

**Submission
No 334**

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

Name: Mr David Stewart

Date received: 25/10/2014

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE PLANNING PROCESS IN NEWCASTLE AND THE BROADER HUNTER REGION

Revd the Hon Fred Nile MLC

Dear Sir and Members of The Select Committee,

I ask you to consider this submission though I lodge it one day after the formal closing date.

I make this submission regarding item (e) "the decision to terminate the Newcastle rail line ... light rail along Hunter and Scott Streets" of the terms of reference.

1. I submit that the Wickham location for the heavy rail termination and the scheme proposed in the REF are totally inadequate as an interchange, that there is not sufficient space at this location for all the facilities and functions required of a transport interchange for this city and that access to the location is inadequate and is severely compromised because it is very close to a major road intersection with consequential traffic congestion.
2. The proposed interchange will operate only as a rail terminating station. The platforms are too narrow for large crowds and potentially unsafe to waiting passengers; there is no space for Light Rail platforms without compromising the local roads; there is no space to extend a Light Rail system further west to form a Light Rail System; there is inadequate provision for bus, coach, taxi and private car services; there is no planning for the movement of PEOPLE who will be both passengers and pedestrians. The REF has no mention of passenger forecasts.
3. A viable interchange providing for all transport systems, and providing good transfer paths for passengers and pedestrians, is available to the west at either Hamilton Rail Station, or at the triangle rail junction known as Woodville Junction. Several arrangements of interchange are possible at these locations and can be provided to the Select Committee.
4. I submit that the intention to operate Light Rail in Hunter and Scott Streets is completely contrary to transport planning and city planning practise. The public transport system must be planned and built to operate at journey travel times close to that of private cars in order to attract passengers away from cars; it must operate at the lowest cost to improve its financial viability; it must be built at the lowest possible cost to make it feasible and improve financial viability. These outcomes can be achieved by placing the Light rail on the existing rail lines within the rail corridor. The reduction in cost by using the rail corridor is estimated by highly experienced professionals at a minima saving of \$50 million.
5. I submit that if Light Rail were to be constructed in Hunter Street the cost would be much greater (as stated above), the time for construction

would take several years, and the consequent impact on existing businesses operating in Hunter and Scott Streets would be extreme. It is considered by some businesses that the impact would be more severe than the 1989 earthquake and that many would close and go out of business. These main shopping streets and businesses are only 50 metres away from the present rail corridor. It would be quite straightforward with good urban design to make the existing heavy rail corridor an attractive and alive Light Rail corridor with small business opportunities around each stop. The time to commence the first stage of a Light Rail system in the existing corridor could be as little as several months with thorough planning.

6. I submit that if Light Rail were to operate in Hunter and Scott Streets the traffic and pedestrian issues would be considerable. No traffic analysis has been carried out, no allowance for goods servicing of the existing businesses has been made, no examination of passenger/pedestrian safety at LRT stops has been made. I submit that there will be a much greater risk of passenger injury from vehicular traffic if the LRT were in the traffic streets than if the LRT were in the existing rail corridor, where passengers do not have to manage multiple vehicle conflicts simultaneously.

