

ASSESSMENT REPORT

HOLCIM REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION CENTRE, ROOTY HILL Rail Delivery and Infrastructure Re-Configuration Modification (MP 05_0051 Mod 1)

1. BACKGROUND

On 26 April 2006, the Minister for Planning approved a major project application (MP 05_0051) from Rinker Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Readymix) for the construction and use of a regional distribution centre for quarry products at Rooty Hill (see **Figure 1**). However, Blacktown City Council appealed the Minister's decision in the Land and Environment Court. On 24 November 2006, the Court upheld the appeal, but approved the project with a number of additional conditions to regulate noise, dust, conservation and infrastructure impacts. No construction works have so far taken place.

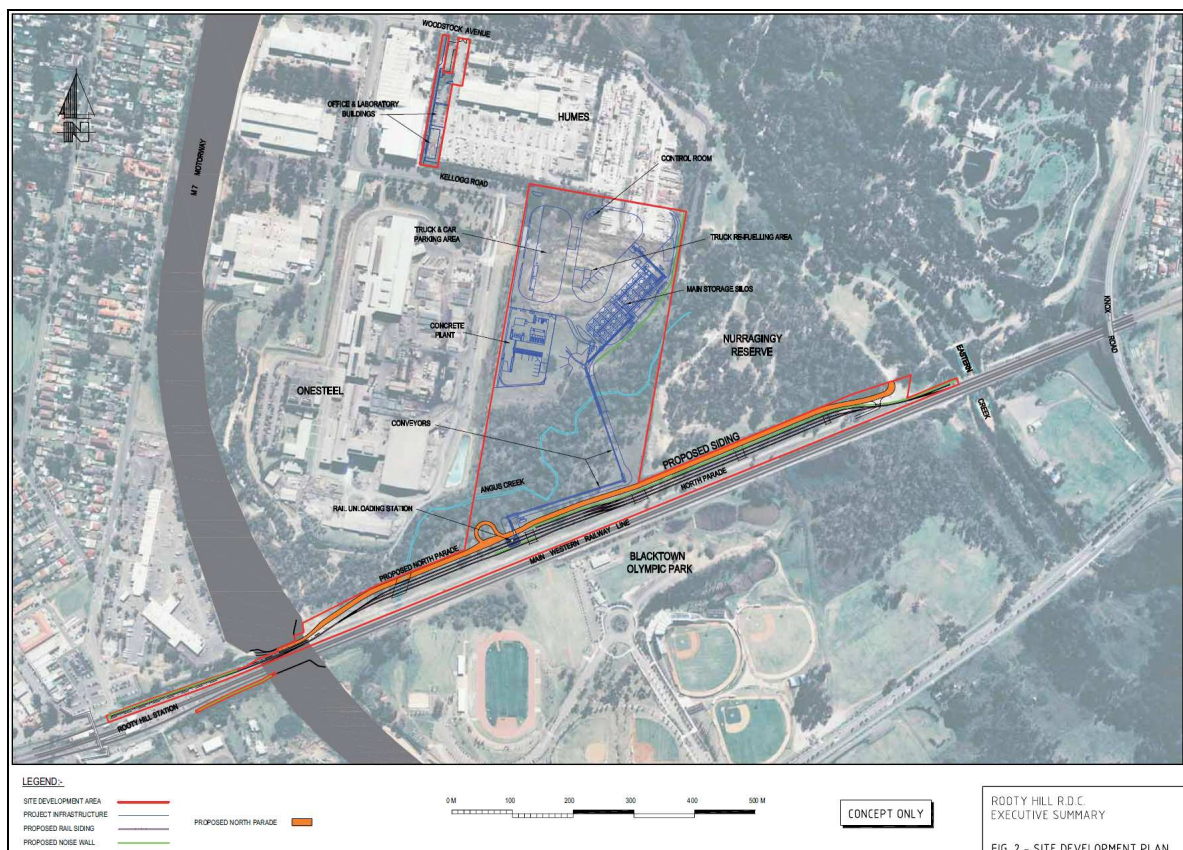


Figure 1: Rinker Regional Distribution Centre, Rooty Hill

The Court's approval permits:

- the construction and operation of a regional distribution centre for quarry products, inclusive of support infrastructure, 24 hours per day seven days per week;
- construction and use of a concrete batching plant with a maximum capacity of 200,000 cubic metres per annum;

- raling up to 4 million tonnes per annum of quarry products from a number of quarries in the Southern Highlands to the site;
- processing of quarry products; and
- distribution of construction materials within the Sydney metropolitan area via road.

