

## urbanrenewal - Submission in Response to Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy

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**To:** <urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au>  
**Date:** 12/18/2012 6:03 PM  
**Subject:** Submission in Response to Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy

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Manager,  
 Centres and Urban Renewal:  
 Department of Planning & Infrastructure  
 GPO Box 39, SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir/madam

I would like to tender my response to the Newcastle Urban renewal Strategy which has been recently released.

In general I believe that this strategy is a positive step forward for Newcastle and will halt the general decline of this city's CBD that I have witnessed since moving to this area in 1987. I believe that this strategy, when implemented, will bring both jobs and people back into the heart of Newcastle. It will cement Newcastle as the state's second largest city and make it a lively and vibrant place for people to come. It will also reflect the Hunter Region's diverse and robust economic base and make the best of the area's natural assets.

There are some aspects of this strategy however that I would like to make comment:

1. In relation to the termination of the rail line at Wickham, I don't believe a compelling argument was put forward in this strategy as to why this should happen. It was more or less just put that this was what would happen. I don't believe that there has been any consideration given to the possibility of **continuing the railway to Newcastle underground**. In all the discussions that I have heard over the past few years as to whether the rail line should be cut I have never heard this idea even put up as a possibility. It has always been an all or nothing argument whereas I believe this option would be a win win for advocates and opponents of cutting the rail line. I am aware that this would be a massive and costly engineering endeavour but I don't think it would be impossible. I believe with the engineering know-how that we have these days it could be done. I agree that there is no point in having a rail line if no people are attracted into the city but I also believe that the rail line has been part of Newcastle and a part of our culture for so long (especially bringing young people to the beach) that it would almost be like destroying its soul if the rail line were to be cut at Wickham.
2. I believe that if it is absolutely necessary to cut the rail line at Wickham then a light rail option would be preferable to buses.
3. In relation to the precedent studies (Part 2 pp 108-109) that were cited in the strategy I was rather shocked to see that the only precedents given were Australian and that no international examples were used. This rather mystified me as there are so many brilliant examples of overseas urban renewal projects that could have been used. For example

Barcelona in Spain has its La Rambla, and although not as long as Hunter Street, is a shining example of how Hunter Street could be transformed as a main street.

Thank you for your attention to this submission,

Kind regards,

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