



Manager, Centres and Urban Renewal:  
Department of Planning &  
Infrastructure  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Date: 6/3/2013  
Ref: 130306-1333

### **Submission to Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy**

I want to make the following submission in regards to the so-called "truncation" of the rail line into Newcastle.

One of the reasons my wife and I moved to Newcastle (Stockton) was the convenience of the train to Sydney. We are regular users of the train, my wife have been commuting weekly for a number of years.

Needless to say that the news that the train line is going to be cut didn't come down well at all with us. In fact, we both find it an absolute disgrace to remove a perfectly functioning piece of infrastructure from the second biggest city in NSW and it shows the State Government's contempt for the people in this city. Furthermore, this will cost an absolute fortune, which will be paid for by the taxpayers. This money should instead be directed to other projects, like bringing the old post office to life.

Trains are superior to buses in terms of speed, capacity, comfort and have, furthermore, a much lower environmental impact than road vehicles.

In other parts of the country, as well as overseas, new railways are being built to reduce road congestion and time spent commuting.

What we want to see is an improvement of the provided services:

- a) Make the Sydney – Newcastle service an express train by scrapping most of the stops in between and increase the speed to what the track and rollingstock are capable of. With these changes to the timetable, I believe a reduction in travel time by 20-30 minutes should be feasible.
- b) Introduce a 1<sup>st</sup> class carriage on the Newcastle – Sydney services with facilities, which will attract business travelers to the train.
- c) Make the local Central Coast service more frequent and stopping at all stations. There should be no more than 15 minutes between the trains during peak hours and 30 minutes otherwise. With the current timetable, it is very far between the trains if you want, for example, travel between Newcastle – Adamstown.
- d) Build a platform at Kotara shopping centre (why hasn't that been done before?).

If the time it takes between Newcastle to Sydney can be reduced as described above, I am sure the train will attract a lot more people that otherwise would have used their cars.

I believe that the majority of business owners in the Newcastle CBD districts do not want to see the trainline disappear. The concept of changing from train to bus at Wickham (or Broadmeadow) will discourage people from visiting the CBD and anyone claiming the opposite must be dreaming.

Lets be frank about the push to kill the train. The land, occupied by the station and yard is highly valuable real estate and developers are circling like vultures to get their hands on it. The argument that the trainline cuts the city in two just doesn't hold up. With pedestrian level crossings, access would no longer be an issue.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olle Scholin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Olle Scholin  
12 King Street  
Stockton NSW 2295