

Environmental Assessment Report Project Application

Sydney Olympic Park

Alterations and Additions to the Royal Agricultural Society
Exhibition Hall

Submitted to
Department of Planning
On Behalf of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

April 2010 ■ 09591

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This report has been prepared by: Jennie Buchanan

Signature  Date 13/04/10

This report has been reviewed by: Gordon Kirkby

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Statement of Validity

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared and submitted under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (as amended) by:

Environmental Assessment

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In respect of	Project Application


Project Application

Applicant Name	Royal Agricultural Society of NSW
Applicant Address	1 Showground Road, Sydney Olympic Park
Land to be developed	1 Showground Road, Sydney Olympic Park
Proposed development	Alterations and Additions to the RAS Exhibition Hall

Environmental Assessment	An Environmental Assessment (EA) is attached
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Certificate	I certify that I have prepared the content of this Environmental Assessment and to the best of my knowledge:
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- It is in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and Regulation.
- It is true in all material particulars and does not, by its presentation or omission of information, materially mislead.

Signature	
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Name	Jennie Buchanan
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Date	April 2010
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Cox Richardson Architects Pty Ltd
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Executive Summary

Purpose of this report

This Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) in relation to alterations and additions to the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) Exhibition Hall is submitted to the Minister for Planning pursuant to Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005.

The proponent is the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS).

Overview of Project

The proposal seeks approval for the following elements:

- Demolition of existing service pods on the north western side of the exhibition hall;
- Excavation and installation of piles;
- Construction of a new concourse along the north western side of the exhibition hall to provide covered connection between the halls and entrance;
- Creation of a new secondary entrance to Australia Avenue;
- New floor, glazed screen, doors and canopy to the external walkway of the Dome Building;
- Construction of 3 new single storey service pods within the new concourse structure providing toilet facilities and meeting room areas;
- Installation new operable internal walls so to enable the further division of the exhibition space for smaller events;
- Upgrade of the existing air-conditioning system within the hall including installation of new ducting in the roof space; and
- Resurfacing of Riverina Avenue with two-toned concrete and relocation of 4 existing trees on the northern side of Riverina Avenue.

A separate Part 4 application will be lodged in late January for demolition and early site preparation works.

The Site

The application relates to the existing RAS Exhibition Hall within Sydney Olympic Park. The site has an approximate area of 51,084m² and is legally described as Lot 1021, DP 875723.

Environmental Impacts

This EAR provides an assessment of the environmental impacts of the project in accordance with the Director-General's Environmental Assessment Requirements and includes a draft Statement of Commitments (see **Chapter 6**) which sets out the undertakings made by the RAS to manage and minimise potential impacts arising from the development.

The proposed addition to the existing hall has been designed such that it complements the existing appearance of the hall and is of an appropriate scale to the surrounding development. The addition is also consistent with the long term master plan vision of the Sydney Showground Precinct in that it does not prevent the further expansion of the exhibition facilities on the northern side of Riverina Avenue.

The amendments to the public domain include resurfacing of Riverina Avenue and relocation of three existing Fig Trees so as to provide a better connection to the Southee Pavilion, thereby improving access through the site. All areas of the development will be accessible to people with mobility impairments.

Of particular importance to this project is the staging of construction so as to ensure that events already scheduled for 2010 and 2011 in the exhibition hall are not adversely affected or disrupted as well as events occurring within the broader Sydney Olympic Park area. Prior to works commencing, the appointed contractor will be preparing a detailed Construction and Environmental Plan which will outline the detailed construction staging and mitigative measures which will be put in place to ensure this occurs.

The proposed development will not generate any adverse visual impacts and tree protection measures are proposed to ensure that the row of heritage palm trees located on the eastern side of Showground Road are protected throughout the proposed construction works.

Conclusion

The proposal is entirely permissible under the planning controls for the site in State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005. The matters for which approval are sought are also consistent with the objectives of the Draft Sydney Olympic Park Masterplan 2030.

The Draft Statement of Commitments has been prepared to inform the detailed design of the development and manage construction and on-going environmental impacts. The environmental assessment addresses the Director General's Requirements and demonstrates the impacts of the proposal can be satisfactorily managed and therefore the project should be approved.

1.0 Introduction

This Project Application and Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) is submitted to the Minister for Planning pursuant to Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

The Project Application seeks approval for alterations and additions to the Royal Agricultural Society Exhibition Hall, at Sydney Olympic Park, as described in Section 2 of this report. This EAR fulfils the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements (DGRs) issued in December 2009 (**Appendix A**).

The report has been prepared by JBA Urban Planning Consultants Pty Ltd, for the proponent, the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS), and is based on plans prepared by Cox Richardson Architects (**Appendix B**) and the supporting technical documents provided by the expert consultant team (see Table of Contents).

This EAR describes the site, its environs and the proposed development. It also includes an assessment of the proposal in accordance with the DGRs under Part 3A of the EP&A Act. It should be read in conjunction with the information contained within and appended to this report.

1.1 Development Application No. S38/6/96

The existing Exhibition Hall was approved under development application S38/6/96. This application sought consent for '*Construction of buildings and supporting infrastructure, carry out earthworks on land occupied by P & M Quality Smallgoods Pty Ltd, subdivide land to enable lease of Showground Site to the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS); use of facilities by the RAS throughout the year, use of facilities for the Royal Easter Show, use of facilities for exhibition and entertainment, recreation and sporting activities and use of facilities for the Year 2000 Olympics and Paralympics*'.

Consent for the above development was granted by the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning in September 1996 and a copy of the Notice of Determination is included at **Appendix C**.

1.2 John O'Neill Report 2007

In 2007 the NSW Government commissioned John O'Neill to undertake an assessment of the existing exhibition space and conference facilities in Sydney, including Darling Harbour and Sydney Olympic Park, against interstate and overseas competition.

In the review of the Sydney Showground facilities, it was noted that the existing facilities are underutilised for combination of reasons include:

- quality of facilities;
- limited activity in the surrounding precinct; and
- distance/access from the CBD.

In addition, the size is currently inadequate to hold some events (current size is 31,550m²).

