EnergyCo

NSW GOVERNMENT

Managing soil contamination and air quality

Newcastle Logistics Precinct

Environmental Impact Statement | Fact Sheet | July 2026

The Newcastle Logistics Precinct will provide storage and logistics capability needed to transport large renewable energy components to Renewable Energy Zones across NSW, supporting the state's transition to renewable energy.

Overview

The Newcastle Logistics Precinct will be built on the Intertrade site, the location of the former BHP Steelworks at 99 Selwyn Street, Mayfield North.

Following the closure of the steelworks, the Intertrade site was covered with a clean physical barrier, referred to as the 'capping layer' in the late 2010s to contain contaminated soil.

The project has been designed to minimise impacts to the capping layer.

The Intertrade site was part of the former BHP Steelworks which operated from the early 1900s until 1999.

The site was remediated between 2016 and 2018 through a process of identifying and containing contaminated areas with a capping layer across the site to make it safe for continued commercial and industrial use around half a metre deep, on top of the entire site to make it safe for commercial and industrial use. The site is approved for commercial and industrial use under a Contamination Site Management Plan (CSMP).

Use of the site is still subject to an ongoing maintenance order (OMO) regulated by the NSW Environment Protection Authority. The OMO requires EnergyCo to maintain a clean physical barrier over contaminated areas.

Soil contamination

The land was heavily disturbed and contaminated while the steelworks were operational. Contamination is the presence of substances in the environment that may pose a risk to the health of the people who use or occupy that environment, or that can harm the environment itself. Causes of contamination included:

- **Coal washing:** Coal is washed to improve its quality and reduce impurities like ash and sulphur. Coal washery waste can contain elevated concentrations of hydrocarbons and metals.
- **Dredging:** Before the steelworks, the wider area formed part of a large estuarine area adjacent to the Hunter River. Parts of the former steelworks to the north and east of the site were progressively reclaimed using sand and sediment dredged from the river, then filled with wastes including coal washery rejects from local mining and waste from steelworks operations.
- **General industry and steel making:** Waste from the former steelworks operations may contain elevated concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, heavy metals and asbestos.

If contamination has the potential to harm human health and/or the environment, it is remediated to remove the risk. Remediation is carried out in several ways and may include removal or containment of contaminants.

Construction activities

EnergyCo is proposing to upgrade vacant land on the Intertrade site, creating a new open-air storage hardstand of around 31 hectares. The project will feature a new open-air hardstand to store energy components before they are loaded onto heavy vehicles and transported to renewable energy project sites. To build the project we will:

- Have to disturb the capping layer and subsoils
- Build a sealed hardstand
- Improve internal roads
- Install stormwater drainage
- Connect utilities
- Assemble a demountable building for office staff
- Monitor dust throughout construction and install additional controls if required.

As the capping layer and subsoils are impacted, a Work Method Statement will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the CSMP to ensure:

- The work will be undertaken in a way that protects the health of users, contractors or workers and surrounding areas and environment
- Once works are completed, the capping layer will be restored/reinstated/replaced so that users and the environment remain protected to the standard that existed before the works were undertaken.

Air quality

Some construction activities have the potential to generate dust, including moving and placing earthwork material and laying new pavement. During construction, we will procure an experienced construction contractor who are expected to deploy following methods to monitor and mitigate the potential for dust leaving the site:

- Stabilise loose material and water the site
- Cover or fence stockpile areas to avoid dispersal of materials
- Limit vehicle movements to designated entry/exit routes and parking areas.

Site operations

When the project is operating as a logistics facility, the hardstand will be used for unloading, loading and storing equipment used to build renewable energy projects. Vehicles and machinery involved in these activities will release air emissions from the site, however, air quality impacts on nearby receivers will remain within air quality guidelines.

For more information, please refer to *Chapter 10: Contamination and soils* and *Chapter 14: Air quality* of the EIS.

Contact us

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