

Parks & Playgrounds MOVEMENT Inc.

President:
Doughithou
49431781
Secretary:

David Horban

Planning for wise leisure

3/2/2013

The Hon Frad Hazzard Mt Level 31 1 Farrer Flace SUDNEY.

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Parks & Playgrounds MOVEMENT Inc.

President:

Mr Doug Lithgow Ph: 02 4943 1781

Secretary:

Mr David Horkan Ph: 02 49511611

PO Box 373, HAMILTON NSW 2303

Planning for wise leisure

Friday, 1 March 2013

The Hon. John Ajaka MLC Parliamentary Secretary for Transport & Roads Member of the Legislative Council

Dear Mr Ajaka,

Make Existing Passenger Rail Services to Newcastle a feature in Renewal Strategy

Thanks for sending me a copy of the announcement about the proposal of the Government to revitalise Newcastle and create a new commercial hub providing thousands of jobs homes and services for the region.

Parks and playgrounds believes that this is a very laudable aim but makes a similar mistake to that made with the last two new hearts or hubs that Governments had proposed for Newcastle in 1956 and 1992. That mistake was to propose new transport terminals which were only ponzi terminals replacing existing terminals and relying on funding from the expectation of increased land values rather than base the new Hubs on the firm foundations of the existing infrastructure.

The real need in such developments is to use existing infrastructure with the passenger rail system servicing the new hub. The best recent example that demonstrates this is the Shard Development opened a few weeks ago in the Tower Bridge district of London in the UK.

There you will see the major new development relating to an improved existing Tower Bridge Railway Station with its connection to the existing wide rail network. The new Heart or Hub at Wickham on this occasion will only be successful if it can key into the existing rail network without removing it as seems to be again proposed. Modern Town Planning properly acknowledges the importance of Transit Orientated Development using the existing infrastructure in an urban setting as exists in Newcastle now.

Parks and Playgrounds Movement very much appreciate you answering our letter of the 3rd of December 2012 for the Minister but we are disappointed that you have missed the significance of our letter which was written to inform the Minister of the historic background to Honeysuckle. I am enclosing a copy of our letter and your reply and a copy of a letter to the Hon Barry O'Farrell MP Premier of NSW which is the response of the Parks and Playgrounds Movement to the general announcement contained in your letter.

We ask the O'Farrell Government in good faith to review its announcement which unfortunately makes a charade of the new hub and revitalisation concept which is a worthy project.

Yours Sincerely,

Doug Lithgow Freeman of the City of Newcastl

Parks and Playgrounds Movement

http://parksandplaygroundsmovement.blogspot.com//

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A community organisation established in 1952





President: Mr Doug Lithgow Ph: 02 4943 1781

Secretary: Mr David Horkan Ph: 02 49511611

Planning for wise leisure

Thursday 28 February 2013

The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP Premier of NSW Governor Macquarie Tower Level 40, 1 Farrer Place SYDNEY NSW 2000 office@premier.nsw.gov.au

Dear Premier,

Newcastle Renewal Strategy and passenger rail services to historic Newcastle Station.

The Newcastle Heritage Railway Station should remain a unique railway destination in the Newcastle urban renewal strategy 2012.

Parks and Playgrounds Movement believe that the NSW Government has acted recklessly in announcing a termination of passenger rail services to historic Newcastle Station at the same time announcing a new transport interchange will be built at Wickham, a suburb of Newcastle, with buses replacing trains. This announcement has been imposed over the recently released Draft Newcastle Renewal Strategy 2012 and will taint any outcome from that strategy.

An Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared before a decision can be finalised for moving Newcastle's existing terminal railway station and its bus interchange to a new station and Transport Interchange to be built at Wickham. The premature announcement disregards the rights of the disabled, the young and the elderly, indeed all railway users and the people of the region and disregards the likely social and environmental impact on the region.

The likely social and environmental impacts have not been identified or alternative proposals properly assessed.

