



Spoil Management Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Project overview

What is the Spoil Management Project?

The Spoil Management Project involves the construction and operation of a rail facility at Chullora and Port Kembla that will be used to transfer spoil (excavated material) between Sydney and the Illawarra by freight train.

Why does Transport for NSW need a spoil management plan?

Over the next ten years, metropolitan Sydney will undergo a period of intense construction through the delivery of major infrastructure projects. During this time, projects such as WestConnex may add to traffic congestion by increasing movements of heavy vehicles as spoil is removed from construction and tunnelling sites.

An opportunity has been identified to alleviate some of this potential impact by establishing an integrated transport path to transfer spoil for use in regional centres outside the Sydney metropolitan area.

What is spoil?

Spoil is the waste material brought up during the course of an excavation such as tunnelling, dredging or a mining operation.

What are the objectives of the project?

- Reduce the number of kilometres travelled by heavy vehicles which will improve congestion on NSW roads, increase road safety and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Improve customer journeys on metropolitan and regional roads including Mount Ousley Road and the M1 Princes Motorway
- Provide socio-economic benefits including jobs and potential growth for businesses
- Set a framework for future projects to use rail freight in spoil management planning

What is the current status of the project?

A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) was prepared to assess the environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the project, and outlines measures to minimise impacts to the environment and community. The REF was placed on public display in August 2017 and feedback invited from the community.

A Determination Report has been completed to assess and respond to feedback received during the public display of the REF and also includes conditions to minimise environmental impacts (known as Conditions of Approval).

The Determination Report and Conditions of Approval are available to view at transport.nsw.gov.au/projects

What is being transported?

The spoil being transported is natural material uncontaminated by industrial or commercial activities. The spoil is classified as Virgin Excavated Natural Material (VENM). No contaminated material will be transported as part of the project.

The material would be classified as VENM prior to being transferred to the Sydney Modal Transfer Facility at Chullora.

The spoil composition is expected to be:

- 65 per cent sandstone
- 35 per cent mixed (sandstone, siltstone, shale).

What is VENM?

Virgin Excavated Natural Material refers to natural material, such as clay, gravel, sand, soil, or rock fines that have been excavated or quarried. Spoil can only be classified as VENM if it has been excavated from an area that is not contaminated with manufactured chemicals or process residues as a result of industrial, commercial, mining or agricultural activities.

How does the Spoil Management Project work?

Natural material would be loaded onto trucks and taken to a proposed transfer facility within the rail corridor at Chullora. The material would then be loaded onto freight trains and transported to a proposed transfer facility at the BlueScope Steel site, Port Kembla. The excavated material would be loaded onto trucks and distributed to construction projects in the Illawarra region.

Which projects can transfer spoil to Chullora and Port Kembla sites?

The initial proposal is based on the transfer of spoil from the M4 WestConnex project.

With tunnelling for the WestConnex New M4 already 99% complete and tunnelling for the New M5 more than halfway, spoil from these projects will not be transported under this arrangement.

Use of the Spoil Management Project for other projects would be subject to a separate planning assessment.

How much spoil would be transported per day?

The facilities would be capable of handling up to 9,000 tonnes of spoil per day.

Will spoil be stored at Chullora or Port Kembla?

Up to 3,000 tonnes of spoil may be temporarily stockpiled at the Chullora and Port Kembla transfer sites.

Will this project affect passenger trains?

No. Materials would be transported by freight train between Chullora and Port Kembla. There would be no changes to passenger services or timetables as a result of the project.

What dust mitigation measures will be used?

Temporary stockpiles would be sprayed down to suppress dust, with a sediment and erosion control system in place to capture and treat any run off.

How will the heavy vehicles access the sites?

A detailed Traffic Management Plan would be prepared in consultation with City of Canterbury Bankstown, Wollongong City Council and M4 WestConnex prior to start of construction and operation of the project.

What will the hours of operation be?

Spoil transfer and truck movements would be undertaken in three slots to coincide with freight train arrivals. The trucks would work for a three hour shift to unload the spoil from each train and transfer the spoil for use within the wider Illawarra region.

The sites at Chullora and Port Kembla are operational 24-hours, seven days per week, however the spoil management process would only be active for around nine hours per day within the proposed sites.

Will there be any noise impacts?

A report was prepared to assess the noise impacts that would arise from the operation of the Spoil Management Project. The report was prepared by acoustic specialists in accordance with the Environmental Protection Authority's Industrial Noise Policy.

The report noted that while there will be noise impacts associated with the project, environmental impacts are not considered to be significant. A Noise Management Plan will also be prepared to ensure mitigation measures will be in place.

Further noise modelling would be undertaken during the detailed design phase of the project to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are designed to effectively minimise noise impacts.

Have vibration impacts been considered?

Due to the distances between the transfer facilities and the nearest residential properties, no significant operational vibration impacts are anticipated. Vibration monitoring will be undertaken to ensure vibration levels do not exceed human comfort levels.

What are the next steps?

No projects have been determined at this stage. Projects will need to submit a detailed plan that includes noise, traffic, safety and community engagement before final approvals are granted.

Construction will only start once all approvals have been finalised and a determination on the Project has been made by Transport for NSW.

The project team will keep the community and other stakeholders informed and updated throughout this process.

Contact us

For further information please contact us via the **Project Infoline 1800 684 490**, email projects@transport.nsw.gov.au or visit transport.nsw.gov.au/projects.

The project team will keep the community up to date via regular notifications and updates on the Transport for NSW website.