

ENFIELD BUSINESS ALLIANCE

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STATE DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE

10 FEB 2004

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SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT – INQUIRY INTO PORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN NEW SOUTH WALES

With regard to your terms of reference, we wish to respond as follows on behalf of the members of our Alliance and their employees.

1. **The NSW Government Ports Growth Plan:**

This plan says, among other things, that "the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources will examine how to increase the proportion of containers moved by rail to and from the ports to intermodal terminals in both Sydney metropolitan and regional NSW".

Clearly this must bring into consideration the prospect of Enfield Rail Yard being developed, this having been a proposed option put forward by Sydney Ports.

As a result of the strength of both community and business objections to both the Sydney Ports proposition and an earlier proposal by the then National Rail Corporation, the State government set up an independent enquiry whose findings were that the proposal should not go ahead.

We submit to you, for your consideration, our submission to that enquiry which lays out not only our objections to the use of Enfield but also logical alternative suggestions. All the issues continue to be pertinent.

2. **The economic, social and environmental impact on the State:**

Clearly the economic, social and environmental impact on the area surrounding Enfield for many kilometres would be devastating. However, beneficial any overall development might be for the State, the concept of making tens of thousands of residents, plus the many thousands of employees who work in the area, sacrificial lambs, should not be an option.

A Senior Executive of Sydney Ports clearly believes that this option is acceptable (see Page 6 of our submission to the independent enquiry). We do not; and we do not believe that you will, certainly when better and more logical alternatives are available. These alternatives centre on placing a major intermodal, or even using a number of existing intermodals, in the South West. This is clearly where the current action is and certainly where the future industrial development of Sydney will be.

Even the figures of Sydney Ports say that *"the Western suburbs generated over 36% of export full TEU and over 62% of imported TEU"*. It is obvious that Sydney's West is the critical delivery destination, so why would one site an intermodal halfway there and then still use road transport to get there when the environmental intent is to decrease the use of road transport?

From an environmental perspective, the air quality in the area is already renowned as bad. It was tested seven years ago and was found, even then, to be bordering on the unacceptable. However, since then there has, it seems, been an upsurge in pollution from the flour mill which is right next to the rail yard. Employees in the area continually complain that their cars are covered, by evening, in a fine white powder which is believed to be escaping flour dust. Employees in the area already are expected to breathe in this dust and not be affected by it.

Add to this the diesel fumes of an additional 1000-2000 trucks a day and imagine the quality of the air. Even if a plan were to be hatched that, somehow, considerably reduced the number of trucks, the position would still be unsustainable and unviable on environmental grounds alone.

- 3. The employment implications for Sydney, the Hunter and the Illawarra Region:**
In considering the development of Enfield Rail Yard in conjunction with the development of Port Botany, it is useful to recognise that unemployment in the Enfield area is not unusually high. Whatever jobs will be developed at Enfield will draw from an already highly employed area. Compared with other areas, including Port Kembla and Wollongong where unemployment is far higher, it makes sense, if for this reason alone, to develop a Port Kembla/Western Suburbs intermodal arrangement.

4. **Current and future infrastructure needs and social aspects including, with respect to the adequacy of existing road and rail infrastructures:**
We refer you again to our submission to the independent enquiry, points 1 and 2. We have outlined just how impossible the development of a suitable road infrastructure is in and around this already well developed area and this very old rail site.

There have been numerous attempts and numbers of plans submitted in the past. Every one of them has failed to pass any sort of objective test. The former National Rail Corporation drew up a plan for a one-way loop road system. It was proven to be a disastrous proposition. Sydney Ports have not submitted a firm proposal and have embarked only on generalisations. But without a firm road development plan how then can any development take place? The truth is that the prospect of tinkering marginally with an already overloaded road system cannot solve the problems of adding thousands of TEU's daily. The area simply does not lend itself to such development.

On the other hand, railing to say, an intermodal in Ingleburn from Port Kembla makes far greater sense.

- It eliminates the road problems that would surround Enfield.
- It eliminates what would be a need to truck the additional 30+ kilometres from Enfield to the West and South-West.
- It eliminates what would be major environmental problems, both traffic and air quality, surrounding Enfield's development.

Port Kembla's Chief Executive, Phil McGavin is reported as seeing Port Kembla to Ingleburn as a winning proposition; so do we. And so, we hope will you.

Finally, we request the opportunity of addressing the Committee at an appropriate time with a view to developing this submission.

ENFIELD BUSINESS ALLIANCE


Gerry Goldberg
Chairman

February 9, 2004
Encl:

ENFIELD BUSINESS ALLIANCE

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SUBMISSION TO INDEPENDENT ENQUIRY RE: PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SYDNEY PORTS' ENFIELD RAIL YARD

The Enfield Business Alliance, an association of more than forty businesses in the Strathfield South area in close proximity to the Enfield Rail Yard, is opposed to and objects to the Sydney Ports' proposed development of that yard.

