

**Submission
No 173**

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

Name: Mr Kerry Bowen

Date received: 23/10/2014

Reverend the Hon Fred Nile MLC

Chair

Select Committee on the Planning Process in Newcastle and the Broader Hunter Region, NSW
Legislative Council

Dear Rev Nile

The word is about that the King Edward Headland Reserve (KEHR), which is situated a few hundred metres from the Newcastle Central Business District, is likely to fall into the hands of developers following what is said to have been a less than transparent process leading to a change in zoning to allow the construction of a function centre and car park at this location.

The KEHR is situated adjacent to King Edward Park, which is a popular gathering place for locals and visitors alike, and construction of a car park and function centre in this very special location would destroy its peaceful ambience and be yet another blot on the cityscape. A somewhat similar development at Fort Scratchley was allowed to proceed several years ago; this impacted adversely on the unique character of the Fort Scratchley precinct.

Given that your Select Committee on the Planning Process in Newcastle and the Broader Hunter Region will evaluate the role of various planning bodies in the consideration and assessment of the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy, amongst other matters, I respectfully request that your Committee evaluate and pass judgement on the overall probity of the KEHR re-zoning decision. Newcastle does not need a repetition of the Fort Scratchley planning fiasco.

In passing, it is worth noting that the current imbroglio over recent inappropriate planning decisions signed off by Macquarie Street, ostensibly on behalf of the people of Newcastle could lead to the natives getting restless. Talk of secession is once again getting an airing in the local press, with people here remembering that the 1967 referendum addressing the proposed breakaway of Northern NSW was only narrowly defeated. To paraphrase what Mark Twain may have said: history may not always repeat, but it may rhyme.

Yours faithfully

Kerry Bowen