



**CRAIG
BAUMANN MP**
MEMBER FOR PORT STEPHENS



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Friday 22nd March 2013

The Hon Brad Hazzard MP
Minister for Planning
Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

RECEIVED

27 MAR 2013

Dear Minister,

I write in relation to correspondence dated 12th March 2013 from my constituent Mr John More of Cove Boulevard, Karuah NSW 2324 regarding the consideration of submissions made to the Department of Planning in response to the Revitalising Newcastle brochure .

Please find enclosed a copy of the correspondence for your information and consideration.

Kind regards,

Craig Baumann MP
Member for Port Stephens
Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Planning

COPY

P.O. Box 43
Karuah 2324
12th March 2013

RECEIVED
13 MAR 2013

Mr Craig Baumann MP
P.O. Box 82
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

Dear Mr Baumann,

Thank you for your letter of 11th Feb concerning closure of the railway line between Wickham and Newcastle and inviting me to make a submission on this matter to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

It was published in the Revitalising Newcastle brochure that submissions would be received until March 17th. One would assume from this that all submissions received by then would be considered before a decision was made.

Notwithstanding that the Department is receiving submissions until that date, it is stated in this morning's Herald news that Mr Tim Owen MP for Newcastle said yesterday that the closure of the railway line will go ahead and "The decision has been made....."

If this is the case, then my submission will not be taken into account and I can see no purpose in forwarding it to the department for consideration. I have included a cancelled copy for your information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John More', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John More

Encl:

copy

P.O. Box 43
Karuah 2324
11th March 2013

Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Submission - Revitalising Newcastle

I submit that rail services to the centre of the city should be retained and not be replaced by buses from a future rail terminus at Wickham.

The railway should be placed underground between Wickham and Newcastle station.

Putting the rail underground could reasonably easily be achieved by simply digging a suitable trench (some six metres deep) for the rail and then covering it over. This would get the rail out of sight and enable removal of all the level crossings which presently cause traffic delays. Access to the harbour would be opened up. The ground above could be used for any purpose; parks, buildings, car parks etc as desired. Building above railway lines is by no means unusual.

This proposed solution has been employed in many places throughout the world so the engineering is not new. The cost of this would be offset because it would not then be necessary to build a terminal at Wickham.

The purpose of public transport is to transport people to their destinations conveniently, cheaply and in reasonable comfort. I believe that for a person wishing to go to Newcastle centre, having to get off a comfortable train – perhaps loaded with parcels – and then having to struggle to find a bus to travel only a couple of kilometres will be a major disincentive to using the service. Losing the train will be a major blow to the city, whereas maintaining the service by putting it underground will send a positive signal that the government is serious about the city and would encourage commercial development.

Without positive proof that the government understands Newcastle's problems and is prepared to do something positive about it, no business will risk setting up there when there are more suitable opportunities elsewhere.

The centre of Newcastle has been dying for many years. I believe that a large part of the reason for this is that people simply will not go there for their shopping when it is easier and more convenient to shop elsewhere at centres such as Charlestown and Kotara where car parking is convenient and free and there is wide shopping choice. Presently, car parking in Newcastle is metered, policed and scarce. If people are to be enticed to come back, then free parking in abundance must be provided. I see no reference to car parking in the pamphlet "Revitalising Newcastle" and until this matter is addressed, any proposed solution will not be expected to succeed.

Unless the train service is maintained, I do not believe it will be possible to revitalise the city and any money spent on grand plans will be wasted.

John More

