

**Submission
No 363**

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING PROCESS IN NEWCASTLE
AND THE BROADER HUNTER REGION**

Name: Mr Walter Ryba and Mrs Jennifer Ryba

Date received: 5/11/2014

THE HON. REV. FRED NIKE
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
MACQUARIE STREET
SYDNEY NSW.

14-10-2014.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to voice my opposition to the termination of the rail line into Newcastle Station.

My wife and I are regular train travellers from our local station into Newcastle Station for various reasons, as it beats the stress of driving and looking for parking. When we travel to Sydney we catch the local train to Newcastle Station & from there we board the Intercity Express to Central because of the ease of transferring our luggage from one train to the next. (platform on the same level)

If the line is truncated; to catch the Sydney train we will have to travel to Hamilton or Wickham and then by train or bus to Broadmeadow Station - adding journey time, extra cost and extra luggage handling which is all unnecessary - how does that equate to a more efficient transport system?

The only people who want the line truncated are:

- ① GPT & The Real Estate Institute
- ② The Baird Govt.
- ③ Non public transport users.

The rest of the developers are quite happily re-newing Newcastle and not agitating to have the line cut.

The people who want the rail system left

as it is are:

- ① The workers who use every station between Waratah & Newcastle.
- ② Students, pensioners, day trippers, tourists, beach goers, people with medical or other appointments, parents with prams, people with bikes & disabled people.
- ③ People with disabilities are well catered for as they can drive their motorised scooters & wheel chairs on and off with ease - not so easy trying to get on and off a bus.

My wife and I have travelled widely round the world and have seen no large city cut its rail line to its centre. Those which have, have realised their mistake and at great cost replaced rail it originally removed. Examples in Australia include the cutting of the line from Perth to Fremantle and on the Gold Coast. Because of the traffic chaos that ensued the lines had to be re-opened. The same amount of chaos is occurring at Bunkury at the present moment & people are demanding the rail service be re-instated.

The populations of Maitland & Branxton are expected to increase by tens of thousands in the coming years and many of those people will use the rail to travel into Newcastle.

Four to five thousand University students will use the Campus at Civic - a short walk from Civic Station. The govt. plans to demolish Civic Station and provide five carparks! How short sighted.

The amount of money needed to achieve this grand plan will be well over the three hundred and forty million dollars or so allocated.

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Half will go just moving and re-locating existing services (water, sewer, electricity, gas, phone lines etc).

Two hundred trains a day arrive and depart Newcastle Station every day. Will buses and light rail be able to match this service provided by trains?

The Real Estate Institute in Newcastle and GPT would be very keen to see high rise buildings erected on the rail corridor, even though they vehemently deny it. Will the govt. build more parking stations for motorists who will abandon public transport and drive their cars into Newcastle as they did in other parts of Australia when the rail line was cut?

Our fine heritage Newcastle Station will be re-placed with a large finished at Wickham.

Moving the line a few metres south makes no economic sense whatsoever when the govt has already spent between fifty and sixty million dollars replacing the old rails and wooden sleepers between Hamilton and Newcastle and now plans to rip up a big portion of it.

The money would be better spent providing overpasses for pedestrian and car traffic and landscaping parts of the corridor.

We say, leave the heavy rail line where it is as it does not make economic sense replacing that which is working well with some vague concept plan that has not been disclosed so close to the period of termination, which the minister says will be re-vealed in "the fullness of time" does not fill us with confidence.

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One would assume that if this were to happen, a smooth transition would of already been commenced by building of required infrastructure to facilitate this.

Nothing is evident so hence we expect chaos & disorder.

The benefit of retaining the rail into Newcastle is far greater than the removal
leave the rail in place!

Yours faithfully

WALTER RYBA

JENNIFER G. RYBA