The review recommended that the facility be expanded in a progressive way so as to provide good quality exhibition space (approximately 35,000m² – 40,000m²) for local exhibition events whilst Darling Harbour would remain the focus for international convention events.

1.3 Sydney Showground Exhibition Hall Upgrade & Expansion – Design Competition 2008

In early 2008, a brief was formulated by the RAS for the expansion of the Sydney Showground exhibition and meeting facilities, in response to the recommendations contained in the “O’Neill Report” issued in March. This brief formed the basis of a design competition managed by SOPA, to be submitted in June 2008.

The brief called for the upgrade of existing exhibition halls, as well as the replacement of ‘under utilised single use’ venues with additional flexible exhibition / convention space, thus allowing the Sydney Showground to grow its potential in attracting large exhibitions. It included a detailed schedule of facilities required to achieve this outcome.

The brief also nominated a staged approach to this expansion, with 2 stages: Stage 1, a 5000 seat multi purpose auditorium, and associated foyer and pre-function areas, BOH and carparking as well as upgrades to existing halls; Stage 2, 10,000m² additional exhibition halls of, including associated FOH, BOH, loading and carparking.

COX submitted a winning scheme to this competition, awarded after several presentations and design reviews in mid 2008 (see illustrations below). The scheme outlined in the submission reflected the brief in terms of facilities provided, and staging goals. As part of the submission, preliminary financial advice from a Quantity Surveyor was used to further inform some staging and delivery options in line with the nominated budget (\$100-\$140M).

Subsequent to the design competition, several workshops were held with the RAS to develop the return brief and meet budget and program constraints. These further developed the staging options, as shown in **Figure 1**. This application is the first in a series that will be lodged for the expansion of the Sydney Showgrounds.

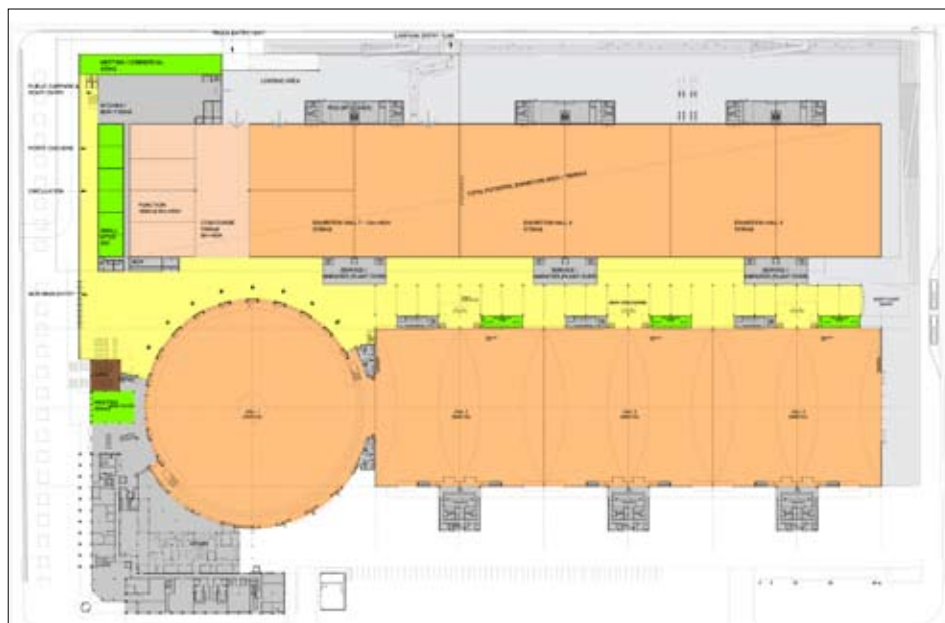


Figure 1 – Future Expansion of the Sydney Showgrounds
Source: Cox Richardson

1.4 Pre-Application Meeting

A Pre-application meeting was held on 1st December 2009 which was attended by officers of the Department of Planning (DoP) and the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA), the Proponent and representatives of the Proponent (Cox Richardson & JBA).

At the meeting the proposed development was presented to the DoP planning officers and what was considered to be the key issues in the mind of the Proponent.

At that meeting the critical timing of the project was also discussed. In particular it was noted that the proposed works will need to commence soon after the conclusion of the 2010 Easter Show so as to ensure they are progressed to a point which will allow for the 2011 Easter show to be held in a safe manner. The RAS Exhibition Hall will continue to function while the hall is being upgraded and as such the staging of the project is also critical for this to be able to occur.

The Sydney Easter Show is a major attraction not only for the subregion but Sydney itself. The show also provides the opportunity for the agricultural industry to showcase its wares to an international audience.

2.0 Site Analysis

2.1 Site Location and Context

The RAS Exhibition Hall is located within the ‘Sydney Showground Precinct’ of Sydney Olympic Park. Sydney Olympic Park is located within the Local Government Area of Auburn. It is 14km west of Sydney CBD and 8km east of Parramatta CBD.

Sydney Olympic Park, has an area of approximately 640 hectares of which approximately 190 hectares comprises sporting venues and the town centre and 425 hectares of public open space. It is the largest event space in Sydney and NSW.

Sydney Olympic Park’s regional context is shown at **Figure 2**.