2. PROPOSED MODIFICATION

Since the project approval was finalised, Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd (Holcim) has acquired Readymix's Australian holdings. Holcim is seeking approval to modify the project approval under section 75W of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The proposed modification involves:

- reconfiguring the rail siding adjacent to the Main Western Rail Line to reduce the length and number of sidings;
- reducing the payload capacity of trains, and increasing the average number of train deliveries from 4 to 4.5 per day for the initial phase of development;
- altering the configuration and location of the rail unloading facilities;
- increasing the ground storage area adjacent to the radial stacker;
- converting the elevated steel storage bins to on-ground concrete storage bays;
- removing the ground storage bins located west of the elevated steel storage bins;
- closing North Parade in lieu of relocating the road; and
- reconfiguring the office, workshop and other internal facilities to improve operational efficiencies.

It is important to note that whilst the application proposes a reduction in the length and number of rail sidings, the application also seeks to retain the ability to construct the currently-approved rail sidings (inclusive of approved noise and dust mitigation measures) in the event that sufficient train paths are not available when the site is operating at peak capacity.

Table 1 below provides a comparison of the approved project and the proposed modified project. The proposed modifications are depicted in **Figure 2** below, and are described in full in the *Proposed Minor Modification to Holcim Regional Distribution Centre (RDC), Rooty Hill Environmental Assessment*, prepared by Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited (Umwelt) and dated October 2010.

Table 1: Comparison of the Approved Project and the Proposed Modified Project

Component	Approved	Changes Proposed
<i>Production Capacity</i>	• 4 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) of saleable product.	• no change.
<i>Mode of Transport</i>	• receiving up to 4 Mtpa of quarry product via rail; • average number of rail movements 8 per day (one way); and • distributing up to 4 Mtpa of quarry product via road.	• increase the average number of rail movements to 9 per day (one way).
<i>Hours of Operation</i>	• 24 hours per day seven days per week.	• no change.
<i>Construction Hours</i>	• 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Friday; and • 8:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays.	• no change.
<i>Employees</i>	• 250 construction jobs and 220 operational jobs.	• no change.
<i>Rail Siding</i>	• construction of 4 rail sidings up to 1500 metres (m) in length.	• construction of 3 rail sidings up to 1100 m in length.
<i>Aggregate Unloading Facilities</i>	• construction of a single rail unloading station comprised of two bins with capacity to hold 200 tonnes (t) of aggregate.	• reconfiguration of the unloading bins; and • reducing the excavation depth for the rail unloading facilities from 9 m to 4 m.
<i>Radial Stacker</i>	• construction of a radial stacker adjacent to the unloading facilities for use in the event of a loading malfunction.	• no change.
<i>Materials Transfer,</i>	• use of an above ground conveyor	• materials transferred from the

<i>Storage and Loadout Facilities</i>	- system to transfer materials from the unloading facilities to the storage bins; - construction of 30 elevated storage bins (33.5 m high) with a total storage capacity of 60,000 t; - construction of 5 ground storage bins with a total storage capacity of 500 t; - use of an above-ground reclaim hopper to transfer materials from the radial stacker stockpiles to the main storage bins in the event of a malfunction; - construction and operation of two truck loading stations; - loads transported from the main storage bins to a loading bin via a conveyor and diverter chute; - product is transferred to a truck via a telescopic chute.	- unloading facilities to storage bins via an underground conveyor system; - construction of 23 m high on-ground concrete storage bins, with a total storage capacity of 60,000 t; - removal of the 500 t ground storage bins; - removal of reclaim hopper. All material stored in the radial stacker stockpiles would be transferred directly to trucks for distribution via a front end loader; - construction and operation of 2 truck loading stations; and - minor changes to the conveyor and chute system to reflect the revised project configuration.
<i>Pug Mill</i>	- transfer of cement or lime via an enclosed conveyor system to the pug mill; and - blending of up to 400 t of road base per hour with cement and lime product.	- relocation of the pug mill (north-west of the on-ground storage bins); and - construction and use of an additional storage bin adjacent to the mill.
<i>Concrete Batching Plant</i>	- construction of 4 silos (23 m tall) with capacity to store 120 t of product; - on ground aggregate storage bins with a total capacity of 1,740 t, washout pits, truck wash bays and office facilities; - maximum production of 200,000 m³ of concrete per year; and 20 agitator parking bays.	no change.
<i>Weighbridges, Re-fuelling Station, Truck Wash Bays and Truck Parking Facilities</i>	- construction and use of entry and exit weighbridges; - construction and use of a truck refuelling facility with capacity to store 100,000 litres of fuel; - construction and use of a truck wash down bay; and - construction and use of 42 truck parking bays.	Minor reconfigurations to improve operational facilities.
<i>Road and Rail Bridges</i>	construction of two bridges over Angus Creek.	no change.
<i>North Parade</i>	realignment and construction of North Parade along the northern boundary of the rail siding.	closure of North Parade adjacent to the project area.
<i>Administrative Buildings and Ancillary Facilities</i>	- construction and use of a four storey administration building; - construction and use of a single storey testing laboratory; - construction and use of two two-storey amenities buildings; use of 310 car bays (105 of which are approved for use by the adjacent Humes Concrete Products Factory, also owned by Holcim).	minor realignment of facilities to improve operational efficiencies.

