

urbanrenewal - Submission Draft Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy

From: Jennifer Langbien <jennlang55@hotmail.com>
To: <urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 3/18/2013 11:26 PM
Subject: Submission Draft Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy

Manager, Centres and Urban Renewal:

Department of Planning & Infrastructure

Re: SUBMISSION Draft Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy

Draft Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy presents some highly desirable upgrades for our city's public spaces and buildings.

However, Newcastle residents want to be involved and to have their contributions really heard and acted upon as stakeholders. Previous government decisions have already created a visual barrier to the harbour and beaches with high-rise developments. We were promised open space along the beachside of the Royal development. Linking the beach with the city. Unfortunately this translated into a tiny windy plaza with no water views. Our skyline in the inner city is an outstanding asset. Vitally important that development guidelines are constrained to preserve this asset.

Removal of local council and community power to engage in planning negotiations once planning instruments are adopted is against the present O'Farrell government election policy. It is essential to retain ongoing community and local planning controls.

The strategy estimates the cost of the public domain upgrades to parks, plazas and public buildings to be around \$58 million.

I STRONGLY recommend reversing the decision to cut the reliable rail transport into the city centre. This would provide \$60 million from the State Government's Hunter Investment and Infrastructure Fund. That money would be just enough to cover most of the public upgrades recommended by the draft strategy, but will provide less than 20% of funds required to adequately close the rail.

The draft strategy also insists that public transport is key to successful revitalisation. Mixed-use developments in the East End of the city are slated to have lower requirements for car-parking spaces because of the anticipated

resurgence of demand for public transport.

Closure of the Rail line at Wickham will not only cost taxpayers dearly and cause major problems for thousands of public transport users. It will also mean some significant disruptions to parts of the city away from the centre. A closed level crossing at Beaumont St will have serious deleterious effects on Hamilton businesses, to say nothing of inconvenience to nearby residents. The alternative would be to stop all trains from Sydney at Broadmeadow, completely disrupting smooth connection between the Maitland line and the Newcastle Sydney line. Neither option is public transport friendly.

The strategy document mentions no plans to increase the number of available buses necessary to create the public transport implied in the proposed measures. There will just be more buses moved to the city centre to provide the frequent services promised. It appears that the state government has not thought through the economic and infrastructure implications of this strategy, particularly its decision to close the rail line.

Our Newcastle community needs more time to consider and respond to the full detail and implications of the draft strategy. We need to have input in the Hunter Street renewal strategy between Landcom and GPT. Renewal can be an opportunity to save our city's cultural and landscape heritage values.

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