Moorebank Intermodal Terminal

What the Environmental Impact Statement says about the terminal

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What and where is the Moorebank Intermodal Terminal?

Intermodal terminals are ‘inland ports’, which enable freight to travel by rail instead of truck. They include a rail yard, trucking terminal, warehouses and facilities to move shipping containers between trains and trucks.

There are a number of intermodals in Sydney and more are needed as Sydney grows. The site for the Moorebank intermodal terminal is between Moorebank Avenue and the Georges River and is currently occupied by the Department of Defence.

The 220 hectare site is the best suited location for a new intermodal terminal in south-west Sydney because it is close to major freight arteries, such as the M5 and M7 Motorways and the Southern Sydney Freight Line (SSFL). It is also big enough for an intermodal terminal, and close to the destination of a large share of Sydney’s freight.

The terminal will be built in stages, with construction starting in 2016. ‘Early works’ to prepare the site, including some demolition and decontamination, will begin in mid-2015. MIC is overseeing development of the terminal.

The Moorebank Intermodal Terminal and SIMTA

The Sydney Intermodal Terminal Alliance or SIMTA is also proposing an intermodal terminal on land next to the Moorebank terminal. The two terminals could combine but, in any case, the number of import-export containers will be limited to 1.05 million a year. This is the number of import-export containers that can travel to and from the Moorebank area by train each year. The terminal would also handle 0.5 million interstate containers a year. The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and the NSW Planning Assessment Commission have approved the concept of SIMTA’s terminal, subject to conditions. A separate planning approval would be required for a combined terminal.

The Australian Government has proposed an intermodal terminal at Moorebank to help manage Sydney’s growing freight volumes and reduce the growth in trucks on our roads. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared to request environmental and planning approvals for the terminal.

An EIS is a formal process to understand the environmental consequences of a development. It is used by approval bodies to help decide if a project should proceed, and, if so, what mitigation measures and limits are required.

This brochure summarises the key findings of the EIS. This information is part of the ongoing community consultation by Moorebank Intermodal Company (MIC).
The Moorebank terminal is an Australian Government initiative to meet the need for increased freight handling capacity in Sydney. It is also a key part of the NSW Government’s long-term plan for managing the movement of freight across Sydney.

Sydney’s population growth and the demands of business and consumers are driving strong growth in containerised freight volumes. The Moorebank terminal is one of the measures proposed for handling the growing volume of freight travelling between Port Botany and western Sydney, while reducing the growth of trucks on our roads. The terminal will also help Sydney handle freight moving to and from other states and territories.

What benefits will the Moorebank Intermodal Terminal bring?

**Enhanced economy:** Almost $9 billion in economic benefits to the Australian economy through improved productivity, reduced business costs, reduced road congestion and better environmental outcomes.

**New jobs:** Construction of the terminal is expected to create around 1,500 jobs. Once the terminal is operating, around 2,200 long-term jobs are expected. These jobs would be at the terminal itself as well as in the broad range of industries that service the terminal and its staff (e.g. construction suppliers, retail, insurance, food outlets and health services).

**Reduced congestion:** Up to 3,000 fewer truck journeys every day (1,500 to and 1,500 from Port Botany) once the terminal is operating at capacity, equating to 1.05 million less truck journeys per year.

**Better environment:** Fewer greenhouse emissions released (as a result of the use of trains, rather than trucks), saving an estimated 7,300 tonnes of CO₂ per year from transport once the terminal is fully operational in 2030. Vegetation in a conservation zone along the Georges River will also be restored and other bushland protected to offset some clearing on the terminal site.

**Community investment:** Contributions to local programs or facilities, for the long-term benefit of residents and the local environment to recognise that not all the terminal’s benefits will be experienced locally.
What will it look like?

Three layouts are proposed and assessed in the EIS – one for each of three rail access options. These options are referred to as the northern, southern and central rail access options, although only one rail access will be constructed. Having three options will give the future terminal operator the flexibility to choose the option that permits the most efficient and effective layout for the site. Once the operator for the terminal has been appointed, the project would progress to the detailed design phase and one preferred location for the rail access will be confirmed. The final site design will then be subject to further planning approvals from the NSW Government.

All layouts are proposed to have the same facilities and building types – chiefly, railway lines, container handling and storage facilities, warehousing, parking and administration buildings. However the exact placement of the various facilities, buildings and entry gates depends on the location of the rail access line and the terminal operator’s preferences. These change environmental impacts like noise and vibration.

