

Planning Assessment Report

Application to Modify the Minister's Approval for Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex

Major Project 06_0232 MOD 3

1 BACKGROUND

The Minister for Planning approved a project application for the Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex on 1 March 2010 subject to conditions, for the following:

1. Retention of the existing rifle range (800m) and ancillary facilities;
2. An additional rifle range (500m x 100m);
3. A new pistol range (50m x 140m);
4. A new combined rifle and pistol shooting range (200m x 85m);
5. A new shotgun range;
6. An new indoor air range (21m x 17m x 6.5m); and
7. New supporting facilities and infrastructure including:
 - Clubhouse and toilet facilities
 - Internal access roads
 - Diesel generator, solar panels, water supply tanks and septic system
 - Sealed parking for approximately 180 cars
 - Ponds for water quality control and fire fighting purposes

Stage 1 of the shooting complex will consist of the first 3 ranges (the existing 800m range, new 500m rifle range, and 50m pistol range) and new supporting facilities and infrastructure. Construction of the remaining 3 ranges (200m combined range, shotgun range and indoor air range) will be subject to future funding agreements.

On 23 October 2010, the approval was modified under section 75W of the Act by amending the location of the 500m rifle range and 200m combined rifle and pistol range, and adjacent sedimentation ponds, to be consistent with unauthorised land clearing.

On 1 December 2010, the approval was further modified under section 75W of the Act by amending one of the approved plans, which showed the incorrect location of the 50m pistol range.

On 11 January 2011, the proponent requested that the project be further modified under section 75W of the Act by including to sign-in control booths for the 500m rifle and 50m pistol range, and use of the clubhouse building footprint for overflow car parking.

2 THE PROPOSED MODIFICATION

The proposed modification seeks approval to install 2 sign-in control booths, one for the 500m range and a second for the 50 metre pistol range. These two ranges, along with the existing 800m range, comprise the first stage of the new regional shooting complex.

The booths are proposed to provide a sign-in control point for shooters who will use the new ranges, which is a requirement of the NSW Firearms Registry. The booths will have a footprint of 7m x 5m, and each will have 2 unisex toilets, storage area, and areas for a diesel generator and a water tank. The sign-in booths will be located at the easterly point of each range, immediately behind the firing points and adjacent to approved parking areas for each range. The booths will be within the existing

approved cleared areas. The proponent advised that the design and use of the booths has been the outcome of consultation with the NSW Firearms Registry Range Inspector.

As a result of the installation of the 2 booths, the approved clubhouse, which is proposed to have limited facilities including change rooms, showers and toilets, does not need to be built at this stage. The proponent is therefore seeking to delay the construction of the clubhouse until the construction of the indoor air range, which adjoins the clubhouse but is to be built at the later stage. In the interim period, the clubhouse site is proposed to be revegetated, with informal parking proposed on a grassed area of the building footprint.

3 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Section 75W(2) of the Act provides that a proponent may request the Minister to modify his approval of a project. The Minister's approval is not required if the project as modified will be consistent with the original approval.

The proposed modification seeks to change the terms of the Minister's determination by amending conditions of approval that relate to the approved plans, being A2 – Development in Accordance with Plans and Documentation. Accordingly, the modification will require approval.

Section 75W(3) of the Act provides the Director-General with scope to issue environmental assessment requirements (DGRs) that must be addressed before the consideration by the Minister or his delegate. DGRs have not been issued for the modification because the potential impacts arising from the modification are addressed by the DGRs issued for the original application and the Environmental Assessment provided in response to the DGRs. It is considered that the impacts arising from the proposed modification are similar to the original proposal, and that no further assessment requirements are necessary.

Section 75W(4) of the Act gives the Minister the authority to modify the approval (with or without conditions) or disapprove the modification. Following consideration of the proposed modification (see below), the Department recommends the modification be approved.

4 CONSULTATION

As the proposed modification is of minor environmental impact compared to the original approval, it is therefore not considered necessary to publicly exhibit the proposed modification. The application was placed on the Department's website after the application had been duly made. No submissions were received regarding the application whilst it was being assessed.

5 CONSIDERATION

The booths are to be located in existing cleared areas, adjacent to the firing points. On-site septic systems will be provided for each booth using a Kelair Blivert system or equivalent.

The impacts of the booths are considered to be minor given their relative small size and location in existing cleared areas.

The application proposes that the cleared area for the clubhouse be revegetated and an area set aside for informal parking. Given the number of parking spaces available at each range, and that a parking area is to be provided for the clubhouse/indoor air range, the Department does not support additional parking on the clubhouse site. Concerns are also raised about possible sedimentation, erosion and drainage impacts resulting from informal car parking on this part of the site. It is therefore recommended that the area cleared for the clubhouse building be revegetated until it is to be constructed.

6 CONCLUSION

The proposed modification works for the sign-in booths are considered to be acceptable and will result in negligible impacts.

7 DELEGATION

The Minister has delegated his functions in relation to modifying an approval under s75W of the EP&A Act under the Instrument of Delegation gazetted 5 February 2010.

8 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Executive Director, Urban Renewal and Major Sites:

- consider the Minister's project approval for the Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex dated 1 March 2010;
- consider the Director General's Environmental Assessment Report for the Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex dated February 2010, including attachments;
- consider the documentation submitted to the Department in support of the proposed modification;
- approve the proposed modification under section 75W of the EP&A Act; and
- sign the attached Instrument (**Tag A**)

Prepared by:



Michelle Cramsie
Senior Planner
Strategic Assessment

Approved by:



Simon Bennett
Team Leader
Strategic Assessment



Michael File
Director
Strategic Assessment



Giovanni Cirillo
Executive Director
Urban Renewal and Major Sites