

**Submission
No 128**

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

Name: Mr Peter Morris

Date received: 22/10/2014

The Director, Select Committee on the Planning Process in
Newcastle and the Broader Hunter Region
Parliament House
Macquarie St, Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

It is with great concern over recent proposals and decisions concerning Newcastle and Lake Macquarie that I lodge this submission. The time frames of some of the issues involved extends a long way back, but they all have recently come to crucial stages and are implicated in illegal donations as revealed by ICAC's Operation Spicer.

The Newcastle rail line has long been under threat because it is essentially the only developable land in the CBD that is not undermined. This has made it a target for developers and the needs of the travelling public have been overridden. It would be folly to remove the direct rail connection to the city under any circumstances, but even more so with the imminent opening of a new legal precinct and a new university campus. There is now a compelling need for the rail line to remain, without the serious impediment of the mode change proposed for Wickham.

The tower buildings proposed jointly by GPT and Urbangrowth NSW are inconsistent with existing plans to retain the character of eastern Newcastle and would detract from the viability or timing of plans for more intensive development of the west end. Urbangrowth's roles as both proponent and consent authority are contrary to good planning process and against the best interests of the community.

The contentious development at Whitebridge is clearly tainted by the illegal acts exposed by ICAC and in many ways would be an overdevelopment of the site.

All three of these issues have sparked unprecedented unrest with in the community and they are all tainted by corrupt behavior or suspect planning processes. I am also confident that other proposals would be similarly affected.

It is my earnest request to the Committee that all developments likely to have been unduly influenced by prop-development forces are suspended permanently and similar proposals only commence afresh at a future date when a consultative process free of corruption can be assured.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Morris