

# PRE-ELECTION PUBLIC MEETING

TO HEAR ABOUT AND DISCUSS THE FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTENT OF THE  
**FINAL REPORT OF THE NSW PARLIAMENTARY  
INQUIRY INTO NEWCASTLE PLANNING MATTERS**



PLACE: **Newcastle City Hall**

DATE: **Monday 16 March**

TIME: **7- 9pm**

## **SPEAKERS:**

**David Shoebridge, MLC (Greens)**

Deputy Chair of Inquiry Committee

**Lynda Voltz, MLC (Labor)**

Inquiry Committee member

### **Issues raised by Inquiry:**

- rail line
- UrbanGrowth/GPT development
- King Edward Park
- Art Gallery
- planning and conduct

Authorised by Margaret Henry,  
19/10 Grey St, Wickham 2293

**Save Our Rail**  
NSW inc. 'improve' not remove!

**Hunter Concerned Citizens**

## **Key Recommendations and Findings of the NSW Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Planning Processes in Newcastle and the Broader Hunter Region**

*The Committee's Final Report (released on 3 March) recommended that:*

- the NSW Government immediately reinstate rail services that have ceased and infrastructure that has been removed from the Newcastle heavy rail line,
- the NSW government lower height controls in Newcastle's East End to 27 metres and refer any development application for the Newcastle East End site to the NSW Planning and Assessment Commission for determination,
- the NSW Government clearly separate the Department of Planning and Environment (which is responsible for regulating the planning and development system) and UrbanGrowth NSW (which is the state government's developer arm),
- the NSW Government acknowledge Newcastle City Council as the principal planning authority for planning in Newcastle, and give the council planning authority over all land in Newcastle city, including land that is currently owned and/or managed by the Hunter Development Corporation (HDC), and
- the HDC Board immediately ensure that none of its employees are materially involved in decision making where they have a conflict of interest, and that the Board immediately apply the NSW Planning and Infrastructure Conflicts of Interest Policy and Guidelines, and that the Minister for Planning and Environment advise what steps will be taken to ensure that the HDC has addressed conflicts of interest in its operations.

*The report also:*

- found that HDC General Manager Bob Hawes had "a significant and ongoing conflict of interest in being a landowner at Wickham and having a managerial role in the NSW Government's decision to truncate the Newcastle rail line at Wickham, a decision from which Mr Hawes stands to financially benefit",
- found that the HDC had "failed to adequately address Mr Hawes' conflict of interest, and this failure had damaged public confidence in the integrity of the Corporation and public decision making in Newcastle and the broader Hunter region",
- strongly reiterated the committee's earlier conclusion that "the truncation of rail services to Newcastle should not have proceeded on Boxing Day 2014", and
- repeated the committee's concern that the decision to cut the rail line was "based upon a flawed cost benefit analysis, without an adequate business case" and was implemented before the start of construction of the proposed light rail replacement, which has "no defined completion date".

The Committee's findings, recommendations and full report can be downloaded from the committee's website at: <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/newcastleplanning>.