3. STATUTORY CONTEXT

Consent Authority

The Minister was the consent authority for the original project application, and is consequently the consent authority for this modification application. However, as the modification generated less than 10 public submissions, the Deputy Director-General, Development Assessment and Systems Performance, may determine the application under the Minister's delegation of 25 January 2010.

Section 75W

The Department is satisfied that the proposed modification falls within the scope of a "modification" as envisaged under section 75W of the EP&A Act, and may therefore be determined as a modification, rather than being considered as a project in its own right.

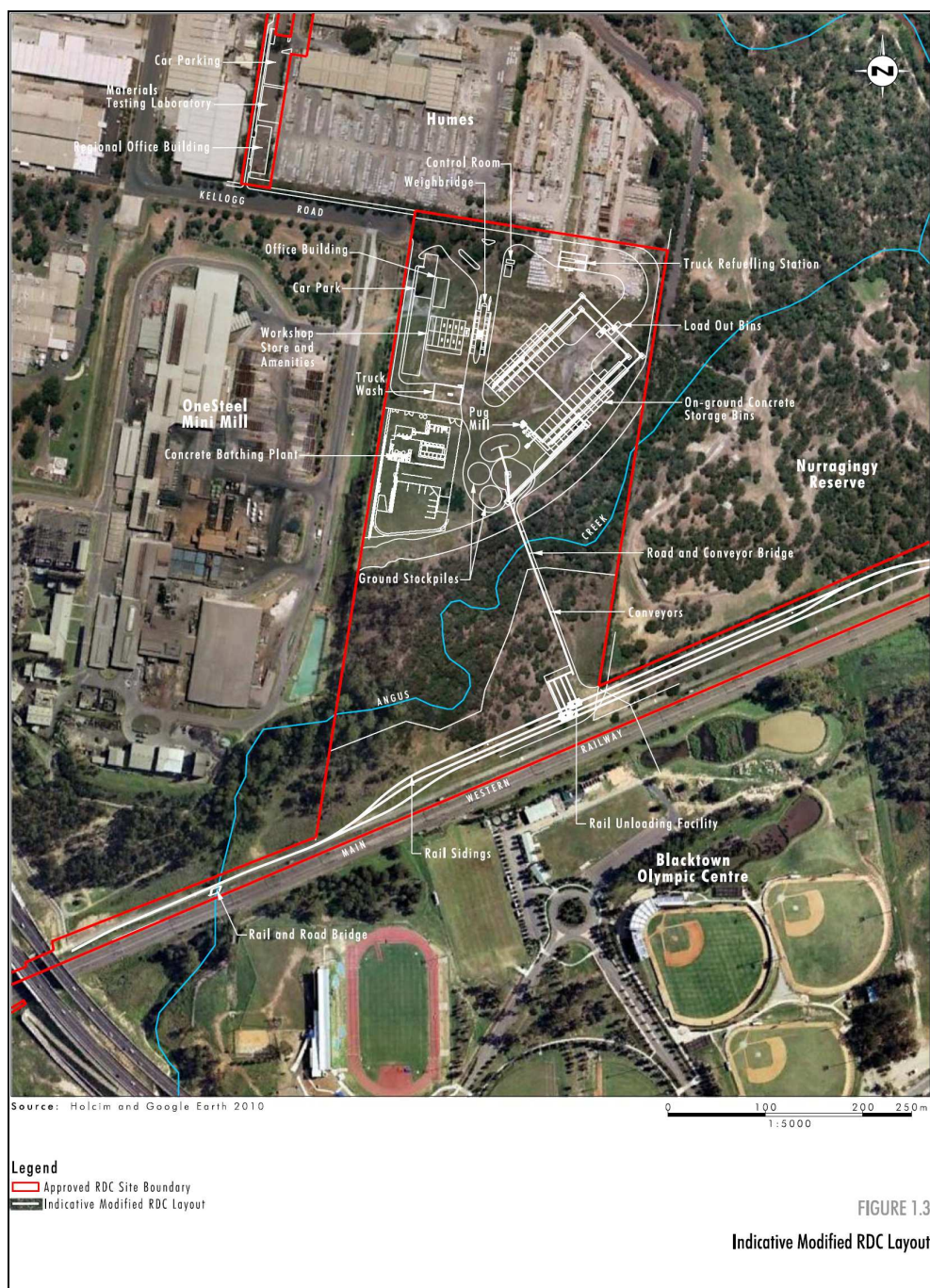


Figure 2: Proposed Modifications to the Project Layout

Environmental Planning Instruments

Section 5.2 of the environmental assessment for the proposed modification contains a detailed assessment of the proposed modification against the relevant provisions of the environmental planning instruments that apply to the proposal. The Department has considered this assessment, and is satisfied that none of these instruments substantially governs the development associated with the proposed modification.

4. CONSULTATION

Under section 75W, the Department is not required to notify or exhibit the application. However, after accepting the EA for the proposed modification, the Department:

- made the EA publicly available from 13 October until 1 November 2010;
 - on the Department's website,
 - at the Department's Information Centre; and
 - at Blacktown City Council's office;
- notified relevant State and local government authorities; and
- advertised the exhibition in the St Mary's and Mt Druitt Standard.

The Department received three submissions from government agencies on the project. A summary of the submissions is provided below.

Blacktown City Council (Council) advised that it has no in-principle objection to the modification, however, advised that it has concerns regarding:

- the lack of information included in the EA relating to the design of the water management system and the civil works required to be undertaken on site;
- the potential flooding impacts of the modification; and
- the potential for the development to give rise to air and/or water pollution.

Council proposed a number of new conditions to address these issues. The Department has reviewed Council's comments and considers that the existing conditions of approval would sufficiently regulate on-site water management and the environmental/amenity impacts of the modified project. In addition, the Department considers that additional information relating to civil works can be provided at the time that the proponent applies for a Construction Certificate.

The **Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water** (DECCW) raised no objection to the proposed modification, however, it advised that the proponent is no longer required to obtain an Environmental Protection Licence (EPL) as concrete batching plants have been removed from the list of 'scheduled activities' identified in the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act). The Department has noted DECCW's comments.

The **Western Sydney Parklands Trust** raised no objection to the application.

Holcim has provided a detailed response to the issues raised in the submissions. The Department has considered all issues in the submissions and Holcim's response to these issues in its assessment.

5. ASSESSMENT

The Department has assessed the application on its merits, and summarised the results of this assessment in the table below.

