

**Submission
No 194**

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

Name: Mr Arthur Keene

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The NSW State Government's plan to remove the rail line between Wickham and Newcastle stations has not been properly explained or justified and has negative consequences for the people of Newcastle and the Hunter valley.

Justification

1. No survey of traffic movements in Newcastle or its environs have been presented publicly which suggests that if such studies exist they indicate that the results for Newcastle will be negative.

2. No analysis of the effect of how the predicted increase in the number of residents in the inner city area will impinge on traffic and traffic congestion in the CBD have been made public. It appears that current planning does not take this into account, but the planning process is pointing to a large increase in the number of residents in the high rise buildings being foreshadowed.

2. No substantive arguments in terms of benefit to traffic movements in the inner city area have been presented presumably because there are none. The suggestion that access to the foreshore will be improved is trivial. At present this access is comparable to the ease of access between Hunter and King streets in the inner city area.

3. The delays experienced at the Stewart Ave crossing are due to the fact that at the Hunter and King street intersections with Stewart Ave five lines of traffic feed into two lines. On any major artery where this occurs traffic will slow down.

Negative effects

1. For commuters going to work in Sydney or destinations between Newcastle and Sydney travel times will be increased by an estimated 20 minutes each way or 40 minutes a day. This is

not acceptable.

2. For travellers with heavy luggage the bus system has quite inadequate storage for heavy luggage. This will have a negative effect on the overseas and domestic tourist trade to Newcastle.

3. No thought has been given to how buses will handle the big increase in the carriage of surfboards etc in the summer and even in the winter.

3. The workers who commute to Newcastle by rail will find it more convenient to come by car thus increasing traffic problems in Newcastle.

4. Previous traffic studies suggest that Hunter St is facing gridlock in the next ten years. Taking up space in Hunter St with a light rail system will greatly increase congestion.

A.G.Keene