

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Attention: Lisa Mitchell

Level 2, Brotherson House  
Gate B103, Penrhyn Road  
Port Botany, NSW 2036 Australia  
**T** 1300 922 524  
**F** 1300 440 198  
**E** [enquiries@nswports.com.au](mailto:enquiries@nswports.com.au)  
**W** [nswports.com.au](http://nswports.com.au)

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## **Re: Cabramatta Rail Loop – SSI-9186**

Thank you for providing NSW Ports with the opportunity to comment on State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) application – SSI-9186 for the construction and operation of a passing loop on the eastern side of the Southern Sydney Freight Line (SSFL) between Cabramatta Station and Warwick Farm Station. NSW Ports is responsible for managing the port and freight assets of Port Botany, Port Kembla, the Cooks River Intermodal Terminal and the Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre. These assets, along with the efficient movement of freight to and from these assets, are critical to the future economic growth, liveability, productivity and sustainability of New South Wales.

NSW Ports has reviewed the documentation related to the SSI application and is supportive of the proposal.

### The Importance of the Cabramatta Rail Loop

The growth of containers on rail is a key objective in *Navigating the Future*, NSW Ports' 30 Year Master Plan, to sustainably cater for the forecast trade growth. Maximising the transport of containers by rail between Port Botany and intermodal terminals is essential for efficient and sustainable container distribution throughout Sydney. NSW Ports have set a target to move three million TEU per year by rail by 2045 – around 40 per cent of forecast container volumes. To achieve this target critical rail infrastructure projects such as the Cabramatta Rail Loop and the Botany Rail Duplication need to be completed to improve the efficiency and capacity of the freight rail network.

The Cabramatta Rail Loop is situated on the dedicated freight rail line between Port Botany and the Moorebank Intermodal Terminal. With approval to handle 1.05 million TEU of import / export freight, efficient freight rail access to and from Moorebank is critical to achieving the aforementioned NSW Ports freight rail target.

It is estimated that once the Cabramatta Rail Loop project is operational, there will be an increase in the operational capacity of freight train movements from 48 up to 72 per day. The increase in available train movements will significantly improve the freight logistics supply chain via rail which is essential for efficiently moving the growing NSW freight task.

The Cabramatta Rail Loop project will not only benefit rail movements to and from Port Botany and intermodal terminals throughout Sydney such as Moorebank, but will also improve the freight rail connections to and from Port Kembla.

Port Kembla is one of NSW's key trade gateways and is already approved for development as a container terminal and is well located to service the growing population of Greater Sydney. Port Kembla is the southern gateway to Sydney. Rail is an important part of existing and future operations at Port Kembla. Rail is utilised for almost all commodities that are imported and exported through the Port. Currently, rail access between Port Kembla and Sydney is via the shared South Coast and T4 Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra Lines. Alternatively, access from Port Kembla to the west is via the Moss Vale to Unanderra rail line.

NSW Ports advocates for the construction of the Maldon-Dombarton rail line in order to expand existing rail service capability to Port Kembla. In addition, it will provide a more direct connection between the Port and West and Southwest Sydney. The Cabramatta Rail Loop is considered an important piece of infrastructure which will integrate with and benefit the future Maldon-Dombarton rail line. However, in order to maximise freight rail efficiency along the Moss Vale to Unanderra rail line more passing loops are required.

Proactively planning for the future of the NSW freight task is essential for growing the capacity of freight on rail. Investment in dedicated freight corridors will allow a more effective freight and logistics network.

NSW Ports is at the forefront of freight rail connectivity and announced in November 2018 an investment to boost rail capacity at Port Botany. Improving 'on-dock' rail infrastructure at Port Botany at each of the three container terminals through a staged investment will improve the rail connectivity of Port Botany to metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW. Upgrades to existing freight rail networks are required to meet the rail freight demand and the Cabramatta Rail Loop forms an important piece of infrastructure which will assist in rail playing a more significant role in freight transport.

The Greater Sydney Commissions regional plan, *A Metropolis of Three Cities* presents a vision and innovative actions for managing Greater Sydney's growth. The plan was prepared concurrently with the *Future Transport 2056* Strategy and the State Infrastructure Strategy, aligning land use, transport and infrastructure planning and details strategies for Greater Sydney's freight and logistics networks to ensure it is efficient throughout Greater Sydney. The plan identifies the current constraints of rail base freight movements which are restricted where networks are shared with passenger services. The plan states:

*There is an increasing importance placed on 24/7 supply chain operations to maintain Greater Sydney's global competitiveness. This forecast increase in the movement of goods will require a freight network that can support safe, efficient and reliable journeys between centres, freight precincts, trade gateways and intermodal terminals across Greater Sydney.*

The Cabramatta Rail Loop project optimises the efficiency and effectiveness of freight travelling to and from ports and intermodals on this section of the freight rail network. Further consideration should be given to additional passing loops and infrastructure along the freight rail network throughout Greater Sydney to improve the capacity of freight transported along the rail network.

NSW Ports supports proposals of this nature which seek to facilitate freight rail infrastructure and development.

If you would like to discuss this submission further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 9316 1151 or [adriane.whiley@nswports.com.au](mailto:adriane.whiley@nswports.com.au).

Yours sincerely,



Adriane Whiley  
**Planning Officer**