

Media Release



3 May 2016

Expression of Interest for the Fixing Country Rail Program

**Mayor of Lithgow City Council, Councillor Maree Statham, is
keen to ensure our Rail Projects are on the list.**

The Chair of Centroc has suggested that it is vitally important that councils and businesses in the region provide an expression of interest under The Fixing Country Rail program.

"Having met with officials at TfNSW last week, I encourage interested parties to submit EOIs for rail infrastructure. It is an unusual program in that it seeks advice from Councils when we don't own the asset. Having said that we are very aware of infrastructure needs in our communities so it is good to be asked," said Cr West, Chair of Centroc and Mayor of Cowra

"We are transport constrained here in Central NSW and at the same time given our proximity to metropolitan markets and port and the resources in the region, there is so much opportunity. We need to work towards internationally competitive rail freight in and out of the region," said Lithgow City Council Mayor, Councillor Maree Statham.

"We know the freight task is going to not only grow, but change. We know that the horticulture industry for example in western Sydney is being squeezed out. We are going to have increasing needs for smart controlled agriculture with ready access to customers be they in Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne or Asia," said Mayor Statham.

"Another problem for freight by rail and freight in general is the congestion in Sydney. To think another 2 million people are going into western Sydney, I can't imagine the gridlock," said Mayor Statham.

“At Council we are aware of some issues but if anyone in the freight industry has an idea for infrastructure improvements to help move freight by rail, now is the time to speak up,” said Mayor Statham.

The Fixing Country Rail program complements Fixing Country Roads, which is all about improving freight movements between farms, key freight hubs like grain silos, saleyards, rail heads, supermarket distribution centres and depots. The EOI closes 6 May 2016.

END

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13th December 2010

Maldon to Dombarton Rail Link Feasibility Study
Nation Building Infrastructure Investment Division
Department of Infrastructure and Transport
GPO Box 594
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MaldonDombarton@infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Sir

Re: Submission – Maldon to Dombarton Rail Link

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this project.

The Lithgow City Council is very supportive of the development of the Maldon-Dombarton rail line which has great potential to achieve a range of significant and positive economic, environmental and social outcomes.

Attached is Council's full submission in relation to the Maldon-Dombarton Rail Line for your consideration. In preparing this submission Council is aware of the:

- Maldon-Dombarton Rail Line Pre-Feasibility Study for the Port Kembla Port Corporation, July 2007, by Connell Hatch
- The Department of Infrastructure and transport, Maldon to Dombarton Rail Link Feasibility Study Issues Paper, November 2010

From the above Study and Issues Paper, as well as other information, Council has formed the opinion that the rail line is a crucial missing link in the State's freight infrastructure, and is needed to ensure the long-term growth of New South Wales and in particular its commodity exports. The current constraints in the rail network, which force freight to take indirect and time consuming routes through congested roads and rail lines, limits economic growth and, in particular, are limiting plans for growth in the Southern and Western, including Lithgow's, coalfields.

Once the broader freight and passenger issues are taken into account, including those beyond the simple freight issues, it is believed that there will be a good business case for the line's completion and utilisation.

An added advantage of the project is that it is already partially completed. As the project was stopped mid-construction, it is advanced in many ways, including:

- Significant site construction, design and detailed research has already been completed and would enable a fast track to completion of the line.

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- is located immediately adjacent to the third largest city in the State,
- will utilise a wide variety of local materials, blue collar labour and construction plant,
- offers a wide range of potential direct and indirect and intangible benefits to primary and tertiary regional trades,
- has the potential to become a catalyst for additional trade and commerce in the Illawarra region, and
- the ability to avoid or forestall other transport congestion issues on both road and rail.

The 35 kilometre rail corridor also appears not to have been compromised by any development. Much of the earthworks and completed components of bridge construction remain in place and in apparent serviceable condition.

Thank you again for the opportunity to make this submission and I can only reiterate that the Lithgow City Council is extremely supportive of this proposal as it would provide an enormous number of benefits to not only the Lithgow Local Government Area but also to a large part of New South Wales.

Yours Sincerely



Councillor Neville Castle
Mayor

Lithgow City Council's Submission on the Completion of the Maldon-Dombarton Rail Line

The completion of the 35 km long Maldon-Dombarton line would provide a vital link between Maldon on the ARTC's Main South line (near Picton in south-western Sydney) and Dombarton at the foothills of the Illawarra plateau, only 15 km from Port Kembla along existing double track.

