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Attention: Belinda Scott

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Re: Botany Rail Duplication – SSI-9714

Thank you for providing NSW Ports with the opportunity to comment on State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) application – SSI-9714 for the duplication of the Botany Line between Mascot and Botany. 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.

The Botany Line forms the rail link between Port Botany and the Sydney Metropolitan Area and the greater NSW rail network. To that end, it plays a pivotal role in the supply chain, facilitating imports to the NSW population as well as exports from regional NSW. The Botany Line and its efficient operation are critical to the local, State, and National economies.

NSW Ports has reviewed the documentation related to the SSI application and strongly supports the proposal.

The Importance of the Botany Rail Duplication

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 Botany Rail Duplication need to be completed to improve the efficiency and capacity of the freight rail network.

The optimisation of port operations and associated supply chains is vital, not only for NSW Ports, but for the NSW and Australian economy more broadly.

It is estimated once the project is complete, there will be an increase in the operational capacity of freight train movements from 20 trains per day (per direction), up to 45 trains per day (per direction) by 2030. The increased capacity of the freight rail network essential for growing the capacity of freight transported on rail. The Botany Rail Line is currently operational 24 hour a day and the continued 24/7 operation is essential to meet the demand of the supply chain. Rail is a critical component of the supply chain and any increase in the capacity of freight moved by rail to and from Port Botany provides significant improvements to the overall efficiency of the supply chain.

NSW Ports promotes for the increased use of rail, and the volume of containers transported to and from Port Botany by rail has grown by 52% since the 2015 financial year. Further, 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 infrastructure are required to meet the rail freight demand and the Botany Rail Duplication forms a critical piece of infrastructure which will assist in rail playing a more significant role in freight transport.

Recent freight rail infrastructure proposals such as the St Marys Intermodal and the Cabramatta Rail Loop will support the movement of freight by rail, however, the Botany Rail Duplication is critical to support the efficient movement of freight to and from the Port and will add value to these other infrastructure investments. Given recent developments in the freight rail infrastructure sector such as the Moorebank Intermodal and Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre, the Botany Rail Duplication is urgently required in order to ensure the efficient operation of the recently completed and proposed freight rail projects.

The Port Botany Rail Duplication will alleviate the bottleneck congestion between Mascot and Botany which is currently experienced by trains coming to or from Port Botany. As trade volume grows and more intermodal terminals come online, this single track on the Botany Line will experience further strain. The Botany Rail Duplication is urgently needed to efficiently cater for increased freight rail volume on the rail network.

Given the significance of the Botany Line to the supply chain and the movement of freight to and from Port Botany it is critical that the proposed construction of the Botany Rail Duplication does not impact the existing operation of the line.

The Port Botany Rail Duplication is a critical freight rail infrastructure project and should be rapidly dealt with by Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. The timely approval, construction and operation of the Botany Rail Duplication will be an operational requirement to successfully support the movement of freight on rail and the growing network of intermodal terminals throughout NSW.

If you would like to discuss this submission further, please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 9316 1151 or adriane.whiley@nswports.com.au.

Yours sincerely,



Adriane Whiley
Planning Officer