

**Submission
No 222**

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

Name: Mr Cecil Jones

Date received: 24/10/2014

Re The Newcastle line-

Before 1950 I mostly went by double-decker bus to Hunter Street and then by Tram to Newcastle Boys High School at Waratah and home on a special School Train (which ran for many years) in the afternoon.

The Tram traffic in Hunter Street was mostly chaotic with constant delays of road traffic at tram stops, when the Trams moved the other traffic would speed-up to be ahead of the Tram at the next stop. Whenever possible to avoid the Trams most people would travel via Wharf Road, which is

now so cluttered that one can only meander to or from various points.

Not many local people had motor vehicles (now some families have two or more).

Change of shifts at the Industries would see rows of bicycles and Private Buses to and from inner Newcastle and beyond, some would use Trains from Hamilton to and from various locations.

My late Parents and most of their friends were pleased when the Trams stopped running, even though we had road chaos while the infrastructure was removed. Now they want to give us utter chaos again, especially gridlock with the number of vehicles now in the local area.

The decision to cut the Newcastle Line is obviously being made completely ignorant of normal Logical Transport Operational Procedures. It is with respect I point out that The Planning and Transport Ministers appear to not have proper qualifications of expertise in these areas and are accepting very shoddy and stupid advice from People who certainly need therapy in very basic Railway Working.

This trend started in the late 90's when the Railways stopped employing Junior Employees and commenced employing Adults with no previous rail experience.

The recent NRMA survey was testament to this with mention of closed stations with no available facilities and people too scared to travel on some services.

As a retired Railway employee of 48 years service and member of a Rail Heritage Group and having been accredited for Theory and Practical Railway Working

What concerns me:-

When Newcastle is hopelessly gridlocked and if there is an emergency in inner Newcastle, such as a fire in a high-rise unit or someone has a heart attack and needs a heart machine

– **How will Emergency Services gain rapid access ?**

We had an overhead pedestrian bridge to Honeysuckle near Worth Place, which was taken down and not replaced when the work commenced.

The apparent closing of the Railway Street level crossing is beyond common logic as it has always been a direct quick access to and from Hamilton and Maitland Road. I worked this location with the mechanical equipment and later remotely from Wickham, whenever we could not use this crossing Hannell Street would be gridlocked back to Elizabeth Street Tighes Hill.

Steel Street could be an over or under crossing, while Civic could be upgraded with lifts, with the expected number of students etc why not have extended walkways over and above across Hunter Street to the Law Courts and Uni. Facilities.

Some people complain of seeing empty trains. but do not realise that this is just Normal Train Working, when some trains work to and from the Depot at Broadmeadow to decant toilets etc.

The outer Areas need to retain our direct transport to CBD through to Newcastle Station, one wonders what other corruption deals have not yet been uncovered, when the Premier and others are so adamant to continue and not listen to Logic **What have they to hide?**

Could You please arrange for all Plans for closure to be held over until all matters are complete.

Thank You

Cecil Jones

Retired Railway Training Officer