

**Submission
No 73**

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

Name: Mr Paul Shearston

Date received: 17/10/2014

I wish to make a number of comments re the planning processes in Newcastle.

* the decision to cut the heavy rail line is a poor decision considering the other planning changes taking place in the city - it has some direct effect on us but we do have available bus services but it does impact on friends and relatives who travel to Newcastle and expect a service to the city centre

* I have no confidence that we will ever see a light rail service - I would expect that it will be seen that the replacement buses will end up being a long- term solution rather than a short - term one.

* I believe the rail corridor will not be retained as open space as promised -I raised this matter with Tim Owen when he was the member and he assured me that there would be no high -rise development on the site but events have now shown these promises to be worthless.

* it would seem that the sole purpose of the rail closure was to make the rail corridor available for large scale development - I have no confidence in assurances that decisions will be made in the long-term interests of Newcastle as a liveable city

* while I have no direct evidence of corrupt influence in the city I believe that the local member was working to the benefit of narrow vested interests seeking to gain favourable development decisions in the city - while ICAC has revealed some evidence of corrupt actions there could be more that has not been revealed

* finally I believe that the rail should not be cut or at least delayed; that any light rail projects should not replace heavy rail but should extend from central Newcastle to other parts of the city; that high rise should only occur the Newcastle West; that the range of other options for Newcastle revitalisation should be given consideration without the air of corruption currently around planning decisions in the city

Paul Shearston Hamilton