

Submission
No 230

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 24/10/2014

Partially Confidential

24th October

The Rev. Fred Nile
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney

Dear Rev. Nile

Submission re Revitalising Newcastle

Newcastle is not the only community complaining of their exclusion in discussions until the decisions have been made at a higher level, when it is too late for change. Community discussions just 'tick the box' for community input. Unfortunately the community is left to live with the consequences of the 'big end of town' decisions eg. truncation of heavy rail and increasing building heights from 2012 LEP.

I completed an online survey re revitalising Newcastle and attended Design Newcastle Summit. Both were structured for participants to choose between stipulated options. A 'TICK THE BOX' exercise.

Design Newcastle 26/7/14 consisted of speeches (TIM OWEN told us we were designing for tomorrow not for today). Early in the summit a question re heavy and light rail was quashed. 'Clouds' were filled with our 'like ideas' of Newcastle now and for the future and ½ hour to Design Newcastle - glue their pictures on a map. The focus was to open up the CBD to the foreshore.

\$150 cash in an envelope was given to all participants for attending 26/7/14 but NOT given to community groups attending 27/7/14.

Why were we paid? Why not the others? Who paid the cash?

Who is going to benefit from truncating a seamless transport system capable of delivering large numbers of people - wheelchairs, disabled, pram, and surfboard friendly - with limited impact on the road traffic?

2.

The inquiry should look at these unanswered questions:-

1. What other options were examined other than light rail which will congest the road and COST MILLIONS \$\$\$?
2. Where is the feasibility and impact study on light rail?
3. How can the existing system be adapted to open up the CBD to the foreshore COST EFFECTIVELY? Or is there more to the decision to cut the rail that we are not privy to?
4. Who will benefit from an empty rail corridor? Developers?
5. Why did JEFF McCLOY conduct secret meetings? What decisions were made? With whom? Impact of increasing height of 2012 LEP on historic Newcastle? How involved were the other council members in any changes?
6. Why has the NCC General Manager offered the rail line to the University for a car park?

Residents are not against development but expect transparency, accountability and genuine public consultation within State and local government.

Yours sincerely