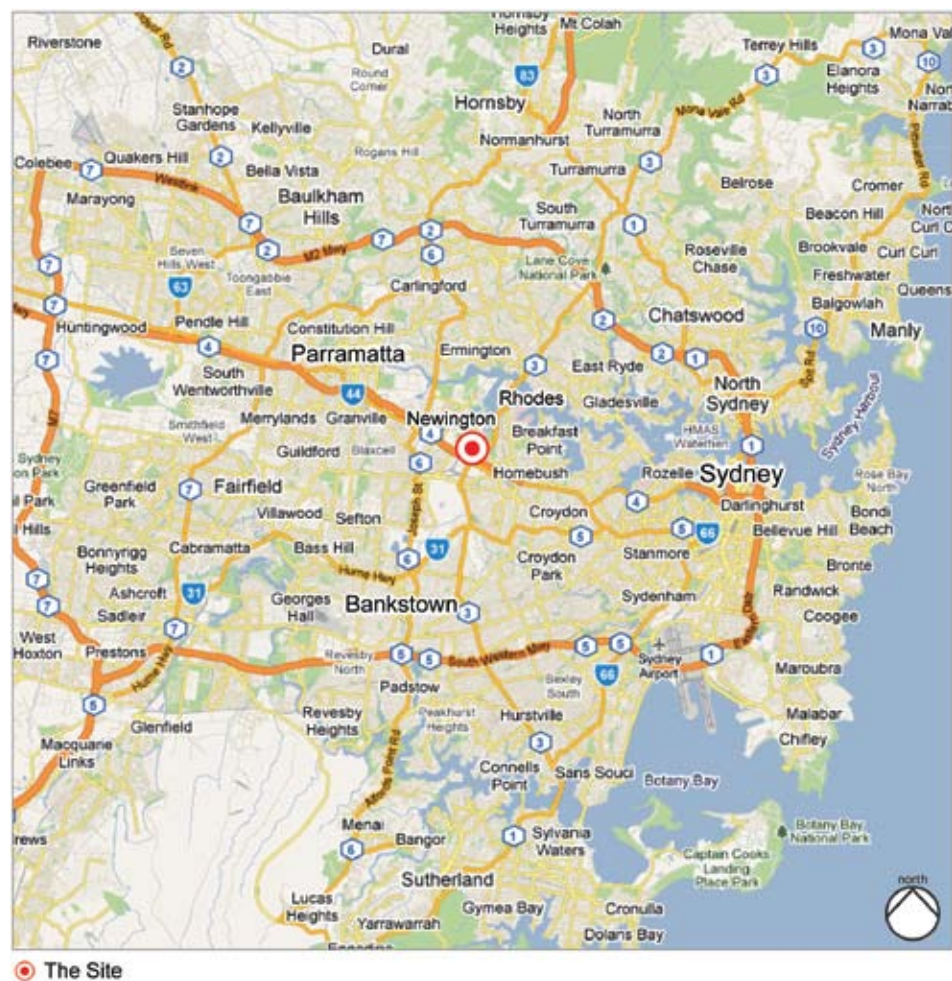


Figure 2 – Locality Plan

2.2 Site Ownership

The site is owned by the SOPA however it is on a 99 year lease to the RAS. Under the terms of the lease, the RAS continues to hold the lease provided it continues to operate the Easter Show annually at the facility. The RAS is also required to utilise the site during the non Easter Show period for business events.

2.3 Site Description

An aerial photo of the site is shown at **Figure 3**. A Site Analysis Plan has been provided at **Appendix B**. The site has an area of 51,084m² and is legally described as Lot 1021, DP 875723. The existing site survey plan is included at **Appendix B**.

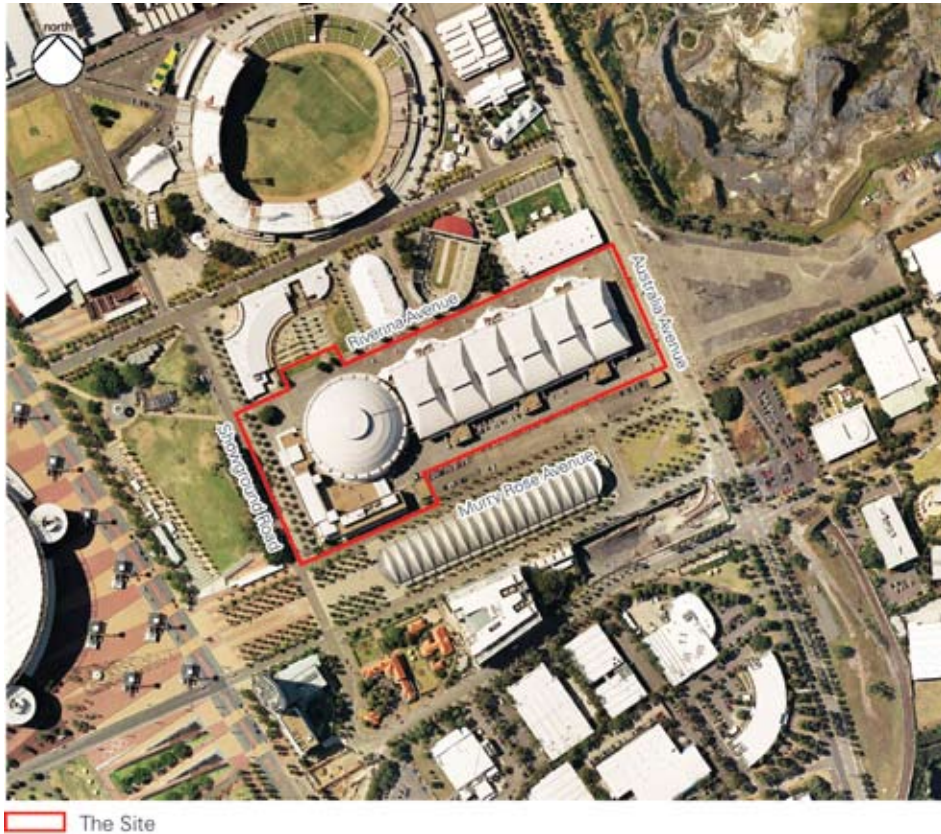


Figure 3 – Site Plan

Existing Development

The site is occupied by the Royal Australia Exhibition Hall (RAS Exhibition Hall). The Hall comprises of a circular dome building and a rectangular building which are joined and can operate a one exhibition space or can be divided into 4 separate exhibition spaces. The RAS Hall has a total Gross Floor Area (GFA) of approximately 31,550m² and an overall height of RL158.26m at the dome and RL142.55m at the exhibition halls. The building is generally constructed with a steel and timber frame and metal cladding. Photos of the existing exhibition hall are provided in **Figures 4** through **7**.

Under the Sydney Olympic Park Masterplan, the RAS Exhibition Hall is identified as an 'Iconic Structure' which was specifically built for the Olympic Games and is to be retained on the site.



Figure 4 – Northern elevation of the Exhibition Hall looking west



Figure 5 – Riverina Avenue looking east



Figure 6 – Western elevation of the Dome Building



Figure 7 – Existing entrances and service pods on the northern elevation of the hall

Landform / Vegetation

The site has a gentle slope downwards towards the north and is generally free of any significant vegetation. However along Showground Road is a row of mature Palm Trees which form part of the heritage streetscape. A mature Fig Tree is also located on the site at the intersection of Showground Road and Riverina Avenue. A row of mature Fig trees are located on the northern side of Riverina Avenue.

