

**Submission
No 346**

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

Name: Mr Eric Manning

Date received: 31/10/2014

Select Committee on the Planning Process in Newcastle and the Broader Hunter Region

2. The committee is to consider the role of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, Newcastle City Council, UrbanGrowth NSW, Lake Macquarie Council, and the Hunter Development Corporation:

When I wrote letters last July to Pru Goward and Tim Owen, I found a complicated overlap of GPT, UrbanGrowth NSW, the Minister for Planning, and the Member for Newcastle. Pru Goward's informative reply came from her Executive Director, Housing and Employment Delivery. He wanted me to make any further enquiries to Urban Renewal.

These names invite confusion: Urban Renewal, Urban Growth NSW, and GPT/UrbanGrowth.

The roles of the five authorities must overlap, but could be made clearer.

(a) State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Amendment (Newcastle City Centre) 2014

I would much prefer to see building heights remain as they were in the SEPP of 2012. The tall towers which are now permitted at GPT locations are not the city I want to live in. They will lead to a domino effect; we will have our own Gold Coast. Before long the city centre will not be renewed, it will be replaced with something out of keeping with the landscape.

Proposed amendment to Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012, Part 2.3.1 Heights of Buildings:

Corner of Perkins and King St should stay at 24 metres

Midblock Wolfe Street between Hunter and King should stay at 30 metres

Corner of King Street and Newcomen Street should stay at 30 metres.

(b) the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy

The six 'investment objectives' of the Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy are motherhood statements, written in words we are sure to agree with. To find the details, building heights and their effects for example, takes some burrowing. It is good to 'exhibit' plans and receive submissions; social media and TV would reach more people.

(e) The decision to terminate the Newcastle rail line at Wickham and any proposal to construct light rail including along Hunter and Scott Streets.

The decision to cut off the railway into Newcastle city centre and Newcastle Station amounts to destroying a public asset, akin to vandalism. The Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy claims to support better connections, yet is scrapping the railway that runs directly into the city centre, providing fast connectivity with Maitland, Gosford and Sydney. A light rail would add a delay and make an obstacle, especially for the disadvantaged, at an interchange yet to be built. The proposed light rail would be no substitute, and would be an intrusion and an expense.

Submitted by Eric Manning