It should be pointed out, however, that it is very difficult to object to a proposal that has not, at this time, been firmed up and is consequently short on detail. All we have to go on is the original proposal of Sydney Ports which Sydney Ports have been at pains to explain is only a generalised suggestion, not a final proposal. Without an EIS which would be a firm proposal, we are disadvantaged. However, we must assume that the original proposal is, in principle, what we can expect.

Our objection is based on the following:

1. The Enfield Rail Yard was first constructed over 70 years ago. Since then the entire area has changed as has the development of Sydney itself. Seventy years ago Enfield could well have been considered an outer suburb of Sydney with limited development in its immediate area. Now this area is fully developed both residentially and with light industry as is the whole area surrounding the site and within many kilometers radius of the site. The use of this site simply because it exists does not take into account the enormous changes that have taken place in the area nor the damage and dislocation such a development would now cause.

2. The proposal envisages a flow of traffic that was never envisaged when Enfield Rail Yard was first established. Consequently the road system, which was established so long ago, has absolutely no hope of coping with the traffic mooted. In fact the system has enough trouble coping with the present flow of traffic. Cosgrove Road is an absolute bottleneck at present especially at the junction with Hume Highway. It is a mere two-lane road with no possibility of effective widening.

Sydney Ports have, in their one briefing that was held that we attended, indicated that they have some nebulous plans to try to widen Cosgrove Road at the Hume Highway for a short length of 50m or so, so that two trucks could enter side-by-side from Hume Highway at a time. However, the proposed widened length would be sufficient for only two truck lengths (each container truck being at least 20m long) and these trucks would then have to merge creating, once again, a major bottleneck. So that is certainly no solution. As to the prospect of exiting Cosgrove Road in similar fashion to go west, it takes the full width of Hume Highway's three lanes for a single pantech to make the left turn so for two trucks to do this turn simultaneously would prove near impossible however one attempted to reconstruct the intersection.

Nor is an alternative suggestion that has been made of considering turning Cosgrove Road and Gould Street into a one-way circuit after joining them up, a solution. This will still mean a flow of trucks that will ensure that the already overloaded Gould Street would come to a standstill based on the number of trucks that would have to flow up Gould Street to the Hume Highway. Anyone with premises in Gould Street would be left in a situation where they may as well close their businesses if all of Cosgrove Road's traffic plus a further container truck every 30 seconds or so, were to end up in Gould Street.

These are but two examples of the inadequacy of not only the road system but also of any attempts at trying to fiddle around the edges of the traffic problems. We would well give many more examples of the absolute inability of the roads in Strathfield South to cope, whatever plan Sydney

Ports might come up with and whatever gloss they attempt to put on it and whether only 30% (the initial proposal) of the traffic or any other percentage of the traffic were to come through Strathfield South.

The situation would be little better were Cosgrove Road to be abandoned as an exit/egress point in total favour of a bridge to Roberts Road. The amount of traffic apparently planned for would create bedlam in an area already a parking lot in peak hour. While the Roberts Road flyover at Hume Highway was an improvement, for a while, on the previous intersection, the traffic increase as a result of this flyover has returned Centenary Drive to a parking lot at peak hours. Trying to go south down Centenary Drive and onto Hume Highway and then turn down Cosgrove Road is a nightmare at peak hour. How on earth would it cope with the additional thousands of container trucks proposed?

The fact is that the insuperable traffic problems should, alone, be enough to ensure that this site is unsatisfactory. And we have not even touched on the far-reaching effects such as –

- * Trucks accessing residential streets to avoid the congestion with the resultant dangers inherent therein. This is already happening throughout the area without the proposed exponential traffic increase.
- * The road safety problems inherent in the enormous traffic build-up. Already there is, on average, a death every year on the roads of Chullora alone as well as numerous injuries, all involving truck traffic on the suburban streets of the area. We believe that this is inordinately high and would multiply dramatically were this scheme to go ahead.
- * Cosgrove Road already sees numerous accidents at the intersection with Hume Highway. The intersection of Hume Highway with Gould Street is uncontrolled and a deadly accident waiting to happen. Trucks currently cannot make a right turn without seriously risking life and limb. Yet large trucks have no other way of getting onto Hume

Highway from Gould Street. There is a narrow lane connecting the two streets but it is hardly useable by container pantechs.

3. A major concern is the reasoning for the development of such a high traffic intermodal in the middle of a well-developed area with limited access. We can only guess at the reasoning for what seems to be such an illogical concept.

We believe there can be no doubt that the industrial heartland of Sydney is west and that the future economic development of Sydney will undoubtedly be south west. It would be hard to dispute that the bulk of container traffic goes to and will grow to these areas, to the west of Parramatta and South West towards Campbelltown.

