

Allison Waddington

From: ner
Subject: FW: North East Rail Corridor Enquiry

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 26 October 2018 10:29 AM
To: Council
Subject: North East Rail Corridor Enquiry

The Secretary
Legislative Council Rail Corridor Enquiry

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a Tasmanian resident and a person who has ridden along a number of rail trails and travelled in a number of heritage rail operations, I would like to make a contribution in support of converting the disused NE rail corridor to a rail trail.

My partner and I have enjoyed riding on several rail trails in Victoria, including the High Country trail and the Murray to the Mountains trail. In New Zealand we have ridden on some rail trails, and in Tasmania we have ridden on the current short stretch out of Scottsdale. In Hobart we regularly use the InterCity Cycleway (which is actually a rail trail). We have also experienced a number of heritage rail rides, including the Abt railway in Queenstown and the PichiRichi railway in Quorn, South Australia.

We can confirm how busy and popular the Victorian and NZ rail trails are. They are a real destination and drawcard for many tourists, from all countries. Getting some pleasant exercise while enjoying scenes of mountains and pastures, and being able to stop regularly for locally produced wines, devonshire teas, souvenirs, and meals, is a totally enjoyable way to holiday.

We observed many local growers, artisans and small towns being energised and reinvigorated by the additional slow moving tourist trails. People on bike stop more often, spend more on food, drink, clothes and accommodation, and interact more with the locals. It is much more social and intensive than car-based tourism. A rail trail between Lilydale and Scottsdale will prove a great boon for the farmers and (current and potential) local businesses along the route.

It is also great to work off some of the kilojoules between food stops! In fact I have found that the only way to avoid putting on weight when I travel is to include a daily dose of bike riding. When more people try this and pass the word on, the popularity of rail trails will only increase.

I ride often with groups of friends, and can guarantee that once the NE rail trail is built, we will be organising regular trips to the north to enjoy the rural beauty and to sample the local delicacies. It will be an experience that we will be able to enjoy at different times of the year, and we will always get personal physical and mental health rewards from adding our own effort to helping to create our own holiday.

By comparison, I wouldn't go out of my way for a heritage rail ride. At the best of times (for example the Tasmanian Abt railway is excellent), it is something most people would only do once. Most heritage rail efforts have the air of dusty desperation, run by passionate (but ageing) volunteers, and always looking for assistance.

Thanks for the opportunity to have some input to this important issue.

Yours sincerely

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