Access

Sydney Olympic Park is supported by a wide choice of public transport services including a train station located immediately south of the site, regional bus services which provide regular daily services from Sydney Olympic Park to Burwood and Parramatta Road Town Centres, ferry network and bicycle network.

2.4 Surrounding Development

The RAS exhibition centre is located immediately north of the Sydney Olympic Park train station which connects the site with the greater City Rail network (**Figure 8**).

To the east of the site, on the opposite side of Australia Avenue is an at-grade car park and the western boundary of Bicentennial Park. Bicentennial Park is a large metropolitan parkland which is part of Sydney Olympic Park and offers visitors recreation, nature-based tours, environmental education and outdoor event experiences.

To the north of the site is the remainder of the Showground Precinct which comprises a series of stadiums and smaller exhibition spaces that have been predominantly designed for use during the Easter Show (**Figures 9 to 12**). These buildings are known as Southee Complex, Badgery Pavillion, Charles Moses Stadium and the Howie Complex. Under the draft Sydney Olympic Masterplan 2030, these buildings are likely to be demolished to make way for a multipurpose facility that can cater for a larger range of event types.

To the west of the site is Showground Road which is an heritage item. Beyond Showground Road is a public park known as 'The Overflow' (**Figure 13**) and the ANZ stadium.



Figure 8 – Sydney Olympic Park Train Station



Figure 9 – Southee Complex as viewed from Riverina Avenue



Figure 10 – Badgery Pavillion as viewed from Riverina Avenue



Figure 11 – Charles Moses Stadium as viewed from Riverina Avenue



Figure 12 – Howie Complex as viewed from Riverina Avenue



Figure 13 – ‘The Overflow’ Public Park

3.0 Description of Development Proposal

This section of the report provides a detailed description of the proposed development.

3.1 Overview

The proposal seeks approval for the following elements:

- Demolition of existing service pods on the north western side of the exhibition hall;
- Excavation and installation of piles;
- Construction of a new concourse along the north western side of the exhibition hall to provide covered connection between the halls and entrance;
- Creation of a new secondary entrance to Australia Avenue;
- New floor, glazed screen, doors and canopy to the external walkway of the Dome Building;
- Construction of 3 new single storey service pods within the new concourse structure providing toilet facilities and meeting room areas;
- Installation new operable internal walls so to enable the further division of the exhibition space for smaller events;
- Upgrade of the existing air-conditioning system within the hall including installation of new ducting in the roof space; and
- Resurfacing of Riverina Avenue with two-toned concrete and relocation of 4 existing trees on the northern side of Riverina Avenue.

Figures 14 to 16 provide indicative images of the new concourse along the northern edge of the hall. Architectural drawings of the proposed development prepared by Cox Richardson are located at **Appendix B**



Figure 14 – Proposed concourse as viewed externally from Riverina Avenue
Source: Cox Richardson



Figure 15 – New concourse addition as shown in the context of the aerial view of the site
Source: Cox Richardson