This is borne out by the fact that the great majority of major cartage companies have already moved their premises from areas such as Strathfield South to the areas mentioned where they perceive their future business to be. The few exceptions remaining in our area remain there, we believe, because they are only waiting to see if Enfield will go ahead, not necessarily because they believe it should.

With so many transport companies now re-located further west it would mean that they would have to send their trucks back to Enfield to collect containers and then truck them back to the west of Sydney. All the benefit of trying to remove trucks from Sydney roads would be negated.

In addition, the development of privately owned and run intermodals currently in areas such as Minto and St Mary's bears testimony to the anticipated future by the freight and transport industries which is completely at odds with the Sydney Port's Enfield scheme.

Why, then, would Sydney Ports or the Department of Planning or the Department of Transport want to develop an intermodal in the unlikely area of Enfield which is, today, far removed from the centre of industrial development?

Why would this development take place a mere 18kms from Port Botany when the ultimate destination is 50kms from Port Botany? Why would Sydney Ports, in line with their stated and laudable desire to get trucks off the road and replace these trucks with rail traffic, use rail for 18kms and then still use road traffic for the next 30kms or more? Why would Sydney Ports not establish an intermodal at the focal point of the ultimate destination rather than at a point less than halfway to that destination – and with the enormous upheaval that this Enfield development would cause? We can see no logic in this concept at all.

4. The only reason that we can see – and failing any explanation, despite repeated requests for one of Sydney Ports, we must believe that there is no other reason – is that a large site with rail tracks currently exists at Enfield. And use of this site seems a simple solution. It is our belief, however, that this is not a good reason for the development in light of all the negatives. We can suggest, however, that, with the growth of this inner-Sydney area, land has become more and more valuable. It is now worth more than \$300sq.m. This makes the close to 50ha that Sydney Ports have purchased for this development worth between \$120m and \$150m which is far in excess of what Sydney Ports paid for this site. Selling off the site would cause Sydney Ports no financial hardship. In fact, it might contribute significantly towards the development of an alternate intermodal site.

We do not believe that this valuable site should be allowed to lie fallow. It should, we believe, be rezoned and re-planned so that it could become a combination of residential, light industrial and parkland. This would make a far more acceptable and sustainable use of this land to the benefit of the entire community and would also ensure a great development of employment in the area.

5. There are other alternatives worth considering. It seems to us that, while an ultimate intermodal in the west is the most desirable concept, the means of getting traffic there could also be diverted away from Port Botany to the ultimate benefit of many communities, especially in the South and

South West of Sydney which will be adversely affected both by the further development of Port Botany and by the resultant traffic increases. We suggest serious investigation of the prospects of using the currently under utilised ports of Newcastle and or Port Kembla to connect by rail directly to an intermodal(s) in the western/south western areas. This would, in its turn, establish considerable employment in these currently high unemployment areas. This seems to us to have far greater potential than the present arrangement. But even if using the Hunter or the Illawarra as ports of entry for these containers, the establishing of an intermodal in the west of Sydney, as suggested, is still an essential.

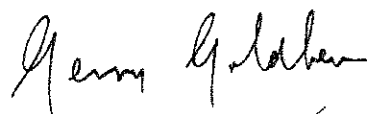
6. The environmental aspects of the proposed Enfield scheme defy belief. The proposed traffic increase is in the neighbourhood of 308,000 traffic movements annually in 2005 rising to 602,000 by 2025. This means an extra diesel truck in the area every 30 seconds or so.

At present container trucks use the M5 between Port Botany and Enfield en route to the west and south west. The pollution build-up in the M5 tunnels is notorious. That pollution will simply be transferred to Enfield if the scheme goes ahead. Our Alliance employs a great many people in the immediate vicinity many of whom actually work as well as reside in the area. Many would therefore be subjected to increased pollution from diesel fumes for 24 hours a day and the health hazards are enormous in an area where the air quality already borders on the unacceptable and where respiratory illnesses are among the highest in Sydney.

It is a fact that, at their briefing, Mr. Barry Turner of Sydney Ports, in response to a question regarding the growth of pollution in the area commented that "Strathfield will worsen but, overall, Sydney will be improved and that's a good outcome". In other words the population of Strathfield can, in the belief of Sydney Ports, be sacrificed for the common good. We believe that a better outcome would be a win-win rather than win-lose. In fact, even in the original proposal the Sydney Ports consultants themselves suggested that "Opportunities for local air quality impact-mitigation are limited".

For all of the above reasons, which we believe are a logical assessment of the situation and not merely motivated by a NIMBY attitude, we object to the proposed development.

ENFIELD BUSINESS ALLIANCE



Gerry Goldberg

Chairman

5th July, 2002

Gerry Goldberg

From: Errol Goldberg <errol@pallmall.com.au>
To: Gerry Goldberg <gerry@pallmall.com.au>
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2002 12:03 PM
Subject: Gould street photo

