

NSW Department of Planning
23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001
Tel: 02 9228 6111
Fax: 02 9228 6455
Email: information@planning.nsw.gov.au
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Subject: Wickham Transport Interchange – Newcastle.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my concern at what seems to be a decision made unilaterally by your department to terminate the rail line into Newcastle at Wickham, west of Stewart Ave. I have searched your website and I have found nothing relating to this interchange at all. I then went to the RMS website and again found nothing. I am a resident of Wickham and live very close to Wickham Train Station. I am wondering where this interchange will be placed if it is to be west of Stewart Ave.

If a major transport interchange is going to be worth anything, it needs to cater for Local and Cityrail Trains, Countrylink Trains, Interstate Coaches, Local Buses, Taxis and Private Cars. To me, it would be a stretch of the imagination to consider Countrylink Trains being shunted off the main line into Wickham Interchange. Also the volume of Interstate Coaches and Local Buses will be high and the roads around Wickham would not be conducive to the increased volume of traffic of all forms. Apart from Hannell St. and perhaps Hunter St. Newcastle West, I can't see any other place for traffic generated by this interchange to go. Is it that all buildings bounded by Stewart Ave., Hunter St., Railway St and the rail line will be demolished to form this new interchange?

There has been talk in the past of an interchange at Woodville Junction west of Hamilton Train Station. There would probably be adequate land here for an interchange. However, I looked on Google Earth and I feel some innovative solutions would need to be put in place to gain suitable road access to this site. This site would certainly solve the problem of Countrylink Train access to the remainder of the transport network.

Another suggestion I read recently is to have a transport interchange south of Broadmeadow Train Station. Adequate land would be available here to house a suitable transport interchange. Road access to an interchange at Broadmeadow would also be in its favour.

Regardless of what site is chosen, I feel flyovers would be needed for road access. Road access is a very important part of any transport interchange worthy of being called such.

If a transport interchange were decided at Woodville Junction, then two-car sets should run from this site into Newcastle (or better still, a light-rail system). There is no way a bus substitution could perform as well as the 5-6 minutes from Newcastle to the interchange no matter how many buses ran.

I feel a Transport Interchange at Wickham will be a cheap, nasty and half-baked solution to the transport problems of Australia's 6th largest city. If this is to be done at all, it needs to be done properly.

Is there going to be a public display of the final design and an opportunity to comment on the proposal?

Yours sincerely & concerned

Les Field
32 Bishopsgate St.
Wickham NSW 2293
Mo. 0414 680 487