



**With the Compliments
of the
Premier**

The Hon Bradley Hazzard MP
Minister for Planning and Infrastructure

For all necessary attention.

28 FEB 2013

Barry O'Farrell

From: John Sievwright [johnsiewwright@bigpond.com]
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2013 8:34 AM
To: <office@premier.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Newcastle Revitalisation Project Submission
Attachments: ATT00001; Submission - Newcastle Revitalisation Project.pdf

Dear Mr. Premier,

Please find attached my submission of comments in relation to the proposed Newcastle Revitalisation Project.

Best regards,
John Sievwright,
Mobile: 0411 225 119,
email: johnsiewwright@bigpond.com

FN	
LN	2013-61917

JOHN K SIEVWRIGHT
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Please Address Correspondence to: PO Box 757, Newcastle, NSW, 2300

20th February, 2013,

Manager Centres & Urban Renewal,
Department of Planning & Infrastructure,
GPO Box 39,
Sydney, NSW, 2001.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re The Revitalisation of Newcastle – Comment Submission

My wife and I are residents of the east end of Newcastle CBD and regularly utilise rail corridor trains between Newcastle Station and Central Station in Sydney, Hamilton, and Broadmeadow.

This date at 2p.m. I attended the public NSW Government information session and questions in regards to the "Revitalisation of Newcastle," more particularly the "Revitalisation of Hunter Street, Newcastle."

At the commencement of the session the convener publically announced that he would not accept any questioning or debate in regards to the "closure of the rail corridor between Wickham and Newcastle, as the State Government had made a definitive decision to close that section of the corridor."

Throughout the meeting the convener continually stifled any question referencing on this subject, much to the considerable displeasure of members of the public present. This fact left many unanswered questions in relation to the entire project, particularly since this section of the rail corridor is such an integral part of the project and very likely to determine its success or failure. The polite conceit displayed on this subject by a public servant on such an important public issue is to be abhorred.

Generally speaking I consider the project strategy booklet and most of its recommendations to be a relatively well thought out paper, however it became apparent that members of the assembled panel were unable to provide definitive or satisfactory answers to a number of questions put to them, certainly not what is expected from those who have charge of such an important multi million dollar project.

Not being permitted to ask questions in reference to the proposed section of rail closure, I hereby submit to you my concerns, opinions and questions for information and consideration, with the view of the Government reconsidering the closing of the rail corridor between Wickham and Newcastle Railway Stations;

- 1) Newcastle already has an efficient bus terminus and taxi stand adjacent to the railway station, the former not only efficiently and effectively processes government buses, but also private buses and coaches. A duplication build for these services at Wickham would be an unnecessary waste of public funds.
- 2) The relocation of Wickham Railway Station to conform with the proposed overall strategy would not only be a major project, but also a major public expense whereby those funds maybe better utilised towards other aspects of the project if the Newcastle Rail link were to be retained.
- 3) The proposed utilisation of buses to shuttle members of the public between Wickham and Newcastle/Newcastle and Wickham, would significantly congest traffic along Hunter Street, more particularly at Newcastle proper, predominantly during peak hours. This would definitely create a "George Street, Sydney" bus buildup effect (interestingly, Sydney is now opting to provide city light rail in preference to bus buildup).
- 4) In order to cater for members of the public wishing to travel from Wickham to Newcastle/Newcastle to Wickham, the Government will need to purchase additional buses and "increase" their frequency, particularly during peak hours, defeating much of the proposed pedestrian, cycling free movement along Hunter Street. I also question as to whether or not the Newcastle terminus will be able to efficiently and effectively cater for this additional traffic bus load and increased frequency?
- 5) The added bus movement will also have the effect of extensively increasing pollution along Hunter Street, not to mention the safety of persons crossing between Hunter Street and Honeysuckle.
- 6) There is a significant aging population in the eastern end of the city, (myself and my wife inclusive), making any travel, and travel with any portable possessions (baggage etc.) from/to our residence much more physically difficult, not to mention the additional cost i.e. having to purchase both train and also bus tickets to travel between Newcastle and Wickham.
- 7) Presently, there is a young person and family culture I have observed on many occasions arriving and departing Newcastle via train carrying their surfboards, body boards and other surfing equipment to/from the beaches, much of which is definitely unsuitable for carriage in buses.
- 8) Presently, Newcastle city is excessively over populated with costly parking meters, to the extent that members of the public avoid parking in the city and prefer alternative parking in outlying shopping complexes where they receive 3 hours of free parking, with reasonable rates thereafter. This I believe has been one of the major contributing factors to the downfall of retail business in the city. Removing many of the parking meters and providing both "free" street parking and 3 hour "fee" parking station parking will assist with the reunification between the public and retail business.
- 9) If the closure of the rail corridor were to proceed, favourable consideration should be given to a "light rail" between Wickham and Newcastle in preference to increasing bus traffic and bus frequency, particularly since the rail corridor already provides much of the infrastructure necessary for such a system. Light rail would alleviate much of the problems outlined above.

- 10) The over provision of bicycle lanes in parts of the Sydney CBD have proven to be a dismal failure, doing little other than adding to vehicular traffic congestion, particularly during peak hour. Careful planning in relation to the number and location of these lanes throughout Hunter Street and the rest of the city should be considered to be a matter of paramount importance, with particular consideration given to the safety of crossing pedestrian traffic to/from Hunter Street and Honeysuckle, for cyclists are renowned to disobey "Stop" and other traffic signs, traffic signals, ride on footpaths and against traffic flows and are mostly not equipped with any danger warning devices (bells). Consistent policing of these aspects should be made an integral part of any bicycle lane planning.
- 11) It was mentioned during the meeting today that the State Government has no intention to sell off any part of the rail corridor to building developers or the public should the rail corridor closure proceed – rightly or wrongly, myself and many others are very concerned that there is a hidden agenda in relation the rail corridor, particularly since the booklet tends to parry off any long term intention via the inclusion of one small paragraph – please would you confirm the Governments intentions in relation this issue?
- 12) In order to further enhance this overall project, please advise if the Government intends to permanently close the vehicular crossing at Beaumont Street, Hamilton?
- 13) After being asked for the Government to provide an extension of 3 months time for public submissions beyond 17th March, 2013, the convener advised that the Government is most unlikely to permit any extension, as the Government was eager to commence the project. Please, would you be good enough to advise if the Government is prepared to provide this additional time, having in mind that details of the project were not released until mid December, 2012, when the majority of the public were proceeding on annual holidays to the commencement of February, 2013.

For you information it is my intention to forward copy of this letter submission to the local NSW Sitting Member, the local NSW member of the opposition, the office of the NSW Premier and local interested organizations and parties.

Yours faithfully,



John K Sievwright,
Concerned Newcastle Resident.



Premier & Cabinet

CMU13-3625

27 February 2013

Mr John Sievwright
johnsiewwright@bigpond.com

Dear Mr Sievwright

Thank you for your recent email to the Premier concerning the Newcastle Revitalisation Project.

As the matter you have raised concerns the administration of the Hon Bradley Hazzard MP, Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, your email has been forwarded to the Minister for attention.

You may be sure that your email will receive close consideration.

Yours sincerely

David Swain
for **Director General**