Table 2: Assessment of Issues

Issue	Assessment	Recommendation
Noise	<u>Construction Noise</u> No change is proposed to the construction period or the construction methods modelled in the original Noise Impact Assessment (NIA). Furthermore, the revised NIA demonstrates that, with the exception of a temporary exceedence of 1 dBA at Nurragingy Reserve, the modified proposal would comply with the noise goals in DECCW's <i>Interim Construction Noise Guideline</i> .	No change to existing conditions of approval.

	<u>Operational Noise</u> The revised NIA demonstrates that the proposed modifications would not result in any exceedences of the project specific noise levels at any residential receiver, the Nurragingy Reserve, the Colebee Centre or the Blacktown Olympic Centre. Furthermore, the Department notes that the project would reduce noise emissions by 1dBa at the majority of the abovementioned receivers. <u>Rail Noise</u> The revised NIA demonstrates that the proposed increase to the average number of train movements per day would not increase rail noise beyond the original noise predictions. <u>Sleep Disturbance</u> The revised NIA demonstrates that the proposed modification would not result in exceedences of the sleep disturbance criterion. Given the above, the Department is satisfied that the proposed modification would not result in any adverse noise impacts at sensitive receivers within proximity to the project area.	
<i>Air Quality</i>	The revised Air Quality Impact Assessment demonstrates: - o there would be no change to the original dust emission predictions for the construction component of the project; and - o the proposed modifications would reduce the total estimated dust emissions during the operational phase of the project from 38,585 kg/year to 33,126 kg/year, which equates to minor reductions in 24 hour PM10, annual average PM10, annual average TSP concentrations, and annual dust deposition levels. Given the above, the Department is satisfied that the proposed modifications would not result in any adverse dust impacts at sensitive receivers.	No change to existing conditions of approval.
<i>Ecology</i>	The project would result in the removal of an additional 0.09 ha of vegetation, 0.02 ha of which is comprised of Cumberland Plain Woodland Critically Endangered Ecological Community, to accommodate the modified rail unloading facility. The proponent has undertaken additional flora and fauna surveys within the disturbance footprint and has concluded that: - o the majority of the disturbance area is dominated by exotic groundcover species; - o the area of Cumberland Plain Woodland within the disturbance area is predominantly characterised by low quality native groundcover species; and - o there are no threatened fauna species within the disturbance footprint. Further, given that no changes are proposed to the design of the bridges over Angus Creek, or the approved water management system, the Department is satisfied that the modification would not impact on aquatic flora and fauna. The Department has reviewed the results of the additional flora and fauna surveys in conjunction with DECCW, and is satisfied that the existing conditions of approval would ensure that the clearance of existing vegetation is managed appropriately, and the removal of an additional 0.02 ha of Cumberland Plain Woodland does not warrant an additional offset.	No change to existing conditions of approval.
<i>Water Management</i>	The application does not propose any changes the water management system.	No change to existing conditions of approval.

