

**Submission
No 93**

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

Name: Mr Jerry Harris

Date received: 20/10/2014

To the director & committee of the state inquiry into Newcastle development and planning,

I am a 22 year old social work student at the university of Newcastle & Newcastle inner city resident. The recent planning decision to remove Wickham, Civic & Newcastle stations gravely concerns me. Firstly I should mention myself and family are regular users of the train line. I myself use the rail to get to both work (in Hamilton) and university. My younger brother uses the line to get to his school in Maitland and in addition to this whenever my family travels inter state or country we use the rail to travel to Sydney airport. As you can see the rail serves an important part in my families life. Not only do I know people who live locally to me who utilize the rail there is also a huge amount of people from Newcastle's outer suburbs and adjoining towns such as Maitland who regularly use the train. During the week hundreds, if not thousands of people use the rail to travel into the city for work or school I know this because of the huge amount of people I personally see on carriages on my journey. During the weekends, especially during summer, thousands use the train into Newcastle to access the beach and other inner city amenities. For many the Dungog, Telarah and Central Coast lines provide the only direct link to a beach.

Disregarding even all of this, my biggest concern is for the major inner city campus the University of Newcastle plans to construct in the very near future. The university site sits directly opposite Civic station (one station before Newcastle) and UoN estimates at any one time up to 3000 students and teachers could occupy the building. With VERY few allocated parking spaces on premises most people who travel by car to the university (which is the majority of students) will be forced to park on city streets already stretched to the limits by residents and workers. It is simply absurd to remove a direct transport link between the city campus and UoN's main campus in Newcastle which is only a mere 12 minute commute between each other.

The point I am trying to convey is how essential Newcastle train line is to the city, the people responsible for lobbying the state government to remove the line have private development interests in the area (for example our former mayor Jeff McCloy who had to resign from office after being caught up in corruption scandals, owns significant sites opposite the train line), please don't allow the state government to remove the rail line at significant cost when there is far more useful and desperately needed projects that need funding in Newcastle.

Sincerely,
Jerry Harris