

**Submission  
No 187**

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

**Name:** Ms Judith Gatland

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I have lived in Newcastle for 50 years and in Newcastle East for 36 of those years. I am on Age Pension as sole income (aged 82) and do not have access to a motor vehicle. My extended family are mostly resident in Sydney so I regularly travel by train from Newcastle Stn. to Sydney and back for short stays. I note having boarded the train to Central Station that many fellow travellers, including those who have travelled from Maitland to Newcastle Stn. (ease of transfer) board with often a massive amount of luggage - more join at Hamilton - as connection to the train to the airport is made at Central.

On weekends, especially during summer months, I note large nos. of families with baby carriages and young people with surfboards/bicycles alighting at N'cle Stn. to access both Nobbys and Newcastle Beaches.

I believe NO survey has taken place regarding just these two facts as well as many others regarding train travellers prior to the decision to "truncate" the rail line at Hamilton!

I do not want to believe that ANY State Government would be so uncaring of its citizens who cannot afford, or choose not to own a motor vehicle, especially when PUBLIC transport is being so heavily and justifiably promoted, as to virtually discourage or cause so much difficulty for its travelling citizens - elderly people trying to drag large pieces of luggage up and down bus steps, no more than one wheelchair-bound person, or prams/strollers able to fit on ill-equipped buses, also surfriders unable to take large surfboards on buses!

There was NO process in place to survey the needs of Hunter train users before the truncation decision was taken! The rail service to Newcastle MUST remain in place until Light Rail is established using the existing track!

Judith Gatland