

Commercial Property

Salta lines up inland port in south-east

Port of Melbourne link planned, writes Philip Hopkins.

MELBOURNE'S south-east will be home to a \$750 million industrial estate linked by rail to the port of Melbourne if local authorities give the go-ahead to a proposal by Salta Properties.

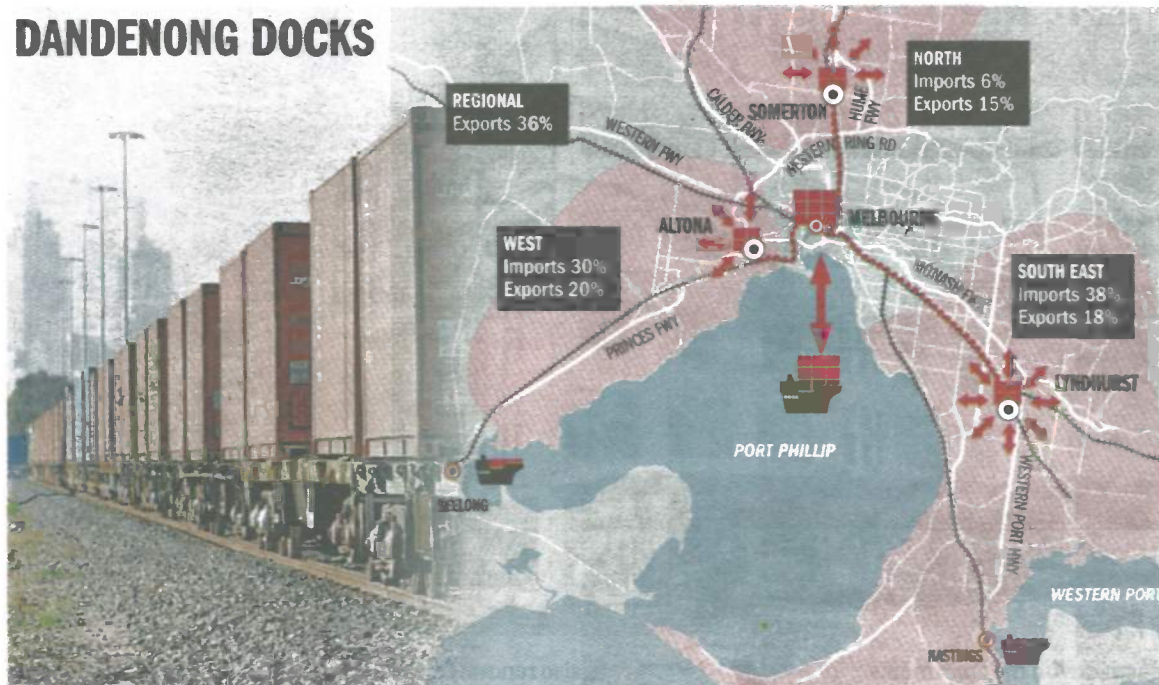
Salta aims to create an "inland port" at Lyndhurst that would shuttle containers to and from the port of Melbourne by train, thus clearing much of the truck traffic from around the port and inner and south-eastern suburbs.

Salta has bought 187 hectares of land with direct access to the Cranbourne rail line and the Western Port Highway for the project.

Salta executive chairman Sam Tarascio told Business Day the site had the capacity for a 1.3 kilometre-long rail siding, 350,000 square metres of industrial space and 500,000 square metres of warehouse space. The total value of the project would be around \$750 million, he said.

The company has submitted a development plan to local government authorities. It has been working on the inland port concept for years, but has fleshed out its plan to meet the government's strategy of a metropolitan freight terminal network, set out in the Victorian transport and freight futures plan. The

DANDENONG DOCKS



government model envisages inland ports in Melbourne's south-east, west and north.

The Lyndhurst freight terminal would be integrated into Salta's warehouse and logistics operations at Victoria Dock in the port of Melbourne, run by its subsidiary Westgate Ports. Victoria Dock is now linked to the Dynon rail terminal and the main rail network.

Mr Tarascio said Lyndhurst could be connected to the Cranbourne train track with a simple

spur, creating a seamless rail link to the port. It would also be well placed to service the port of Hastings if it develops as a container port.

The Lyndhurst project is aimed at pre-leases to big importers and exporters, but would be available to any customers. The warehouses could be built on to the rail link on the Salta land. The goods would be delivered to and from the metropolitan freight terminal to their suburban destinations by truck.

The Lyndhurst site — bounded

by Bayliss, Glasscocks and Taylors roads — has been rezoned and is in the middle of an industrial area.

Mr Tarascio said freight trains could run between the port of Melbourne and Lyndhurst outside peak hours during the day. He has also proposed running road trains on the Monash Freeway between 10pm and 5am. The road train could enter Lyndhurst with one turn off the freeway.

The idea is to establish contracts with importers and exporters so

Get the inland ports working, and the congestion problem is gone. SAM TARASCIO, Salta executive chairman

that the two national stevedores, DP World and Patrick, load and unload the goods to and from ships through the Victoria Dock rail terminal or from the port terminals operated by the two stevedores.

Mr Tarascio said inland ports were crucial to solving the problem of inner-city traffic congestion, particularly around the port of Melbourne. The port now handled 2 million containers a year, and this would double to 4 million within a few years, and 8 million by 2030. By 2020, it is hoped that Lyndhurst would handle similar container volumes to that of the port of Melbourne today.

Salta also has 35 hectares of land at Altona that it aims to use as an inland port for the west. Mr Tarascio said Lyndhurst would handle the 60 per cent of the port's container volumes that were bound for or originated in Melbourne's south-east. The west accounted for about 30 per cent of the containers.

"East and west make up 90 per cent of the port traffic. Get the inland ports working, and the congestion problem is gone," he said.