

Submission
No 180

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 23/10/2014

Partially Confidential

Planning undertaken by Newcastle City Council in restructuring the cultural institutions in the city, leaving the Art Gallery without a director needs to be investigated. The dismissal of the Art Gallery Director was protracted (November 2013 to August 2014) and the findings of the Council's investigating body have never been revealed to the community. What role did the disgraced former Lord Mayor play in the dismissal? What role does the General Manager (appointed by the Lord Mayor) continue to play in sullyng the reputation of the former Art Gallery Director and thwarting the role of the Art Gallery Foundation? The General Manager's restructure has resulted in the Art Gallery being managed by the city's newly appointed Cultural Director who has no experience in running an art gallery or managing a significant collection. The Art Gallery Foundation has not been able to conduct its business of raising funds to acquire works for the collection due to the General Manager's interference. What role did the former Lord Mayor play in influencing the State Government to not support the Art Gallery building redevelopment which was well on the way? Former MP for Newcastle, Tim Owen mentioned the redevelopment in his parliamentary maiden speech. A contribution from the State would have matched the \$7m allocated in September 2011 by the Federal Government. Why were the Federal funds returned by the Lord Mayor May 2014 when the Council was holding \$6m for the redevelopment and the community has contributed \$1.4m?