

urbanrenewal - Addition to Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy submission

From: "Bernie Bernard/Barbara Whitcher" <bbernard@msn.com.au>
To: <urbanrenewal@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 4/3/2013 4:36 PM
Subject: Addition to Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy submission

Dear Sir/Madam

On the 1st March I emailed the submission that I have copied below. I have now added a section to that submission.

Thanks

Barbara Whitcher

I am a member of Stockton Community Action Group (SCAG), one of the Newcastle community groups. Recently I attended the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy afternoon briefing session at the Town Hall. I was pleasantly surprised at how many people were there.

There are many positive features of this renewal Strategy but I am totally puzzled about the logic of the answer to the question **How will public transport changes better serve the region?** in your recent Newcastle News. I truly cannot see how replacing train services with buses will indeed ensure that the whole city etc will be **well serviced** by public transport.

The local State Member, Tim Owen, continue to stress that the majority of people in Newcastle are in favour of cutting the rail line. On what did he base this conclusion? I believe it is insufficient to rely on business meetings and door knocking especially if the latter took place some time ago.

There would certainly be more people in favour of cutting the rail line if light rail replaced it, although I am not one of these. However, replacement buses are inadequate because they would require passengers moving from one area to another; it would be more difficult for mothers with babies or small children as well as the elderly and infirm.

As a Stockton resident who sees numerous people from my suburb (as well as north of here, including Fern Bay, Nelson Bay etc) parking at the ferry wharf so that they can catch the train to Sydney from Newcastle, I believe many people will be inconvenienced if the rail is moved back.

On Tuesday I was at a luncheon organised by the Stockton & District Probus Club. At our table the main topic of conversation was the proposed closing of the rail line into Newcastle. It was interesting to see how many elderly, conservative people were worried about the consequences of this action.

I believe that many of the good features of the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy could be implemented without cutting the rail line, especially if the money intended for that purpose was put into the Strategy.

This morning (1 March 2013) in the Newcastle Herald there was a very interesting article written by one of the Newcastle City Councillors who also attended the same afternoon briefing session as myself. I am not a member of the Greens but I did agree with the sentiments that she expressed about the meeting and the Strategy.

I cannot understand why the renewal strategy does not include the planned extension of the Newcastle Art Gallery. This extension has earned \$7 million from the Federal Government and had \$1,000,000 of donations as well as millions set aside by Newcastle City Council. For a modest cost of \$21,000,000 Newcastle could have a truly wonderful gallery befitting the huge collection of valuable art that it owns. Great Art Galleries are a very important drawcard for tourists and a refurbished Newcastle Art Gallery could really enhance Newcastle. This project is ready to go.

Sincerely

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