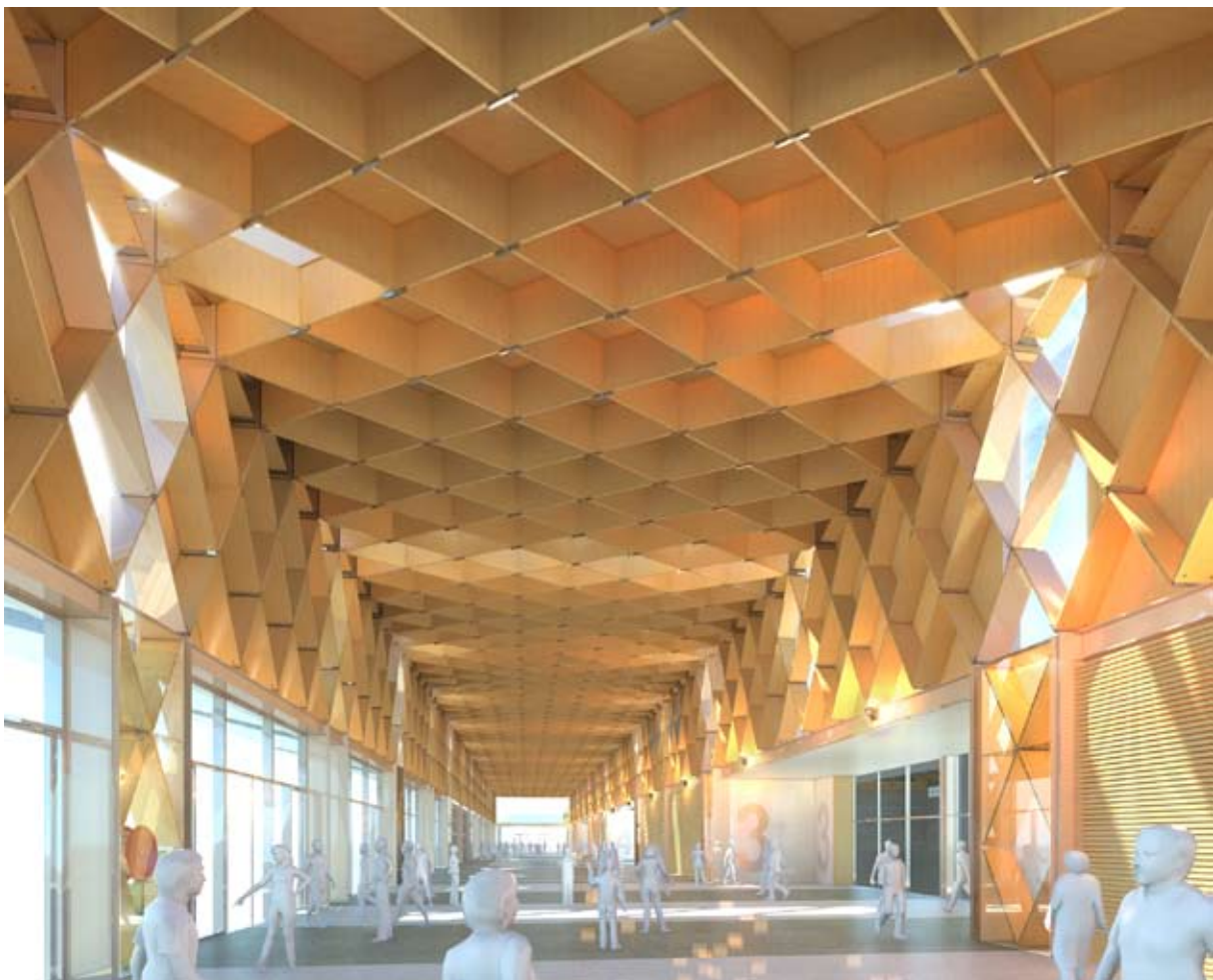


Figure 16 – Internal view of the proposed concourse
Source: Cox Richardson

3.2 Numerical Overview

Table 1 provides a numerical overview of the proposed development:

Table 1 – Numerical Overview

Component	Proposal
Site Area	51,084m ²
Existing Gross Floor Area	31,550m ²
Proposed Gross Floor Area	36,235m ² (+4,685m ²)
Height of Concourse	RL128.76 (12.1m)
Parking	No change to parking spaces or servicing facilities

3.3 Demolition and Excavation

The three 2 storey service pods and canopy sails on the northern side of the exhibition hall will be demolished. The service pods currently contain meeting rooms and toilet facilities.

Prior to the demolition of the above pods, the services related to these facilities will be decommissioned. Aurecon has established that the services required for the remainder of the hall can be maintained as necessary from supplies located on the southern side of the exhibition halls.

3.4 Internal Alterations to Existing Building

In order to improve the operation and amenity of the existing halls it is proposed to upgrade the existing air-conditioning system. The upgrade works will involve the re-use of the existing air-conditioning plant and equipment and installation of new distribution ductwork within the roof void.

Whilst the works are being undertaken, the air-conditioning equipment located on the roof of the existing northern pods will be temporarily relocated to the ground level. Once the concourse construction works are complete, the plant equipment will be relocated to a roof position between the existing building and new concourse addition as shown on the sections at **Appendix B**.

New operable internal walls will be installed within hall which will allow the further division of the halls into smaller exhibition spaces. New storage cupboards are also proposed for the dividing walls for events when the internal dividing walls are not needed.

New internal access stairs will be provided to the existing two storey service pods on the southern side of the hall and operable walls will be inserted in the meeting rooms on the upper level of the service pod.

3.5 Proposed Concourse Addition and Enclosure of Existing Dome Colonnade

Concourse Addition

The proposed concourse will be a long linear extension to the northern side of the exhibition hall building. It will be approximately 208m long, 12.1m high and 12.6m wide and will adjoin the existing external walkway which wraps around the dome building.

Within the new concourse will be three service / meeting / office spaces (74m² each and capable of being divided into two separate rooms) and three banks of new amenities. These are positioned on either side of the existing hall entrances.

The concourse will allow for pre-registration / welcome drinks and the like to occur outside of the exhibition hall while people wait to enter the halls for the actual event. The concourse will also be used for queuing of people between shows i.e. whilst a matinee event is occurring within the halls, people will be able to queue in the concourse for the evening show.

The concourse will be constructed out of the following materials:

- Steel frame and steel cladding externally to match the existing;
- Clear glazing;
- Natural timber cladding (internal); and
- Concrete floor and tile finish (internal).

Enclosure of Existing Dome Colonnade

In order to improve access within and around the dome building it is proposed to enclose the external covered colonnade. This will involve the installation of a new floor, glazed screening, doors and canopy to the existing structure.

A Design Statement has been prepared by the Architect and is included at **Appendix E**.

3.6 Public Domain

It is proposed to resurface Riverina Avenue once the proposed building works are complete. Two tone concrete paving will be installed in a bar code pattern. The tones of paving used to achieve this pattern are charcoal and quartz which will match with the existing pavement in front of the Southee Complex.

In addition to the new paving in Riverina Avenue, the grassed areas in front of the Southee Complex will be extended. Four existing Fig trees will be relocated into the enlarged grassed area which will allow for the widening of the existing path between the RAS Exhibition Hall and the Southee Complex as shown in **Figure 17**.

The proposal will maintain the existing north/south linkages to the main showground arena and also the existing east / west linkage along Riverina Avenue. The width of Riverina Avenue will reduce, however this is not expected to have any adverse affects on the flow of pedestrian movement in this area as people will no longer be standing in Riverina Avenue to enter the exhibition halls, but will rather utilise the new concourse facility. It is noted that a new entrance will also be created at the eastern end of the concourse, thereby increasing the level of access to the existing building. Drawing DA_009 provides a diagram of existing and proposed linkages on the site (refer **Appendix B**).



Figure 17 – Proposed Public Domain Works
Source: Turf Design

3.7 Services

In order to improve the operation and amenity of the existing hall, maintain environmental plan objectives and accommodate the new extension, the following works will be carried out to the site services. Drawings showing the location of the services are located at **Appendix D**.

Mechanical Services

- Installation of new exposed supply air ducting across the halls which will be connected to the existing reverse cycle air-conditioning units on the southern side of the hall and the existing units on the northern side. Motorised swirl jet type diffusers will discharge air downwards which is able to be adjusted to suit cooling and heating modes.
- New reverse cycle air-conditioning systems serving the new Concourse and new meeting rooms.
- New toilet exhaust systems.
- New smoke exhaust system serving halls 2, 3 and 4 and the new concourse.

Electrical Services

- New lighting, power and telecommunications will be installed in the new concourse.
- A new dedicated electricity supply will be provided to the existing air condition system and the additional units in the new concourse.
- New electrical essential power supply to new smoke exhaust systems.
- Installation of new connection modules for tenant use.

Hydraulic Services

- Existing in ground services will be relocated to accommodate the new piles of the concourse.
- New connections will be made for new stormwater and drainage from the concourse addition.
- New reticulation of hot water and cold water services.
- Sanitary drainage and plumbing.
- Hydrants and hose reels for new concourse.

