacerbate that problem for them.

### Alternatives

I would like you and the government to consider the following alternatives to ripping up the railway line between Wickham and Newcastle:-

- Put the railway line underground so it becomes like a “tube” similar to what they have in London.
- Place the railway line high above the ground similar to the “L” railway line in Chicago which floats above the city in a loop around the city.
- Beautify the areas alongside the railway line between Wickham and Newcastle with trees, and murals, and parklands.
- At the Stewart Ave/Hannel Street intersection, and also the Merewether Street intersection, which are both problem junctures in the morning and afternoon peaks, and where traffic is often congested because of the railway line, why not divert the roadway underground so cars don’t have to wait for the train. Surely this wouldn’t cost too much.

Mr Hazzard I urge you to consider the voice of the people, not just the minority, not just the developers, but all the people of Newcastle in this matter, and take on board any suitable alternatives offered to the government before taking down the railway between Wickham and Newcastle City. Please, don’t destroy our city.

Your sincerely

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