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CC: [REDACTED]
Date: 23/02/2013 5:26 pm
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 Feb.

It was disturbing ,however,that the panel of experts were unable to answer many of the important questions being asked.Cutting Newcastle's rail service has been debated for 20 years yet it was obvious that there has not been adequate work done on the alternatives to an excellent existing service nor to the impact of this major decision on residents and visitors to our city centre.

I would like to put forward some of my concerns.

- 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 aims to increase the inner city population by 12,600(I presume there will be extensive housing built at Newcastle Beach and the "old law" precinct) yet 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 or have chosen this area because of the good 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 or become fenced in pieces of no man's land? The council hasn't funds for more parks and we have a huge precedent for cyclone fenced public land with Laman's street, the old post office and the former bowling club at King Edward park.
- 4.There is inadequate room for a comprehensive transport interchange at Wickham and it will impact heavily on residents of that area ,particularly the closure of Beaumont and Railway streets and the shunting of trains that can not be accommodated at Wickham. There was no cost for this new interchange and road closures.
5. How does the corporation propose to establish the East end and Hunter Mall as a shopping precinct? Its failure as a shopping centre over the last 30years can be attributed to closure of large employers providing services to large numbers of people and the building of alternative motor car friendly shopping centres. It already has trees ,umbrellas and coffee shops.It needs jobs.
6. At a cost of \$340million to close the railway for 3 stops, how many level crossing would that pay for? Motorists don't like being held up at level crossings but the strategy aims to discourage motor car usage. Cyclists and pedestrians don't become stressed at railway crossings .The precedent for new level crossings exists elsewhere in NSW.

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 by tram and cycle way.

Yours Sincerely,
Anna Enno