

**Submission
No 168**

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date received: 23/10/2014

Partially Confidential

Submission to Newcastle Planning Committee

I am writing this submission in support of the decision to close the heavy rail line at Wickham and the establishment of the transport interchange and light rail. I do this to counter the submissions from the vocal opposition that you will no doubt be swamped with.

I am an ordinary 68 year old citizen who lives with my wife at Carrington and make the following points:

1. For many years I have been frustrated by the continual interruption to traffic caused by the Stewart Avenue heavy rail crossing.
2. The roundabout at the intersection of Cowper Street Carrington and Hannell Street is often gridlocked in peak hour creating a very dangerous situation for anyone wanting to leave or enter Carrington. I believe that the heavy rail crossing at Stewart Street is a major contributor to this gridlock as traffic often backs up from the crossing all the way to the roundabout.
3. Many of the trains terminating or leaving Newcastle Station have only a handful of passengers or sometimes none at all. Train commuters will be served just as well by the Wickham interchange.
4. I strongly believe that the heavy rail line into Newcastle is a huge barrier between the CBD and the wonderful shore line and river bank activities that Newcastle is so lucky to have.
5. Closing the heavy rail line at Wickham has long been recognised as a catalyst to the revitalisation of the Newcastle CBD, just ask GPT.
6. The west end of Hunter Street will be revitalised by the light rail and the hundreds of university students who will choose to walk from the interchange or take the light rail to their new campus in Hunter Street.
7. Light rail will be such an asset to Hunter Street delivering patrons to the front door of many CBD businesses and will be a major draw card to our wonderful city.
8. I believe that the current government is committed to the light rail. The only way it won't happen is if the DO NOTHING fraternity, and there are many, somehow get their way and again stifle anything that is of benefit to our wonderful city.
9. Many of those opposed to the heavy rail removal come from out of town. They don't live here, they don't have to put up with the existing heavy rail and they have no right to tell us what should happen in Newcastle.
10. The DO NOTHING fraternity talk a lot about the removal of the heavy rail line. It's not being removed, it's just being truncated and replaced with a transport system that is more flexible and will be able to deliver more people to exactly where they want to go as opposed to the aged rigid two stop system that we are forced to put up with now.
11. I do not believe that the Government decision making processes has been tainted in any way as blind Freddy can see that the current proposal is the way to go forward for the long term benefit of all.

There will be interruption and frustration during the construction process but it will be well worth the hassle. If the DO NOTHING fraternity would see a little bit down the road and not insist that everything should remain the same, then we would all be better off. Newcastle missed out last time revitalisation was proposed by GPT. This is our big chance – **please don't let it slip away again.**

23/10/2014