Concerning cross rail connectivity:

In recent years Honcysuckle Development Corporation (Now Hunter Dev. Corp.) has overseen the removal of 3 pedestrian over-bridges and 2 vehicular level crossings. The

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Over-bridges were at Bolton St, Worth Pl. and Cooper St. and the Level crossings were at Hannell St. and Market St. These connective facilities were no doubt removed because of the out of date Honeysuckle Approved Scheme which intended in 1993 to shift the Newcastle Terminal station to Civic. The relevant Minister should be asked to direct the HDC to vary their approved scheme in accordance with the provisions of the Growth Centres (development corporations) Act sections 14, 15, and 16 under which they are constituted. A previous Minister should have directed this action following the making of the Hunter Regional Environmental Plan (Amendment No3) Central Honeysuckle in 1997.

Under today's circumstances the two new replacement Level Crossings should be completed at Steel Street and Worth Place. (The roads each side of the railway have been in place for many years) and the three pedestrian over-bridges should be replaced at convenient locations between Wickham and Newcastle. This is long overdue and must be part of the 2012 renewal strategy for immediate implementation. Design planning for road traffic and grade separation at Stewart Ave and possible rail under or over-pass should have been undertaken as part of the renewal strategy.



Above: 1981 Harbour foreshore Scheme proposed pedestrian concourse to replace the Level Crossing shown below



Market Street Level Crossing Newcastle Herald photo 1981

Newcastle Rail Station Heritage importance & accessibility:

The Newcastle Railway Station is a heritage place having the distinction of being a unique terminal station of the Great Northern Railway which is the second passenger rail system in NSW (Newcastle to Maitland-1857). The existing station is beautifully situated in the heart of historic Newcastle close to the harbour Foreshore and the Newcastle Beaches. It is listed on the NSW State Heritage Register and is surrounded by other State Heritage Items including the Coal River Precinct, Nobbys Headland and Fort Scratchley and the Convict Lumber Yard. The wonderful Customs House with its distinctive clock tower and Time Ball and the Great Northern Hotel are heritage listed sites adjacent to the station. Many elderly and disabled people as well as commuters from the Central Coast and from the Hunter Valley including Maitland travel to Newcastle rail station to access this unique destination and appreciate its excellent accessible platforms with their easy access to the harbour and Stockton Ferry and the existing bus interchange.

We ask that the announcement regarding passenger Rail to Newcastle be reconsidered and the passenger rail services be made a feature of the Renewal Strategy with improved pedestrian access to Wickham and Civic Stations as recommended by Director General of Planning in the Renewal Strategy and the replacement of the connectivity removed in recent decades.

The legal machinery to correct this situation must be invoked by directing the Hunter Development Corporation to review its "Approved Scheme" which is totally inappropriate for its widened responsibility over the whole Hunter Region. Furthermore the appropriate Minister should direct the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to prepare the necessary Environmental Impact Statement to identify the likely social and environmental impacts if it is proposed to decommission passenger rail facilities at Newcastle and build a replacement Transport Interchange at Wickham.

The removal the 150 year old passenger rail system into Newcastle and the moving of the existing Bus Interchange and the Terminal Station to Wickham requires a professional Environmental Impact Statement to identify and consider the likely environmental and social impact on Newcastle and the region.

We trust that the NSW Government will consider the views of the Parks and Playgrounds Movement and make the passenger rail services to the existing heritage Newcastle Station a feature of the Newcastle Renewal Strategy with improved pedestrian access to Wickham

and Civic Stations as recommended.

Yours Sincerely

Doug Lithgow President

Parks and Playgrounds Movement Inc.



Mistoric Newcostle Railway Station — proposed improvements to arrival and departure Concourse Proposed by the Northern Jurks and Playgrounds Novement for the Newcostle New Our Rail Committee

Newcastle Railway Station is a heritage place of distinction with many State Heritage listed Items nearby



Scenic railway entrance to Newcastle as proposed in the 1981 Newcastle Urban design & Harbour Foreshore Scheme