It is the belief of Lithgow City Council that the Maldon-Dombarton line, through the attraction of current and future freight will result in a more favourable separation of freight, and passenger traffic between Sydney and the Illawarra region, thereby reducing congestion on the Illawarra south coast line. This project could improve passenger service capacity and reliability for the Illawarra region. More importantly though to the Lithgow Local Government Area and regional New South Wales there will be vital opportunities for the movement of:

- Coal from the Western as well as the Southern coal fields. This is especially so for the Lithgow coal fields.
- Grain from many productive agricultural regions of NSW.
- Other Bulk Freight; e.g. Limestone from Marulan, near Goulburn; Copper concentrate transported by rail from Parkes via Moss Vale to Port Kembla for export; Copper concentrate is also transported by rail from near Orange to Port Kembla.; Iron ore railed from a mine near Parkes via Moss Vale to Port Kembla.; Steel trucked from Port Kembla to Sydney;
- Freight Containers
- Cars

As a result of these opportunities there is then the potential to reduce truck movements resulting in improved road safety and environmental benefits.

Mining in the Lithgow Local Government Area

Lithgow is home to a number of coal mines and these play a critical role in the economic make-up of the Local Government Area providing local jobs and associated multiplier effects to the region. Based on 2006 ABS data the largest employer in Lithgow is the mining industry, employing 834 persons, or 12.3% of workers in the Lithgow Local Government Area and 10% of the total resident workforce. Recent research completed in August 2010 indicates, however, that the mining sector actually employs over 1,000 people in the Lithgow Local Government Area.

The mining companies and the mines that are operating in the Lithgow Local Government Area include:

- **Centennial Coal** – with 50% of western operations production for the domestic market and 50% exported. Mines include:
- **Airly Mine**
 - Number of full-time employees= 36 plus contractors
 - Full Production in 2012 expected employee numbers 113
 - 100% export coal, no domestic contracts.

- Board approval for a 1.6 – 1.8 million tonne per annum export mine granted on 20 August 2008, at an expected start-up capital cost of \$104 million.
- **Angus Place Mine**
 - Number of full-time employees = 220 plus contractors
 - Nominal annual production capacity exceeds 7.0 million tonnes per annum.
 - Long-term domestic contracts with Wallerawang and Mt. Piper power stations totalling 5.1 million tonnes per annum.
- **Springvale Colliery**
 - Number of full-time employees= 255
 - Generally produces between 2 – 3.0 million tonnes per annum of thermal coal from the Lithgow coal seam.
 - Springvale Colliery has contracts with Delta Electricity to supply thermal coal domestically for up to twenty years.
- **Clarence Colliery**
 - Number of full time employees=196
 - Large, good quality reserves sufficient to support mining for more than 20 years, with resources of approximately 230 million tonnes.
 - Marketable reserves estimated to be 48 million tonnes following recent receipt of additional mining lease area.
 - Production capacity of up to 2.5 million tonnes per annum – Australia's most productive continuous miner operation
- **Ivanhoe North Mine**
 - Number of full time employees=12
 - Recently established truck and shovel open-cut thermal coal mine site rehabilitation operation, recovering up to 525,000 tonnes over two years.
- **Lamberts Gully**
 - Number of full time employees= 21
 - Truck and shovel open-cut operation.
- **Xstrata** – with 100% of production for the export market. Mines include:
 - **Baal Bone Colliery**
 - Number of full time employees = 180 and 30 contractors
 - Annual production capacity is approximately 2.5 million tonnes run of mine coal
- **Coalpac** – with 100% for the domestic market. Mines include:
 - **Invincible Colliery**
 - Number of employees = 42
 - **Cullen Valley Mine**
 - Number of employees = 41
 - **Administration in Lithgow LGA**
 - Number of employees = 20

Impact of the Maldon-Dombarton Rail Line

Lithgow City Council would see that the completed rail line would provide a number of potential benefits, including:

