



24 June 2015

Ms C McNally
Secretary
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Attention: Mr A Beattie

Dear Ms McNally

**State Significant Development – SIMTA Stage 1 – Intermodal Terminal and Rail
Connection Environmental Impact
Your Ref: SSD 6766**

I refer to the Department's letter of 26 May 2015 inviting Council to comment on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Stage 1 of the proposed SIMTA Intermodal Terminal at Moorebank. As you will recall, Council previously provided your Department with a submission setting out issues Council considered need to be addressed in any EIS for Stage 1 of the proposal.

The EIS has been examined in light of those issues. The results of that Review are summarised below and a number of recommendations made for the consideration of your Department in its further consideration of the proposal.

**ISSUE 1 – NEED FOR A COMBINED MASTERPLAN AND RATIONALISATION OF DUAL
TERMINAL OPERATION**

The MIC and SIMTA Terminals have been proposed as separate entities, pursuing separate approval pathways. In December 2014 it was announced by the Moorebank Intermodal Company (the Applicant for the MIC Proposal) that MIC and SIMTA had reached an agreement to develop the two sites as a whole of precinct strategy. This is subject to a number of conditions precedent and approval by the Boards of Qube and Aurizon and the Commonwealth Government. Council understands that the terms of this agreement have yet to be satisfied.

It appears that under this agreement, MIC will continue to seek Concept Approval for its proposal west of Moorebank Avenue while SIMTA will be responsible for obtaining all other approvals required to build all stages of the project. However, SIMTA has noted that the two projects are considered separate until such time as the terms of the agreement are satisfied. In light of this situation, the SIMTA Stage 1 Proposal was assessed as a standalone proposal.

COMMENT

Council is encouraged that co-ordinated construction and operation of the two Terminals appears to be contemplated. However, it appears that this arrangement had not been finalised as at the date the relevant EIS materials were prepared.

It is considered that a satisfactory joint development and operation arrangement should be put in place as a condition of any approval to ensure appropriate and co-ordinated construction and operation can occur.

It is noted that both MIC and SIMTA proponents envisaged their individual terminals would ultimately cater for all container demand arising from rail transport out of Port Botany. Accordingly, with a joint operation there would appear to be two capacity related risks – either both terminals are developed to less than full capacity and operate at a sub-optimal level (as appears to be contemplated by SIMTA) with associated concerns over environmental performance and impact on the surrounding area OR the precinct wide operation would enable double the container capacity to be accommodated, also with potential concerns over greater impacts on the surrounding area.

This issue should be addressed in any joint development and operation arrangement. Whilst the latter risk (additional capacity) could, and should, be controlled via appropriate approval conditions, the down side risk is only likely to be mitigated by appropriate investment and management strategies by the operator(s).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 The requirement for a satisfactory joint development and operation arrangement be imposed as a condition of any approval to ensure appropriate and co-ordinated construction and operation can occur.
- 2 Any approval for either or both the MIC and SIMTA Terminals be subject to a condition to the effect that the total operational capacity of the Terminals, when combined, does not exceed the maximum capacity constraint as identified and assessed in the EIS material for each facility.

ISSUE 2 – TIMING OF RAIL ACCESS CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION

The Stage 1 proposal includes construction of the rail link into the SIMTA site. In response to Council's concern over the commencement of Terminal operations in advance of an operational rail link, SIMTA has indicated there is no scenario under which the terminal would operate without the Rail link being completed.

COMMENT

It is pleasing that Council's concern has been acknowledged.

Nevertheless, it is considered that, should Project Approval be granted, conditions should be imposed to require that Terminal Operations cannot commence unless and until appropriate rail access has been constructed and is operational.

RECOMMENDATION

- 3 Any approval be subject to conditions preventing commencement of Terminal operations unless and until appropriate rail access has been constructed and is operational.

ISSUE 3 – TRAFFIC IMPACTS, PARTICULARLY ON CAMBRIDGE AVENUE AND ASSOCIATED ROADS

The EIS specifically examined the potential impact of the Stage 1 proposal on Cambridge Avenue, as sought by Council.

The EIS indicates that no heavy traffic will use Cambridge Avenue during the operation of the SIMTA Terminal. The Terminal design will ensure that all heavy traffic will enter and or leave the SIMTA site via Moorebank Avenue to and from the north as a result of the intersection configuration.

