

**Submission
No 320**

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially Confidential

SUBMISSION INTO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY INQUIRY ON THE PLANNING PROCESS IN NEWCASTLE .

For attention of the Chair: Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile MLC Christian Democratic Party

This submission is mainly related to the developments in the east end and the truncation of the railway.

One must ask the question, what is the haste, when the proposed infrastructure that is to replace it not be ready for another suggested 2 years. Why the backflip from the previous labor decision to retain the rail. I suppose look at the process and evidence produced in ICAC to lead you down the path of why and who the players involved at the time and what or who was to gain .

POINT 1: The minister for the Hunter Miss Berejiklian has stated the decision to truncate the rail was not a transport decision but was about rejuvenation of the CBD. One of the core cries of the cut the rail brigade ,To Open up the water front to connect revitalise hunter street. Well firstly, Honeysuckle blocked the waterfront and has not really regenerated Hunter street. And removal of the heavy rail has been viewed highly suitable for development with no subsidence issues unlike other parts of the town. Again blocking access to the waterfront. These assertions have not been denied premier Baird of keeping Highrise from the rail corridor. Again Who was to gain from the removal of the line costing in excess of \$340million.. Once again look at the precedents from ICAC spicer and credo on the money spent and lengths gone to by certain peoples to create an opportunity for very large sum of money on the waterfront.

POINT 2: Now to the other reason for removal, the traffic congestion by the level crossing. SO think of the additional car traffic and bus traffic to congest when the train line is truncated compared to the wait at a railway crossing, The money spent on ripping up the rail would be much better spent addressing the corridor issue in other sections of the city like Adams town crossing which has much longer wait times and interruption's then Wickham.

Where is the logic in that.. Well it appears there is none, just an ideological decision not based on fact to suit a select few.

One of the main reasons to implement the Newcastle bus free zone was to reduce traffic congestion and commuter car use into Newcastle. SO let's remove the train line which brings in people to the cbd from

upper hunter, Central coast and other parts along the line into the Newcastle cbd .Then think of the 5000 Plus University students going into the heart of the cbd via civic Station.

But no!! Let's disenfranchise and inconvenience commuters, students, surfer's travellers and seniors who utilise this wonderful service. Changing to buses will also be especially problematic for wheelchair users, parents with prams, music students with bulky instruments, surfers (especially young people from up in the Hunter Valley) who use the service to get to Newcastle beach, blind and vision impaired people, and users who are older and less mobile. WHY ?, surely no beaureucrat would suggest that , sounds reminiscent of the changes cabinet minutes that became transparent during icac Credo. Let's change it we are the government and we have to pay the piper.

From a transport planning perspective this question is crucial- you don't make people change from rail to another mode of transport unless it is absolutely necessary because doing so erodes the key advantage of rail – which is that it is fast and direct.

Absolute lunacy, with all these people this mass transport direct to the cbd. There is no room at the Wickham terminus for buses to meet passengers; they will have to board elsewhere. What this means is that (especially during the crucial morning and afternoon peaks), shifting from rail to bus for the last leg of a journey into the city will be a nightmare.

A 2010 report into cutting the line at Wickham by consultants AECOM projected that the new terminus would cost between \$375million and \$505million. This is before additional buses (including drivers, cleaning etc) and associated infrastructure (like a bus terminal adjacent to the new station) are taken into account.

Potential road bypasses to cope with altered and stifled traffic flows would cost more again, and then there is the \$58million in urban renewal projects outlined in the Governments reports on top of it all. Supposedly the \$120million pledged so far by the NSW Government will be used to leverage some even larger amount of money from the Federal Government; the theory being that once this money is spent cutting the line the private sector will then go on a construction frenzy

POINT 3: How does removing this vital piece of infrastructure effectively assist NEWCASTLE cbd Progress and go forward. You put in limited buses for 24 mths whilst a light rail would mainly following the cut line. Trains wouldn't be cut at Redfern so why cut the line at Broadmeadow and then?

Newcastle has natural and built historical assets, the promotion of this city with its gorgeous beaches, its heritage buildings and efficient intercity rail connection is abysmal. It

The closure of the Newcastle rail line at Broadmeadow from Boxing Day is a hindrance not a help, it does nothing to encourage public transport use, will not rejuvenate the cbd and will not reduce congestion it just doesn't make sense. What is behind such an ill thought out decision?

What is the connection between the chamber of commerce who released the report "Newcastle Central a real solution 2012" which promoted removal? People within the Newcastle Alliance were mentioned in ICAC spicer and credo in relation to supporting the liberal candidate for Newcastle. ,

OPERATION SPICER – PUBLIC INQUIRY

In Operation Spicer the commission investigated allegations of corrupt conduct involving:

- h) whether members of Parliament, including Christopher Hartcher MP and Michael Gallacher MLC, solicited and received donations from prohibited donors for use in the Liberal Party 2011 State election campaign, including in the seat of Newcastle;
- (g) whether parties and persons, including Buildev Pty Limited, Nathan Tinkler, Darren Williams, David Sharpe, Jeff McCloy and Hilton Grugeon improperly sought to influence certain members of Parliament by making donations during the 2011 State election campaign;
- i) the circumstances in which two campaigns were conducted against the sitting member of the seat of Newcastle, Jodi McKay MP, including the publication and distribution of misleading information, and whether certain persons were involved in organising, or attempting to organise, and/or funding those campaigns, including Joseph Tripodi MP, Anne Wills, Nathan Tinkler, Darren Williams, David Sharpe and members of the Newcastle Alliance;

Please accept my submission into this inquiry

Yours Sincerely