Fire Services

- New smoke controls for new smoke management systems
- Extension to existing EWIS and Vesda systems.

3.8 Staging

As the hall has a significant number of events already scheduled for 2010, including the 2010 Easter Show which is the biggest event of the year, the staging of the development will be a key consideration in the delivery of the project. McLachlan Lister has prepared an indicative Master Program (**Appendix F**) which proposes the following key milestones:

- Instructions to Project Team to proceed to full design development – 11 January 2010
- Out to Tender for Early Works – March 2010
- Out to Tender for Main Contract – 3 May 2010
- Award Early Works Contract – 5 April 2010
- Award Construction Contract – 28 June 2010
- Commence Early Works – 26 April 2010 (Post Easter Show)
- Commence Main Contract – 26 July 2010
- Handover incomplete site areas to RAS for use during Easter Show – 12 March 2011
- Handover Zone 1 (adj. Hall 2) to RAS – 30 May 2011
- Handover Zone 2 (adj. Hall3) to RAS – 27 June 2011
- Handover Zone 3 (adj. Hall 4) to RAS – 25 July 2011
- Project Target Completion Date – 25 July 2011 (4 weeks contingency)
- Project Completion Date – 22 August 2011

In order for the hall to continue operation during the proposed works, the internal upgrade of the air-conditioning system will be undertaken initially. In addition to this it is proposed that an alternative internal corridor path within the halls will provide pedestrian access to events in the hall whilst access from Riverina Avenue is not possible.

At the time of the 2011 Easter Show the external façade will be substantially complete and the floor finishes approximately 50% complete, making the generally suitable for public circulation. The unfinished concourse and foyer area will require preliminary clearance certification for public use and will be subject to agreement with the PCA consultant.

Events occurring within the broader Homebush Bay area, such as the V8 Supercars and the like will affect access to the site by way street closures and erection of temporary structures over roadways. The appointed contractor will be required to demonstrate that their proposed construction program has been designed around such events such that the construction program will not be affected and similarly that the proposed works will not impact on the operation of events held at Homebush Bay.

3.9 Capital Investment Value

The capital investment value of the project is \$33 million (see **Appendix G**). Capital investment value is defined in the SEPP as the value of development including all costs necessary to establish and operate the development, including design and construction of buildings, structures, associated infrastructure and fixed or mobile plant and equipment (but excluding land costs).

4.0 Planning Framework and Context

This section details the relevant environmental planning instruments (EPI) applying to the site and the proposal. An assessment of compliance with relevant planning controls is summarised in Section 6 and detailed in the Table of Compliance at **Appendix H**.

4.1 Strategic Plans

NSW State Plan

The NSW State Plan was released in November 2007. It sets key strategic priorities for the NSW Government and is to be used to guide decision making and resource allocation. Of relevance to this application is the priority relating to 'Growing Prosperity Across NSW' which includes activities that promote productivity and economic growth, including rural and regional NSW.

The State Plan outlines *"Business Groups want the Government to focus on reducing the regulatory burden on business, ensure infrastructure is available to support business needs and develop strategies to help particular industries succeed competitively. They also want world class events held in NSW to draw attention to the broad range of opportunities for business and investment."*

The improvement of exhibition facilities at Sydney Olympic Park is consistent with *Priority P1: Increased business investment* as it will provide improved exhibition space allowing a broader range of events to be held within the exhibition hall. The proposal is also in accordance with the John O'Neill report which recommends that the facilities at Sydney Olympic Park be improved and expanded.

Metropolitan Strategy

In December 2005, the NSW Government released the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy titled *City of Cities – A Plan for Sydney's Future*. The Metropolitan Strategy provides commentary and direction for the next 25-30 years at a regional level on issues such as land use, economic development, jobs, transport, innovation, centres and corridors, and residential areas within Sydney.

The Metropolitan Strategy identifies Sydney Olympic Park as a specialised economic centre. These types of centres have been identified as they are considered to have metropolitan and economy wide impacts and as such have significant economic and social impacts. The strategy states that "planning in and around these centres needs to support and encourage their specialised function".

Sydney Olympic Park also forms a key component of the Parramatta to City Corridor. The strategy recognises that it will be important to achieve a balance between Sydney Olympic Park's core role as a regional sporting and specialised business centre, and its potential for residential development.

Draft West Central Subregional Strategy

The draft West Central Subregional Strategy, released in December 2007, is a key part of the implementation of the 2005 Metropolitan Strategy and is intended to guide land-use planning until 2031. The key relevant directions include:

- Increase in jobs from 7,900 (2001) to 19,900 (2031) in the Olympic Park / Rhodes Centre;
- 17,000 new dwellings in the Auburn LGA; and
- Improve access to regional open space resources such as Western Sydney Regional Park, Sydney Olympic Park & Parramatta Park.

Of particular relevance to this application is strategy F3 – Improve Sydney’s Major Sporting and Cultural Event Facilities. The strategy outlines:

“In order to maintain Sydney’s identity as Australia’s true Global City, it is imperative that the role of Sydney Olympic Park does not diminish and that constant improvements are made to the precinct to cater for future world class events such as concerts, festivals and sporting events.”

The Sydney Showgrounds are one of two major facilities in Sydney which are able to cater for big events such as the Easter Show, Big Day Out, V 8 Cars and the like. The improvement of the exhibition hall is consistent with the strategy as it will allow for a broader range of events to be held within the hall.

4.2 State Legislation

State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005

Schedule 3 of SEPP (Major Development) 2005 provides the detailed planning guidelines for Sydney Olympic Park, including site zoning, maximum building heights, Floor Space Ratios, Environmental Conservation Areas and Heritage Items.

Under the SEPP, development which has a Capital Investment Value of \$30 million or more is considered to be a Major Project to which Part 3A applies.

An assessment of the proposal under the SEPP is provided at **Appendix H**.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land (SEPP 55)

- SEPP 55 provides controls and guidelines for the remediation of contaminated land. In particular, this policy aims to promote the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment.
- Clause 7 specifies that a consent authority must not consent to the carrying out of any development on land unless it has considered whether land is contaminated and if the land is contaminated, it is satisfied that the land is/ can be suitable for the proposed development.
- SOPA has confirmed that the site is not subject to any ongoing remediation maintenance requirements (refer to the remediated lands map at **Appendix I**).

