

Tasmanian Legislative Council Inquiry North East Rail Corridor

The Inquiry Secretary

Legislative Council Tasmania

This submission argues for the valuation of the social capital gain of utilising and protecting the railway and heritage for the future pleasure and use of both residents, visitors and day trippers. I leave it to others to argue the feasibility and estimated costs and the environmental/ engineering aspects of a project that could be staged to encompass a journey from Launceston to Scottsdale.

The railway enthusiasts and volunteers' organisations have the skills and organisational capacity to run such a project and to contribute to the financing. Bridestowe Lavender Estate is a keen supporter of the concept, as is many in the community in Dorset who can appreciate the unique offering of a heritage railway which would create the point of difference in offerings compared to other municipalities. Kentish, Latrobe and Break a Day are already investing in bike trails and cannot offer the special adventure of a train trip. The fact that the Launceston city Council is prepared to entertain the support of such a project does make the option a possibility. We would hope that a time frame for the development can be put into place. The corridor is owned by the state and should remain in the hands of the state and the railway left intact.

1. Bridestowe Estate is a tourist icon, attracting many visitors and would welcome being an integral part of a railway tourist venture. The village of Nabowla with its readymade platform and line would be a natural stopping point where people could be shuttle bussed to the Estate.
2. The project of the train and railway would enhance the experience of visiting vineyards, the Military Museum in Scottsdale, the Lavender Farm, picnics and walks at Lilydale Falls. Picnic trains with themes and linked to special arts events such as the Steam Punk Festival (now to be located at the Inveresk Industrial Precinct) and the Summer MOFO would expand our tourist offerings. The Junction Festival (Launceston) which currently flows onto the West Tamar Intertwined Festival could flow into the North East with entertainment programs and arts events to

be experienced. As a slow train travelling through countryside to Scottsdale there are historical, heritage and natural features that can be enjoyed such as Lilydale Falls, The Tunnel and the old Scottsdale Railway Station. These opportunities and should not be lost. A passenger light rail is an inclusive and different way to travel. It is a unique adventure where all ages and abilities can participate.

3. I have spoken to residents along the line and they cannot understand why you would rip up a railway. They mourn for their railway as many of their fathers and grandfathers had built and maintained the line. This is not merely a nostalgia for the past, it is a living breathing continuity of the story of Tasmania. This little-known history can be enhanced and developed and celebrated through the physical presence of a train. It would be the catalyst for music, arts and theatre. The community itself will benefit from the acknowledgement of past. They have stories to tell and this rich oral history is yet to be tapped.
4. I was surprised that people living on farms in the hills of Ringarooma recognise the value of a train to Scottsdale. They want the train. They understand the loss of the line from Scottsdale to Tulendeena, and accept that as inevitable, but they do not accept the loss of a line from one town (Launceston) to another town (Scottsdale) with all its tourist potential for greater visitation.

There are few old fashioned pleasures in the world.....a train ride with others is one of them. Slowing down time is another. Let's not strip it away for an experience that can be had in other places in the world. Bike trails can be replicated. A train line, once it is gone it will never come back.

Your sincerely,

Edwina Powell