

**Submission
No 366**

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

Name: Mrs Isabel Hamilton

Date received: 24/10/2014

Reverend the Hon Fred Nile MLC Chair

Select Committee on the Planning Process in Newcastle and the Broader Hunter Region, NSW Legislative Council

newcastleplanning@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir,

This is an essential inquiry into planning decisions in Newcastle. Particularly since our elected representatives resigned in disgrace because of admissions made before ICAC.

I want to draw your attention to concealed dealings around the spot rezoning of the King Edward Park Headland Reserve. The Newcastle City Council had decreed that this section of parkland was not to be zoned for commercial use as the land was dedicated for public recreation. In particular an application for a function centre was disallowed in June 2011.

Please investigate how in 2012, this land was secretly rezoned to allow for a function centre on our iconic headland park. There was no discussion of this rezoning and no reasons given to the community (who have campaigned long and hard to avoid the building of a private commercial structure on heritage land originally dedicated to recreation and parkland).

Mr Keith Stronach (the developer who had submitted the DA for the function centre) was questioned in ICAC over his \$5,000 illegal donation to disgraced former Member for Newcastle, Mr Tim Owen; Counsel Assisting asked was he trying to grease the wheels for King Edward Park?

I support FOKEP's submission into the planning process, rezoning fails the basic tests of probity, transparency, accountability and public consultation and raises strong questions of developer involvement in the political, decision- making process.

Yours sincerely

Isabel Joyce Hamilton