State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

The aim of this Policy is to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure across the State.

Under Clause 104, the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) is to be made aware of traffic generating development and given the opportunity to provide comment. The proposed development is considered a traffic generating development by virtue of Schedule 3 of the SEPP, which requires referrals for Tourist facilities, recreation facilities, showgrounds or sportsgrounds with 200 or more parking spaces.

State Regional Environmental Plan 24 – Homebush Bay Area

Following the gazettal of the amendment to SEPP (Major Development) 2005 to include Sydney Olympic Park as a State Significant Site, SREP 24 no longer applies to Sydney Olympic Park. This SREP is therefore not a consideration for this assessment and does not apply to the proposed development.

4.3 Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2030

The Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2030 was adopted on 30 September 2009. The Master Plan is a 22 year vision for the sustainable development of Sydney Olympic Park, among other things it seeks to:

- Provide a comprehensive approach to the development of Sydney Olympic Park; and
- Protect the role of Sydney Olympic Park as the premier destination for cultural, entertainment, recreation and sporting events.

The RAS Exhibition Hall is located within the Sydney Showground Precinct as shown in **Figure 18**. The Master Plan contains specific controls relating to this precinct and also the RAS Exhibition Hall site and incorporates the recommendations of the O'Neill Report in terms of expanding the Sydney Showground facilities. The Tables of Compliance at **Appendix H** provide a detailed assessment of the proposal under the draft Masterplan 2030 as the final adopted Masterplan was not available at the time this application was prepared.

Notwithstanding this, a discussion with a SOPA's officer has advised that no substantial changes have been made to the specific controls (Section 5 of the draft Master Plan 2030) relating to the Sydney Showground Precinct.

Nine precincts - one unique urban centre



Figure 18 – Precincts within Sydney Olympic Park
Source: Sydney Olympic Park Authority

5.0 Environmental Assessment

This section of the report assesses and responds to the environmental impacts of the proposal. It addresses the matters for consideration set out in the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements (DGRs).

The draft Statement of Commitments at Section 6 of this report complements the findings of this section.

5.1 Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements

Table 2 identifies where the individual matters listed in the DGRs have been addressed in this report and the accompanying technical studies.

Table 2 – Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements

Director General's Requirements	Location
Key Issues	
Relevant EPI's Policies and guidelines to be addressed	Sections 4 and 5.2 and Appendix H
Built Form and Urban Design	Section 5.3 and Appendix B
Public Domain	Section 3.6 and Appendix J
Transport and Accessibility Impacts	Section 5.6
Noise Impacts and Amenity	Section 5.10 and Appendix M & O
Infrastructure Provision	Section 3.6 and Appendix D
Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)	Section 5.4
Consultation	Section 5.13
General Requirements	
Executive Summary	Page v
Site Analysis	Section 2
Description of the proposed development	Section 3
Assessment of key issues	Section 5
Draft Statement of Commitments	Section 6
Architectural plans	Appendix B
Statement of Validity	Page iv
Quantity Surveyor's Certificate	Appendix G
Conclusion and justification of suitability of the site for proposal	Section 7
Plans and Documents	
Existing Site Survey Plan	Appendix B
Site Analysis Plan	Appendix B
Locality / Context Plan	Section 2 and Appendix B
Architectural Drawings	Appendix B
Stormwater Concept Plan	Appendix F
Erosion and Sediment Control Plan	Refer to Commitments at Section 6
Geotechnical Report	Refer to Commitments at Section 6
View Analysis	Indicative images of the proposed development are provided at Appendix B.
Landscape Plan	Refer to Public Domain Plan at Appendix J.
Shadow Diagrams	Shadow Diagrams are not considered necessary as the proposed extension is to the north of an existing building and therefore will not generate any significant additional shadowing compared to the existing situation.

5.2 Consistency with Relevant Strategic and Statutory Plans and Policies

Table 3 provides a summary of consistency with key strategic and statutory plans relevant to the project. A more detailed assessment of consistency with provisions and controls in relevant environmental planning instruments is provided in **Appendix H**.

Table 3 – Summary of consistency with key strategic and statutory plans and policies

Instrument/Strategy	Comments
Draft West Central Subregional Strategy	This Project Application is consistent with the Strategy in that it will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the RAS Exhibition Facilities, thereby retaining and enhancing an existing cultural facility within Sydney Olympic Park; and - Increase employment opportunities on the site.
SEPP (Major Development)	The proposed development is permissible within the B4 Mixed Use Zone and complies with the built form controls contained within the SEPP. The proposed development has a CIV of \$33 million and is therefore a project to which Part 3A applies.
SEPP (Infrastructure)	As the proposed development involves the expansion of an existing facility and increase of 4,685m ² or a 15% increase in floor space it will not generate any significant amount of new vehicular trips. The proposed development does not include any additional parking spaces and it is noted that many people attending the RAS Easter Show or Sydney Olympic Park travel by public transport. The proposal will be referred to the RTA for assessment as part of the DoP's assessment process.
SEPP 55	Condition 31 of Development Consent S38/6/96 required the preparation of validation reports and submission of those reports to the EPA prior to the works commencing on the site. As the hall has now been constructed it is assumed that the site has been suitably remediated. Further, SOPA's records do not nominate the site as being subject to ongoing site management measures. The proposed development does not propose any change of use and is therefore considered to remain suitable for the existing use.
Draft Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2030	The proposed extension of the RAS Hall is consistent with the desired future development of the Showground Precinct (Section 5 of the Master Plan) and complies with the general provisions outlined in Section 4 of the Master Plan. The extension has been specifically designed such that it allows for the construction of a new hall / exhibition space north of Riverina Avenue, as envisaged in the Master Plan.

5.3 Built Form and Urban Design

Height, Bulk, Massing and Scale

The height of concourse combined with the natural wood materials will provide a sense of a grandeur when entering the hall. At an overall height of RL124.66m, the hall is well below the maximum height permitted (RL142m) on the site and remains subservient to the main dome building and the adjoining exhibition hall which have existing heights of RL158.26m and RL142.55m respectively.