- Assisting in delivering overall efficiencies in freight distribution and intermodal networks in the greater Sydney metropolitan region, thereby improving Sydney's and NSW's economic competitive advantage.
- Supporting regional economic development by improving efficiencies in the transportation of freight (principally grain, coal, ore, cars)
- Facilitating regional economic development.
- Reducing truck movements and in turn reducing fuel costs for transport, greenhouse gas emissions, improving public road safety conditions and reducing the need for road upgrades.
- Resulting in a more favourable separation of freight and passenger rail traffic on the Sydney network (particularly between Sydney and the Illawarra) which will improve the system's passenger service capacity and reliability.
- Providing a longer-term option for future passenger transport between south west Sydney and the Illawarra.
- Bringing to fruition a project that has received millions of dollars of investment without any outcome to date

Other Issues for Consideration

While the pre-feasibility study considers many issues other issues should be taken into consideration in the feasibility study when considering the level of impact of the completion of the Maldon-Dombarton Rail Line. These will include:

- Potential for the line to be a catalyst for economic development in the Illawarra and south west Sydney,
- Potential to support/compliment overall efficiencies in freight distribution and intermodal networks in the greater Sydney metropolitan region, thereby assisting Sydney's and NSW's economic competitiveness.
- Road maintenance impact and costs
- Accident costs, including lost time through delays
- Greenhouse emissions
- Air pollution
- Noise pollution

The completion of the Maldon to Dombarton rail line would provide critical infrastructure support to Lithgow's mining sector and associated economic linkages including local employment.

GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

ITEM:4 GM - 07/04/08 - MALDON DOMBARTON RAILWAY LINE

REFERENCE

NIL

SUMMARY

This report updates Council following a briefing and workshop held on 5th March 2008 with representatives of the Wollondilly Shire Council and a community action group wanting to see the finalisation of the railway link.

COMMENTARY

On the 5th march 2008 Council received a presentation of the incomplete Maldon Dombarton Railway Line from the Wollondilly Shire Council and members of a community action group. The Council and Group are seeking support from other Council's in NSW to lobby the State and Federal Government to see the completion of this infrastructure.

This matter was initially raised in Council by Councillor McAndrew given the impact the link will have to opening the rail freight of coal exported from our region this coal is exported via Port Kembla, however, the delays in freight given the "priority" of commuter traffic in the metro areas is of concern for local producers but also future expansion and the continued push to upgrade the Lithgow to Gulgong Railway Line via Kandos.

From the presentation given it appears that the bulk of the infrastructure is in place, however, previous governments have ceased the construction for reasons unknown. The proposal is now to seek support from as many NSW Councils as possible to lobby for the finalisation of this project.

The project has potential benefits to the Lithgow region on a number of fronts, not the least export opportunities for coal. It should be remembered with the proposed Melbourne - Brisbane rail corridor, the western line (through Lithgow) will be the only link to Parkes from the major freight importing and exporting ports, (Port Botany and Port Kembla).

This may potentially see the former rail depot at the base of Scenic Hill becoming an active centre again and the location of maintenance depots, drivers and other staff associated with the transportation of rail freight.

Given the large extent of exportable agricultural commodities from the central west it is also seen as a positive move to consider requesting Centroc and OROC to garnish support from their respective members.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There is no implication to Policy arising from this report. This proposal supports a number of policies aimed at increasing the potential of Lithgow as a gateway and hub for activity linking the Central West and Metropolitan areas of the State.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications.

CONCLUSION

This report seeks a Council resolution to support the completion of the Maldon Dombarton Railway Line.

F08- 28 RESOLVED

THAT:

1. Council support the efforts of the Wollondilly Shire Council to see the finalisation of the Maldon Dombarton Railway Line.
2. Council request Centroc and OROC to gain support from its member Councils for the completion of the Maldon Dombarton Railway Line.
3. Council lobby the Federal Member for Macquarie, the Hon Bob Debus and the local State Member, Gerard Martin to support the finalisation of the Maldon Dombarton Railway Line.

MOVED: Councillor H K Fisher

SECONDED: Councillor M J Wilson.

CARRIED

ITEM:5 GM - 07/04/08 - LITHGOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION INC - MARCH REPORT

REFERENCE

NIL

SUMMARY

This report outlines the President of the Lithgow Business Association Inc report for March 2008.

COMMENTARY

A report was received from the President of the Lithgow Business Association Inc detailing the groundwork for a better future for Lithgow.

The association advised that a great deal of concern was received from local business owners and the general public with regards to the future of Lithgow. The Association contacted many of the businesses to convene a Business Workshop. The workshop took place on February 20 and the aim was to involve the business community in a brainstorming exercise that would enable the association to set the wheels in motion.