<i>Transport</i>	The application would not increase vehicle movements during construction or operation of the project. The application proposes to increase the average number of each-way rail movements from 4 to 4.5 per day in order to reduce the length of the rail siding and payload capacity of trains accessing the site. This would not generate additional noise or dust impacts. Traffic associated with the construction and operation of the distribution centre can be regulated via existing conditions of approval.	No change to existing conditions of approval.
<i>Site Access</i>	The Council is in the process of closing the portion of North Parade adjacent to the project. It is proposed to remove all references within the approval that relate to the requirement to re-construct the portion of North Parade adjacent to the project. Given that there is sufficient room for emergency vehicles to access the site, the Department raises no objection to the closure of the unconstructed portion of North Parade.	Deletion of Condition 2.21B of the approval, which requires the re-construction of North Parade adjacent to the project area.
<i>Visual Impact</i>	A revised view analysis identifies that the visual impacts of the modified project would be reduced at 10 of the 12 view points, and the impact at the remaining view points will be less or the same as those predicted under the original assessment. The reduction in the visual impact is predominantly due to the proposed reduction in height of the main storage bins. Further, the majority of the development has been relocated behind existing vegetation which would assist in visual screening of the project.	No change to existing conditions of approval.
<i>Greenhouse Gas & Energy Use</i>	The proposed modification would not alter operational demands for diesel or electricity. The Department is satisfied that the modified project would not increase greenhouse gas emissions from the approved development.	No change to existing conditions of approval.
<i>Aboriginal and European Heritage</i>	No significant sites are located within the project area.	No change to existing conditions of approval.
<i>Hazards</i>	The application does not propose to modify hazardous materials inventories. The original classification of the development as a 'non-hazardous' industry (as defined in SEPP 33 – Hazardous and Offensive Developments) remains applicable.	No change to existing conditions of approval.
<i>Socio-Economic Assessment</i>	The application would not alter the capital investment value of the project, or alter the number of construction or operational jobs that the project would create.	No change to existing conditions of approval.

6. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

The Department has prepared recommended conditions for the modification. Holcim has reviewed and accepted these conditions.

7. CONCLUSION

The Department has assessed the proposed modification in accordance with the relevant requirements of the EP&A Act, including the objects of the EP&A Act and the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

The assessment found that the environmental impacts of the modified project would not be significantly different from the development as originally approved and could be suitably controlled via the existing conditions of consent.

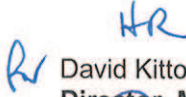
The Department is satisfied that the proposed modification is in the public interest and should be approved.

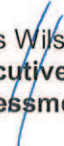
8. RECOMMENDATION

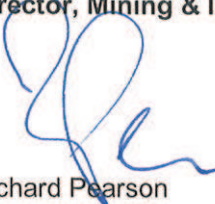
It is RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Director-General, Development Assessments and Systems Performance:

- **consider** the findings and recommendations of this report;
- **determine** that the proposed modification is within the scope of section 75W of the EP&A Act;
- **approve** the proposed modification under section 75W of the EP&A Act; and
- **sign** the attached Notice of Modification (Tag A).


Howard Reed 17.3.11
Manager Mining Projects


David Kitto 17.3
Director, Mining & Industry Projects


Chris Wilson
Executive Director, Major Projects
Assessment


Richard Pearson 22/3/11
Deputy Director-General, Development Assessments
and Systems Performance