

To plan for freight, or not to plan for freight: that is the question:

Gary White¹, Daniela Vujic²

1 NSW Department of Planning and Environment

2 NSW Ports

What if I told you that the import and export of goods (freight) including the efficient movement of freight through our cities and towns was so fundamentally important to the economic prosperity and liveability of our country; that without it, our economy would considerably suffer and our lifestyle standards diminish – would you believe me?

Our ports and the freight supply chain are the heart and arteries of our cities yet many planners do not realise the importance of freight logistics, let alone know how they should be planning for it to deliver liveable and sustainable communities.

The world is changing. Significant changes will occur as a consequence of the freight task interfacing with real time technology. The effectiveness of the distribution and transportation of goods and services will shape our cities and regions.

As an island nation, Australia relies on sea freight to move goods in and out of the country, accounting for over 99 per cent of our imports and exports. Our ports are the international gateways for this freight and are reliant on efficient landside freight facilities and infrastructure.

But do planners understand the environment in which the freight industry needs to operate in order to avoid increased costs to the industry? Do they understand the direct correlation between the ports and the demand of businesses and consumers?

We will discuss why strategic and land use planning for freight is critical for planners to consider and the consequences of not planning for it.