



Director, Hunter Region
Department of Planning and Environment
PO Box 1226
Newcastle NSW 2300

Submission in response to the Draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan

27 February 2018

To the Director, Hunter Region, Department of Planning and Environment,

As a rail haulage service provider in the Hunter Valley coal and bulk commodity supply chain Aurizon welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Department of Planning and Environment's (the Department) *Draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan* (the Draft Plan).

Aurizon acknowledges the general intention of the Draft Plan which aims to protect freight rail access and infrastructure to the Port of Newcastle (the Port) and identifies the Port as a global gateway, providing international freight connections servicing Greater Newcastle and the Hunter region. Furthermore, Direction 2 of the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036*¹ aims to enhance connections to the Asia-Pacific through global gateways and identifies the Port of Newcastle as one of two nationally significant gateways in the region. Ensuring the continuity of the important role the Port plays in the regional economy through the international export of commodities is a key element to the Regional Plan. Whilst these objectives are reflected in the Draft Plan, Aurizon notes that statements of intention made in relation to the Carrington precinct of the Draft Plan (page 84) appear at odds with the general objectives of Department's strategy, specifically the intention to:

"investigate the potential to relocate coal export facilities.... away from residential areas and explore options to renew the Carrington Precinct for alternative uses (including tourism)".

As noted in the *NSW Draft Freight and Ports Plan*² the Port of Newcastle is the world's largest coal export terminal and will continue to be the primary coal export facility for NSW for the foreseeable future. With a strong and stable outlook for coal exports from the Hunter Valley, the Carrington Coal Terminal (CCT) is set to remain a crucial component of the coal supply chain providing capacity (up to 25 million tonnes per annum) and flexibility to producers, rail haulage providers and shipping lines. It should also be acknowledged that the CCT is a large employer

¹ Hunter Regional Plan 2036 (2016): <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/Hunter>

² NSW Draft Freight and Ports Plan (2017): <https://future.transport.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/plans/Freight-and-Ports-Plan.pdf>

in the region which is reflective of the significant economic benefit the coal industry provides to regional communities in NSW.

To Aurizon's knowledge, there are no existing or proposed alternatives able to provide these functions to the Hunter Valley's coal export industry which, as outlined, are consistent with the Department's strategy for ports in NSW and approved in accordance with the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Three Ports) 2013* which under clause 3 (b) aims to "allow the efficient development, re-development and protection of land at Port Botany, Port Kembla and Port of Newcastle".

In summary, Aurizon acknowledges the general intention of the Department's strategy, however, the Draft Plan appears to overlook the integral role the CCT plays, and will continue to play in the; efficient functioning of Newcastle Port; the sustainable utilisation of existing infrastructure; and the Hunter Valley coal supply chain. Aurizon urges the Department to reconsider statements of intention made in relation to the CCT when finalising the Draft Plan.

If you wish to discuss any elements of this submission please do not hesitate to contact Aurizon at 13 23 32.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Baxter', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Catherine Baxter
General Manager, Aurizon Operations SEQ & NSW