

HUNTER TRANSPORT for BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Michael Gallacher
Minister for the Hunter
Parliament House
Sydney
NSW 2001

10 JAN 2013

Dear Mr Gallacher

RE: Don't cut the Newcastle rail line - light rail or tram trains are the solution

We are extremely disappointed that the State Government has decided to cut the heavy rail line into Newcastle and failed to consider the light rail or tram train option as the win/win solution to Newcastle's rail dilemma.

It is simply not good enough to cut the rail, build a new terminal and promise to 'preserve' the corridor for future light rail. We do not understand how the Government can support the extension of light rail through the Sydney CBD, and beyond, yet dismiss the light rail option here in Newcastle. The Government has not explained why light rail was not adopted.

Consequently we ask you the following questions:

- 1) What feasibility study/investigations did the Government use to justify the dismissal of light rail for Newcastle in 2013?
- 2) Did your feasibility into light rail include an assessment of 'tram trains' as detailed in our paper on this subject – refer to: www.newcastledeservesbetter.com
- 3) How can light rail be suitable for Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and the Gold Coast, let alone many other cities overseas, but not Newcastle?
- 4) How can the community be expected to believe the claim that light rail is not viable at present but may be at some indeterminate time in the future?
- 5) What changes does the Government anticipate will be required to make light rail viable in Newcastle in the future?
- 6) What guarantee can you offer that the corridor will be preserved for light rail in the future?
- 7) How can you guarantee that a future government will not sell off the corridor or parts of the corridor in the future?
- 8) Can you point to one example where a rail line has been closed and later re-opened?

Light rail (or tram trains) is the common sense, rational and cost effective compromise solution and must be adopted **now – before** increasing residential densities demand it – **not after** – that's simply good planning.

We request a meeting with you at the earliest opportunity to discuss these questions.

Tony Proust
7th January 2013

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