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Subject: Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy 2012

I applaud the decision to try to enhance the city centre of Newcastle but cannot understand why the rail line is being cut at Wickham when you expect so many more people to be coming into Newcastle whether to live, work, attend university or the law courts or to spend leisure time at the beaches, waterfront or shops and cafes.

The city is gradually renewing itself, with more and more people coming into the city centre to access the new, unique shops, cafes and restaurants that are slowly evolving and which cannot be found in shopping malls.

The railway is an efficient, effective and environmentally friendly way of transporting a lot of people that would otherwise take many buses to move. Why not have a bus interchange at Wickham and ask people to use the train 'down the city spine' and into the city centre, and get rid of buses altogether on Hunter and Scott streets? Perhaps a bus from the station around the waterfront and beaches and back would help visitors and residents.

It would take a fraction of the money set aside to pull up the rail line, to make this line more appealing to the eye and more accessible for pedestrians, cars and cyclists to cross from the city centre to the foreshore - a foreshore that has been blocked from Hunter Street, not by the rail line but by the highrise buildings along the waterfront.

The trains that are being used at present could easily go more slowly from Wickham Station to Newcastle Station allowing more car and pedestrian crossings to be installed.

The government will take a backward and very short-sighted step if it goes ahead with the rail closure, a decision made by people who do not live in Newcastle and who will be unaffected by the decision. I feel they have been influenced by developers who could just as easily develop their plans with the rail line in tact if they really had the best interests of Newcastle at heart.

I earnestly ask that the decision be revoked.

Susan Gray