Indicative Southern Rail Connection Concept Layout

Southern Layout
The southern layout has rail access across the Georges River toward the southern end of the site. The railway line then turns around a loop at the south end of the site before heading north to the various facilities. The proposed interstate facilities will have a rail line that loops around the northern end of the site before returning south. The main site entry for heavy vehicles is towards the centre of Moorebank Avenue although there will be access gates used for warehouses and other purposes along Moorebank Avenue.

Central Layout
The central layout has rail access across the Georges River toward the centre of the site. The railway line then turns south, turning around a loop at the south end of the site before heading north to the various facilities. The main site entry for heavy vehicles will be from Moorebank Avenue at the northern end of the facility, although there will be access gates used for warehouses and other purposes along Moorebank Avenue.

Northern Layout
The northern layout has rail access across the Georges River at the north-western end of the site. The railway line then proceeds south through the site and the proposed interstate terminal will have a rail line that loops around the southern end of the site before returning north. The main site entry for heavy vehicles will be from Moorebank Avenue at the southern end of the facility, although there will be access gates used for warehouses and other purposes along Moorebank Avenue.
Key features and differences

- **Rail access** from the SSFL via a crossing of the Georges River
- **Heavy vehicle access** to the facility from Moorebank Avenue
- **An upgrade to Moorebank Avenue** to enable safe and efficient access to the terminal
- **Warehousing** on the eastern side of the site along Moorebank Avenue
- **Rail track and terminal facilities** for import-export and interstate freight operations
- **Support buildings and facilities** that will provide administrative and maintenance support to the operations
- **Retention and enhancement of river side vegetation** along the Georges River, with this area protected as a conservation zone
- **Landscaping** that provides visual relief for nearby residents and users of Moorebank Avenue
- **A piped stormwater network** and detention basins, incorporating opportunities for stormwater reuse and treatment before runoff is discharged as clean water to the Georges River
- **Low emission plant and equipment** for terminal operations to reduce air quality impacts
- **Preservation of native vegetation** to the west of Wattle Grove as a conservation zone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Layout</th>
<th>Northern</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Southern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rail Bridge</td>
<td>One bridge near the northern section of west boundary</td>
<td>Two bridges near the centre of west boundary</td>
<td>One rail bridge near the southern side of west boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal southern rail loop</td>
<td>Interstate rail traffic only</td>
<td>All rail traffic</td>
<td>All rail traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal northern rail loop</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Interstate rail traffic only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Site Entry (Heavy Vehicles)</td>
<td>Moorebank Avenue South</td>
<td>Moorebank Avenue North</td>
<td>Moorebank Avenue Centre</td>
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</table>
Assessments have been carried out to determine the likely impacts the terminal would have on the local area and wider environment, if developed in accordance with the three layout options.

These assessments involved a thorough review of all potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed designs. They assumed the conditions of highest impact to ensure effects can be managed within acceptable standards.

During previous consultation with the community, a range of environmental and social issues were identified as important. All of these were considered in the EIS:

- Regional and local context
- Land use and ownership of the terminal site
- Topography
- Traffic and transport environment
- Noise and vibration environment
- Biodiversity
- Hydrology and water quality
- Soils and contamination
- Air quality
- Aboriginal and European heritage
- Socio-Economic impacts
- Visual environment and light spill
- Health impacts
- Hazards and risks
- Greenhouse gas emission
- Property and infrastructure
- Waste and resources management
- Cumulative impacts.

The Environmental Impact Statement

Impacts

**Noise impacts:** Noise impacts are likely to occur during the construction of the rail infrastructure and facilities, and particularly during construction of the rail bridge across the Georges River. These impacts were predicted to be localised and short-term but noise mitigation measures will be required during construction to comply with noise guidelines.

Once the terminal is operating at full capacity in approximately 2030, some noise mitigation will be required. Given that the site layout will be determined in the detailed design phase, the EIS assesses the noise impacts without noise mitigation measures being implemented. Without mitigation, noise levels from the terminal would exceed the noise assessment criteria at the nearest homes in Casula, Wattle Grove and North Glenfield under certain conditions. Due to the proximity of homes to the western boundary, Casula residents would be the most affected.

For operation of the rail access connection in approximately 2030, without mitigation, noise levels at the nearest homes in Casula would exceed the amenity noise criteria for the northern rail access option, but comply with the criteria for the central and southern rail access options.

Initial assessments have also been undertaken to determine the likely impacts if a noise barrier were installed along the western boundary of the site. Further assessment of mitigation measures will be undertaken during the detailed design stage to achieve compliance with noise criteria.

Ground vibrations are not expected to cause disturbance or structural damage during the construction or operation of the terminal.
Traffic impacts: During construction of the terminal, traffic and congestion have the potential to increase on local roads. Some partial and full road closures may be required although they are likely to occur at night. Once operational, the terminal will increase some traffic around the site. However, it will also reduce growth in truck trips over the regional road network.

