

Submission  
No 54

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date received:** 13/10/2014

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Partially Confidential

I humbly request the cessation of the proposal to truncate the heavy rail line into Newcastle Station and to develop high-rise in the Central Business District.

Since moving to Newcastle in 1980, I have never witnessed such a consistent and ardent opposition to proposals such as these, from a diversity of peoples for such a long period of time. The level of opposition is justified, and is based in fact, not simply passion, or as the minority often dismissingly refer to as 'anti-progress sentiment.'

The City of Newcastle is changing, not due to property developments or changes in transport behaviour, it is changing through the creative industries and tourism, along with the increasing support of Novocastrians and visitors taking advantages of the City. Advantages which will be lost if the rail line is truncated and high-rise overdevelopment permitted to proceed.

I have personal experience of one shop owner, who moved their internationally themed retailed shop from retail centre of Charlestown to the Mall in Newcastle, and is now doing five times the business they were attaining in Charlestown. This is one personal example, and once again, as a long term resident, I visit the Mall area regularly and have witnessed its resurgence to where it is now, a vibrant creative hub.

The City's revitalisation is happening, not through greater access to the Harbour, as many in favour of truncation state, and not through building high rise developments which will certainly change the dynamic and aesthetic of the City, but through small and creative innovations such as Renew Newcastle and the City's amazing coffee and cuisine cultures, and visitors coming in from outside the City and overseas.

Decisions to truncate the rail line and develop the CBD have been made through political and self-motivated process, not through sound economic and sustainable research. As a result, the level of opposition mentioned earlier has been expressed and is continuing to be expressed in numerous forums and in the media by locals and by visitors to the City from Australia and abroad. The voices of these residents and visitors is being ignored and dismissed by the Government, which perhaps reflects the attitudes expressed by vested stakeholders such as The Property Council, Hunter Development Corporation, Urban Growth, along with our former Member of Parliament and the City's Lord Mayor.

The money committed to truncating the rail line and building high rises would be better spent investing in sustainable projects which reduce the City's infrastructure backlog or promote projects detailed in the Destination Management Plan, which will not only improve the City for residents, but for the increasing number of Visitors as well.

I humbly request that you listen to the people of Newcastle and the many visitors to our City and region, not to the self-interest of the few. Further, that the Government cease activity in the rail corridor and plans to develop high-rise in the Central Business District until.

Thank you for this opportunity.