The EIS also indicates that, in the event of traffic incidents blocking the M5/Moorebank Avenue Interchange, heavy vehicles would be queued on site so obviating the need to travel south to use Cambridge Avenue.

The EIS indicates, however, that (limited) construction related traffic will use Cambridge Avenue. In this regard, Council has expressed its concern over the safety of Cambridge Avenue, and particularly the causeway.

The EIS estimates that a minor proportion (about 5%) of staff and visitor vehicles (light traffic) will use Cambridge Avenue to access the site, involving an increase of less than 1% in traffic loads on that route. This traffic will access the site via a different intersection to that to be used by heavy vehicles.

COMMENT

It is pleasing that Council's concern has been acknowledged.

To ensure that only light traffic associated with the Terminal is able to use Cambridge Avenue, it is considered that any approval should be conditional upon prevention of heavy vehicle access to and from Cambridge Avenue, including during M5 related blockages to Terminal operation.

In the absence of any such condition(s), Council would need to be assured by either condition(s) of consent or a Planning Agreement with Council to ensure that appropriate upgrade and maintenance works would be carried out on Cambridge Avenue and related road routes to accommodate potential heavy vehicles associated with Terminal use, without adverse impact on Council's road infrastructure nor on the amenity of development fronting such roads.

It will be important for the proponent to liaise closely with Council to address the issue of construction traffic on Cambridge Avenue, should approval be granted. It would be appropriate for any approval to be conditioned to require this consultation to occur.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4 Any approval should be conditional upon prevention of heavy vehicle access to and from Cambridge Avenue
- 5 Should such condition(s) not be imposed, alternative condition(s) be imposed requiring the proponent to ensure that appropriate upgrade and maintenance works would be carried out on Cambridge Avenue and related road routes to accommodate potential heavy vehicles associated with Terminal use, without adverse impact on Council's road infrastructure nor on the amenity of development fronting such roads

- 6 Any approval condition requiring SIMTA to enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement with the State Government to address off site traffic impacts of the proposal be accompanied by a requirement to consult Campbelltown City Council and take its concerns into account as part of preparing any such Agreement
- 7 Any approval be subject to a condition requiring the proponent to liaise closely with Council to address the issue of construction traffic on Cambridge Avenue.

ISSUE 5 – INTERACTION WITH OTHER FREIGHT FACILITIES IN THE AREA

Council has expressed its concern over the apparent lack of analysis regarding the possible interaction between the SIMTA Terminal and existing freight terminals in the vicinity, such as Macarthur Intermodal Shipping Terminal (MIST), with concerns expressed over the impact of possible truck traffic between the two Terminals.

In response, SIMTA has advised that the two facilities have different target freight catchments and there is unlikely to be a commercial benefit to transport a container to the SIMTA Project and then on to MIST.

COMMENT

Given the potential impact of traffic between the Terminals should operational intentions change in future, any approval for the SIMTA Terminal should be conditioned to require a separate approval prior to such interaction taking place.

RECOMMENDATION

- 8 Any approval be subject to conditions to the effect that, should operational intentions change in future with the potential to lead to interaction with other freight terminals in the area (including but not limited to MIST) a separate approval would be required prior to such interaction taking place.

ISSUE 6 - STRATEGIC CONTEXT

If the SIMTA Terminal proceeds, it will introduce a major new land use into the locality and, provided adverse impacts are addressed appropriately, it would present a significant opportunity to review strategic land use and infrastructure settings in the area to capitalise on any positive spin-offs of the Terminal.

COMMENT

Any review of strategic planning in the area would most appropriately be carried out in a partnership between the Federal and State Governments, working with Campbelltown Council.

Aspects which warrant consideration include

- Broader land use changes to capitalise on the potential economic and employment benefits from improved freight handling and distribution (allied with current freight handling facilities in the area) and
- A review of the overall transport infrastructure in the area to facilitate economic and employment growth in South West Sydney.

RECOMMENDATION

- 9 In the event of approval of the SIMTA Terminal, the Federal and State Governments commit to working with Campbelltown City Council to review strategic planning settings in the locality to maximise positive spin-offs from the Terminal construction and operation.

Should you wish to clarify any of the above matters, or discuss the issues raised, Council would be pleased to assist. In this regard, please contact Council's Director, Planning and Environment, Mr Jeff Lawrence on 4645 4576.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'LDeitz' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lindy Deitz
Acting General Manager