

Newcastle rail plan favours developers over commuters

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Cabinet documents revealed today prove that the NSW Government's plan for the Newcastle rail line isn't in the best interests of commuters.

The Cabinet documents show that the State Government ignored Transport for NSW's suggested plan for the Newcastle rail line, instead choosing a slower, more expensive system preferred by property developers.

Rail, Tram and Bus Union NSW Secretary Alex Claassens said the Government owes the community an explanation as to why it has not only set the region's public transport system back decades, but also why it has cost the community an additional \$100million to do so.

"The NSW Government needs to reveal to the community exactly why it ignored its own expert advice and instead chose a plan that will cost us millions and result in significantly slower commutes," Mr Claassens.

"While most cities around the world are working to improve their public transport systems, the NSW Government is ripping Newcastle's up.

"Newcastle deserves a world-class rail system, but the plan the NSW Government has delivered for the area is nowhere near that.

"It's disgraceful that the desires of property developers would be put ahead of the public transport needs of the region.

"Regional communities across Australia are crying out for the kind of rail infrastructure Newcastle was lucky enough to have - a heavy rail line that takes you right into the heart of the city. It's unbelievable that the Government has been willing to throw that away.

"These documents reveal that the NSW Government's plans for the Newcastle rail line aren't about improving customer service at all. The truth is that customer service has suffered as a result of this move."