

urbanrenewal - Necastle Redevelopment, what about implementing a partial tube solution

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To: <urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au>
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Subject: Necastle Redevelopment, what about implementing a partial tube solution

Dear Sir/Madam

Having listened to all the arguments regarding this subject there are a few points that can not be changed....

- a) If you want people to go into Newcastle (day/night visitors) then they need to have a reason
- b) If you want visitors tourists to go into Newcastle then they need to have a reason
- c) If you are going to build new court facilities and put 9,000 university students and staff into the city then they need to have efficient transport
- d) If you are going to put another 6,500 residents into this precinct then they need efficient transport
- e) If you are going to bring more cruise liners into the harbour then the tourists need efficient ways to get out of the city to see the region
- f) There need to be a fast efficient way to get people to and from Williamtown airport.

Some questions:-

- a) where are you going to park the cars for the day visitors eg students, law court peoples
- b) where are you going to park the residents cars
- c) where are you going to park the cars that the "hoped for new activity " is going to generate in addition
- d) how are the roads going to cope with the extra traffic.

Personal observations now shows that the bottlenecking for traffic on Stewart Avenue at the west end is not the rail crossing but the three sets of traffic lights in close proximity at:-

- a) Hannel st/Wharf road intersection
- b) Stewart Ave / Hunter St intersection
- c) Stewart Ave/ Parry St intesection

Having researched expanding, developing regions worldwide on the web and having visited significant cities overseas in the last few years eg :-

London, Paris, Singapore, Chicago, Los Angeles, Auckland

And in Australia Sydney Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane there are several clear factors...

The only efficient way to move people quickly and simply is rail.

Buses simply add more choke to existing roads.

The simplest way to move people around a city is light rail/tram system

More and more cities are planning for and installing

- a) light rail,
- b) trams
- c) heavy rail and
- d) for large distances high speed rail is booming not just in China but right across Europe

The Urban renewal plan cites the reason for renewal as the need for Newcastle CBD to be the capital of the Hunter why?

- a) all the decisions about expenditure in the state are made in Sydney
- b) all decisions that seem to be made regarding infrastructure are to expand the coal industry which is having more negative impact and is not sustainable long term economically or environmentally
- c) The population in the Maitland area is growing at a faster rate than Newcastle

If people from the surrounding regions are wanting to come into the "cultural heart" of the hunter, this new capital as the plan says to experience

- a) the art gallery
- b) the law courts
- c) the university
- d) the beaches
- e) the library
- f) the harbour
- g) the theatres

h) the lifestyle

from

- a) the Valley
- b) the Lake
- c) Port Stephens
- d) Maitland

Then why would you cut the most efficient form of transport at the edge of this precinct and force people to change to buses to complete their journey to the inner city.

Yes build an interchange at Wickham for coaches and trams and light rail but don't expect the passengers headed to Civic and Newcastle to get off the train that brought them in from the region to complete their journey.

The whole argument to rip up the rail track is purely a ruse by the commercial interests to get their hands on the corridor for commercial development.

The problems that most cities have is how to get rail back into a city if

- a) it has been removed or
- b) if it was never planned properly in the first place

eg look at the "horrible" elevated trains in the likes of New York and Chicago, what an eyesore.

A Tube Solution.

If the rail corridor is so significant to urban renewal, (and I believe it is a "three card trick" piece of deception really) then the plan should be to temporarily cut the rail at Wickham, excavate the corridor and put in a tube to put the trains underground for the last leg of the journey from Wickham to Newcastle.

The old heritage listed station could then become a touristy hub in its own right as a boutique coffee lounge etc .

This tube could in fact be continued right through to Nobbys beach.

Newcastle city centre will never ever again be the vibrant centre in the style that it was in the halcyon days of the 50's thru 70's because

- a) the hospital is not there any more with its nearby specialist doctors suites
- b) The days of the large dance halls are gone
- c) There are large regional shopping megastructures now at Kotara, Charlestown, Glendale, Green Hills etc
- d) The John Hunter is quite removed
- e) There are a lot of quite spread private hospitals eg Newcastle Private, Lingard, Lake Macquarie, East Maitland, Toronto
- f) The glory days of David Jones are gone
- g) The regional centres have the picture theatres and so the centre does not draw that clientele the way it did before the days of TV

Once again I believe there has not been enough thought put into this and not enough discussion with people in the regions.

This is not just about Newcastle city centre and the dwindling traders who have been left high and dry due to the exodus of the people being drawn away by the suburban centres.

There needs to be serious discussion with all the regional councils.

Thank you

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