Traffic from the terminal will mostly impact Moorebank Avenue, but proposed road upgrades included in the concept design will minimise these impacts. During the busiest peak periods, traffic associated with the terminal will add less than 3% to existing traffic on the M5 Motorway.

Visual impacts: There will be visual impacts from both the construction and operation of the terminal, although they will be limited to a relatively small number of locations around the site. During construction the most visible aspects will be construction cranes, fencing and vegetation clearing. Longer term impacts can be minimised through landscaping and additional planting, and urban and lighting design measures. Some Casula residents will be able to see the intermodal terminal and its operations.

Light impacts on the surrounding areas during construction and operation are expected to be minimal.

Air quality impacts: Construction and operation of the terminal will create a slight increase in some airborne pollutants. By itself, the terminal will not exceed any air quality guidelines and for most pollutants, air quality will remain well below guideline limits. Air quality guidelines for particulate matter (very small particles of pollution) are already exceeded from time to time due to bushfires and hazard reduction burning. However, the guidelines permit a small number of exceedances to allow for these events, and the terminal will not cause additional exceedances above these allowances.

Mitigation measures included in the concept design will reduce air quality impacts. Long-term air quality monitoring is being conducted and will continue during construction and operation to develop a site specific database regarding local air quality. During operation of the terminal, air quality will continue to be monitored.

Human health impacts: An assessment of general lifestyle and wellbeing conditions was carried out, with a focus on the impacts from traffic congestion, noise and air pollution from the terminal, as well as economic wellbeing and other broader social factors. Both positive and negative impacts were identified. The negative impacts are considered to be low, based on the proposed mitigation measures to reduce these impacts.

The key findings of the studies included:

- Exposure to particulate matter emissions can be linked to various health impacts such as respiratory illnesses. However, the impact assessment concluded that the likely effects of low levels of exposure, and low levels of particulate matter emitted by the terminal in the surrounding area, are low. Consequently, any potential health risks or impacts of the terminal are considered acceptable within existing requirements.

- Noise can have a range of health impacts such as sleep disturbance and cardiovascular health problems. Without mitigation, construction and operational noise from the project would potentially lead to health concerns. However, construction and operational noise mitigation measures will need to be implemented to meet noise guidelines. With these measures, noise levels at sensitive sites nearby (such as homes) are expected to remain within acceptable levels, with the likelihood and significance of any health impacts being negligible.

- Traffic congestion has the potential to contribute to health impacts such as stress and anxiety. This would notably affect users of Moorebank Avenue during construction; however, once proposed mitigation measures are implemented, the project is anticipated to have net positive health outcomes in relation to traffic congestion.
Get involved and have your say

There will be three community information sessions where you can find out more information about the EIS. The information sessions will be held at the Comfort Inn Hunts, corner York Street and Hume Highway Casula on:

- Thursday 23 October, from 6pm to 8pm
- Saturday 25 October, from 2pm to 5pm
- Tuesday 28 October, from 6pm to 8pm

Make a formal submission to the EIS

You can view the EIS online at www.micl.com.au/community/eis

Members of the public are invited to make a written submission on the EIS by 8 December 2014. To do so, please mail your submission which references application number SSD 5066/EPBC 2011/6086 to:

Attention: Director, Infrastructure Projects
Planning Systems
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Or use the online form for this proposal: www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/page/on-exhibition

The Department of Planning and Environment will publish your submission on its website in accordance with the privacy statement.

For more information on how to make a submission visit www.micl.com.au, call 1300 382 239 or submit an email via our website. If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450.

Vietnamese
Nếu cần thông ngôn viên, xin quý vị gọi cho Dịch Vu Thông Phẩm Dịch (TIS Toản Quốc) qua số 131 450 và nhớ hỏi cho Moorebank Intermodal Company qua số 1300 382 239. Giờ làm việc của chúng tôi là 9.00am – 5.00pm weekdays.

Arabic
إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مترجم، الرجاء الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة المحلية والشفهية (TIS National) على الرقم 131 450، وطلب منهم الاتصال بـ Moorebank Intermodal Company على الرقم 1300 382 239. أوقات عملنا هي 9.00am – 5.00pm weekdays.

Italian
Se hai bisogno di un interprete, per favore telefonare al Servizio Traduttori e Interpreti (TIS National) al 131 450 e chiedi loro di telefonare alla Moorebank Intermodal Company allo 1300 382 239. Il nostro orario di ufficio è dalle 9.00am alle 5.00pm.

Want to know more? www.micl.com.au • 1300 382 239