

**Submission
No 242**

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

Name: Mr Tim Curtis

Date received: 24/10/2014

Dear Inquiry members

Newcastle is lucky to have a rail line running through the city, almost to the beach. If anything, it is underutilised today. As Newcastle grows over the next decades and centuries – as it surely will - demand for intercity and intra-city trains should only increase whether it be for tourists travelling from Sydney to visit Newcastle's beautiful beaches and increasingly vibrant bars and restaurants or for local people doing the same or travelling to and from work.

In Sydney, we are spending billions of dollars making forced acquisitions of property, building tunnels and overpasses and re-building tramlines because previous city planners did not have the foresight to reserve transport corridors to where people were going to travel in the future. We also continue to suffer from slow journey times and traffic jams in places where we can't afford to build transport links because cost of doing so is prohibitive. Extending the train line from Bondi Junction to Bondi Beach is a good example of this.

It seems crazy to rip the Newcastle rail line out now in order to make some short term cash in property sales when the long term cost is so great, whether it be cash to re-build in future, Sydney-style traffic jams or just generally stunting Newcastle's growth. We should learn from Sydney's experience and preserve Newcastle's rail line so that it can form the transport backbone to future Newcastle growth.

It is even more extraordinary to make such a short-sighted decision to rip up rail line when some people involved in the political decision process have been found to be corrupt and are gaining from this at the long term cost of Newcastle and NSW.

Please don't destroy the transport infrastructure in Newcastle that makes travelling to and within the city so accessible and that enables Newcastle to be such an attractive growth city of the future.

Yours sincerely
Tim Curtis