



Blayney Shire Council

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The Hon Melinda Pavey, MP
Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight
Freight, Strategy and Planning
Transport for NSW
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Melinda

RE: NSW Draft Freight and Ports Plan (the Draft Plan)

Council thanks you for the opportunity to provide input both in writing in this submission and at the workshop in Dubbo on 26 February attended by our Director Infrastructure Services, Mr Grant Baker.

Blayney Shire is highly dependent on road and rail freight. Our gross regional product is estimated at \$484 million (Source: Remplan), with the majority of movement currently via road transport.

Following from the workshop in Dubbo, Council makes the following observations and recommendations.

Blayney as part of the Central West Region is constrained by two major transport challenges. The ability to move freight between Blayney by either road or rail to Port Botany and Port Kembla are hampered by long transit times and poor safety outcomes. Key linkages that require consideration, commentary and forward planning within the Draft Plan, are the corridors (road and rail) over the Blue Mountains, and the Blayney – Demondrille / Maldon - Dombarton rail linkages.

Council welcomes the recent visit to Blayney by members of the Office of the Regional Infrastructure Coordinator, to further investigate and discuss the opportunities that reopening the Blayney – Demondrille Railway may provide for NSW and the Central West Region.

As highlighted in Council's submission to the NSW Government's Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056, the Centroc – Central West Transport Capability Matrix identifies these projects as its key priorities to unlocking the potential of the Central NSW Region.

It is noted that the Draft Plan is a high level document, and *"is designed to provide the platform for consultation to inform the development of the final NSW Freight and Ports Plan"* (Section 1.4 About this Draft Plan).

Notwithstanding this Council urges the NSW Government to ensure the final plan contains value propositions identifying perhaps ten key outcomes, projects or activities for each region. As discussed in Dubbo, these would include capital infrastructure projects, but also activities such as truck operator skills training to ensure we are able to support the increased demand for truck operators; the RMS Live Traffic project to provide emergency advice over the local and regional road network, rather than just the state network; and the Freight Links Project identified in the Central West Orana Regional Plan.

In order to monitor progress, and not lose sight of these outcomes/projects an Implementation Plan should be prepared for each region. Acknowledging the strong relationships established during the development of the Central West Orana Regional Plan, Council would commend a similar model to that adopted by the Department of Planning and Environment, where Centroc and its member Councils could work with Transport for NSW on implementation.

To ensure consistency across NSW Government planning/strategy documents, it is imperative that the NSW Government's Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056, and its supporting plans, including the Freight and Ports Plan align with the Regional Plans prepared by Department of Planning and Environment. In the case of Blayney and its fellow Central West Councils, those Directions identified in Goal 3 of the Central West Orana Regional Plan.

Council concurs with the suggestion by industry at the Dubbo workshop, that there be a comprehensive risk analysis undertaken of identified outcomes/projects that also includes an assessment of a "do nothing" case. How will this impact the freight task, the future of the Central West and NSW as a whole?

Whilst the Blayney based freight task is currently focussed on the movement of goods to Port Botany and Port Kembla, Council recognises that the reopening of the Blayney-Demondrille and the establishment of Inland Rail will change the face of future freight movements in the Central West.

Council considers Blayney a key location to support this change, with freight facilities at both the Linfox and Sealink Terminals in Blayney offering direct connections to the Main Western, Main Southern and Inland Rail corridors.

Council would welcome the opportunity to collaborate further with NSW Government agencies to ensure that "the movement of goods in an efficient, safe and environmentally sustainable manner provides successful outcomes for community and industry".

Yours faithfully

Rebecca Ryan
General Manager