

**Submission  
No 235**

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

**Name:** Ms Sally Corbet

**Date received:** 24/10/2014

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This is my submission to the Newcastle Planning Inquiry. It is about the Newcastle rail line truncation

## Newcastle rail line

If we, as citizens, are to have faith in our government, we must be assured that infrastructure and planning decisions are made for the general good, not for the benefit of a few influential people. The recent ICAC revelations suggest this has not been done in Newcastle. I am concerned about the decision to truncate the rail line at Broadmeadow and then take passengers into Newcastle by bus.

I have no trust that the decision was made in the interestests of the public good, given the information we now have about the way developers tried to influence Newcastle and other Hunter politicians to further their own interests. In no way is it in the public good to force passengers to change at Broadmeadow from a train onto a bus. I live in the Hunter and to get to Newcastle now would have to travel to Broadmeadow, then get on a bus that has to deal with urban traffic. My trip which used to take 1 hour and 15 mins could easily take an extra 15-20 mins

An efficient train service to connect all of us in the general Hunter area to Newcastle is essential for work, business, essential appointments and leisure. This is the way to keep rural areas vital and attractive places to live. The inconvenience of changing plus the extra time taken to reach Newcastle will increasingly put people off using public transport.

I ask that all relevant documents to do with the decision to truncate the rail line at Broadmeadow station on Boxing day 2014 be made public to the inquiry and to the public. This would include any correspondance between the then MP for Newcastle, Mr Tim Owen and the relevant government departments.

There is no guarantee that if the line is truncated, light rail will in fact be installed. Nor is there any guarantee that the possibly defunct rail corridor will not be sold off to private interests. This is not in the interests of good forward planning for Newcastle.

I read today that documents must be released showing the reasons for the rail truncation and its timing. They will be released within 14 days and no doubt the inquiry will be investigating them.

I request that the inquiry make these documents public. We must be able to understand what actually went on. We must be able to see the cost-benefit analysis. We must be able to see you believe they would benefit from this decision and why.

The decision to cut the rail is wrapped in secrecy. I'm aware it has been going on for a long time and finally now the background has a

chance to be exposed.

The decision to truncate the line at Broadmeadow must be put on hold until the inquiry makes its final report.

Yours sincerely  
Sally Corbett