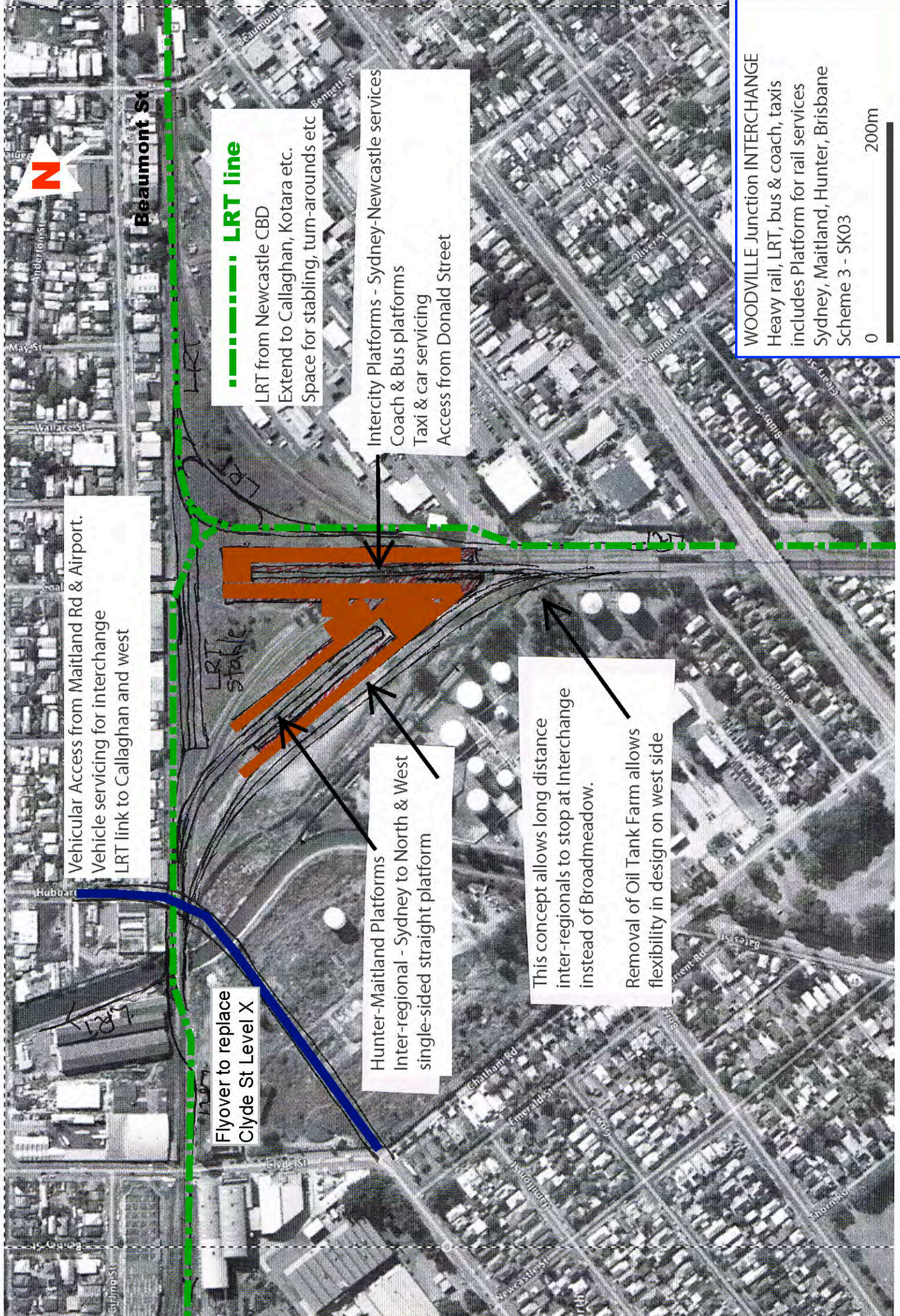
7. I submit that the professional assessment made by the departments involved has been over-ruled by considerations other than good urban and transport planning and that these other considerations are connected with property development, whether by private interests or by the government land agent. Many of the above points of submission were made at public presentations to officers of the State Government agencies responsible for the planning work and the REF. Many of these points were agreed with by these officers, informally and verbally, at these presentations. The statements made by them indicate that their technical and professional opinions have been over-ruled by senior management. I have several witnesses to these statements.

I make this submission with three authorities: I am a long time resident of Newcastle; I have worked pro-bono for the last three years with a small group of professional citizens concerned for the urban and transport development of this city and whose work has been supported by Fairfax and The Newcastle Herald (www.hipti.org.au) ; and I am a highly experienced professional transport engineer with wide experience in urban and transport planning and with costs and the process required to implement works such as are contemplated and are needed.

Yours sincerely

David Thomas Stewart F.I.E.Aust.

25 October 2014



Beaumont St

LRT line

LRT from Newcastle CBD
Extend to Callaghan, Kotara etc.
Space for stabling, turn-arounds etc

Intercity Platforms - Sydney-Newcastle services
Coach & Bus platforms
Taxi & car servicing
Access from Donald Street

Vehicular Access from Maitland Rd & Airport.
Vehicle servicing for interchange
LRT link to Callaghan and west

Flyover to replace
Clyde St Level X

Hunter-Maitland Platforms
Inter-regional - Sydney to North & West
single-sided straight platform

This concept allows long distance
inter-regionals to stop at Interchange
instead of Broadmeadow.

Removal of Oil Tank Farm allows
flexibility in design on west side

WOODVILLE JUNCTION INTERCHANGE
Heavy rail, LRT, bus & coach, taxis
includes Platform for rail services
Sydney, Maitland, Hunter, Brisbane
Scheme 3 - SK03

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