

urbanrenewal - Manager, Centres and Urban Renewal: Department of Planning & Infrastructure. Newcastle Renewal.

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It seems the plan overlooks the historical importance of the rail line, despite talking about intending to take the history and character of the city into account when deciding the future character.

Railways in NSW started from two points in NSW, both Sydney, and Newcastle. This should be recognised.

All though it looks like they are going to cut the railway, it could be worth considering reserving one track for special events, and historic purposes. This line could be hidden beneath the landscape, and only utilised for occasions like the Maitland Steamfest. There would be some traffic disruption at these times.

The plan ought to consider replacing existing level crossings with more modern, innovative ones. Gates that retract into the ground, more attractive gates, etc. Better design can make a rail line become an attractive part of a city, when more than utilitarian needs are considered. Remolding streets gives opportunities to create underpasses, where there used to be dead road space. This can improve connection across a rail line without the need to remove it. A better consideration of the space between the road and rail can result in the sense of a rail line being a barrier being reduced.

It is good that many options around the rail line are flexible should the plans change.

Thomas Walder.