The proposed concourse has been designed to match the existing appearance of the exhibition hall and is sensitive to the iconic status of the building.

The scale of the addition is appropriate to the design and height of the existing RAS Building as well as the function that the concourse will serve as a main entry point to the individual halls.

The relationship of the extension to nearby existing buildings can be seen in the architectural sections provided at **Appendix B**. The sections show that the extension will be of a similar scale and will not comprise an overbearing structure.

The proposed concourse should also be viewed in the future desired context of the Sydney Showground Precinct. The proposed addition will maintain pedestrian access along Riverina Avenue and will allow for the eventual demolition of the buildings to the immediate north and their replacement with a more adaptable and function exhibition building as proposed under the Draft Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2030.

Impacts on views and potential overshadowing

The proposed development is not located within a protected view corridor and will not be readily visible from outside the site and as such is not expected to have any adverse impacts on views.

The proposed addition is positioned to the north of an existing building and will therefore not generate any significant additional overshadowing. Preparation of shadow diagrams was not considered necessary given that the proposed development will not overshadow any residential properties or protected public domain area.

Design Quality

The proposed addition to the building has been designed by a qualified architect and is considered to be of high architectural integrity. As outlined in Cox Richardson's Design Statement at **Appendix E**, the proposed development forms the initial stage of the broader expansion of the RAS facilities.

It has been designed to meet the need of the RAS while providing an appropriate and integrated expansion for what has become synonymous with the heritage of the Sydney Olympics.

5.4 ESD

The proposed alterations and additions to the building will improve the environmental performance of the building in the following ways:

- Installation of water efficient fixtures and fittings within the new bathroom facilities;
- The new toilets will utilise the Water Recycling and Management System (WRAMS) which is reticulated around the Homebush site;
- Improved function of the halls air-conditioning system and the inclusion of new economy cycles is likely to reduce energy costs when operating during the evening and at times when the outdoor conditions are acceptable;
- The proposed sunshading awning will protect the glazing on the north west façade from direct sunlight;
- Stormwater will be connected to the WRAMs system.

During the construction period, every effort will be made to recycle materials or use sustainable products where possible.

5.5 Environmental and Construction Management

In order to ensure that the proposed works are carried out in an orderly manner that does not have any adverse environmental impacts, McLachlan Lister Pty Ltd has prepared a Preliminary Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the project (**Appendix F**). Once appointed, the building contractor will prepare a detailed CEMP for the project which will be reviewed and signed off by the Principal Certifier for the project (See commitments at Section 6 of this report). The detailed CEMP will include further detail on the following key issues.

Site Access

Figure 19 shows the proposed site access on Australia Avenue and the proposed boundary of the construction site. The site will be secured by interlocking temporary fencing. During this time, public access will be via an internal path in the building or alternatively from entrances on the southern side of the building.

During the construction works it will be necessary for some large events taking place within the Exhibition Halls. Prior to works commencing, the RAS in conjunction with the fire engineering consultant will identify such events in and will ensure that specific details are included within the tender documents to enable construction methodologies to be developed that provide safe access and egress at all times.

In carrying out the development, the building contractor will ensure that reasonable steps are taken to maintain pedestrian and vehicular access and services in Sydney Olympic Park. Where interruptions are unavoidable, these will be negotiated with any affected businesses and facilities. A commitment to this effect is made at Section 6 of this report.

Consultation

A Project Control Group will be established which will meet regularly to discuss progress of the project and any issues arising from the work already undertaken.

A complaints register will also be established by the contractor for the project. When complaints are received, a verbal response will be provided to the complainant within 1 hour (unless the complainant agrees otherwise) and a written response provided within 1 calendar day.

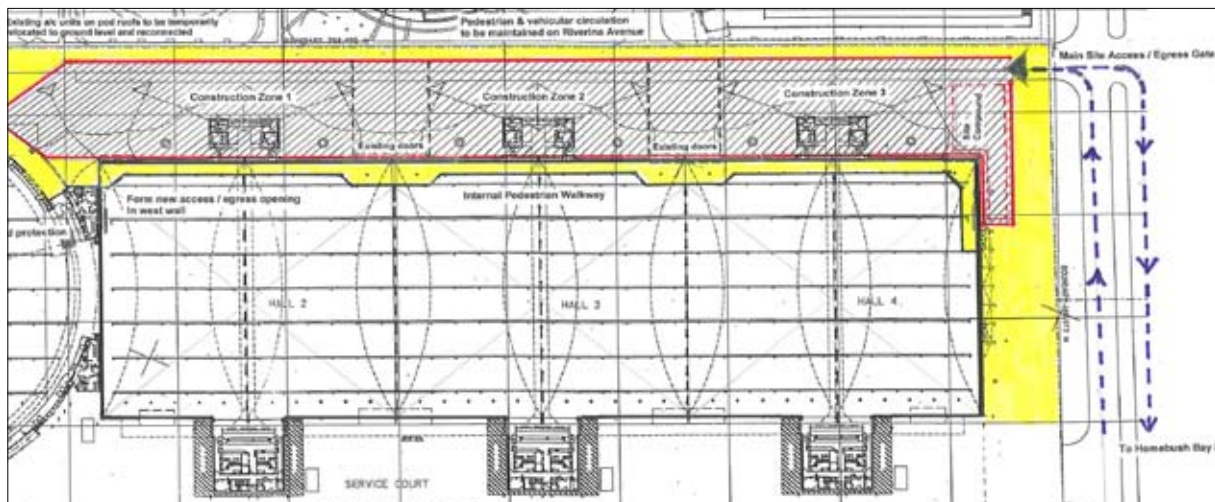


Figure 19 – Construction site boundary and site access point from Australia Avenue
Source: McLachlan Lister

Environmental Management Plans

Detailed construction environmental management plans and an operation environmental plan will be prepared by the contractor which will outline mitigative measures to be undertaken during construction works. The plans will deal with the following construction risks which have been identified by McLachlan Lister:

- Noise from demolition activities
- Noise from major construction activities
- Noise from construction plant and equipment
- Vibration from foundation works
- Dust from demolition works
- Stormwater runoff
- Removal of hazardous materials
- Waste water
- Air quality
- Construction traffic
- Erosion and sediment control
- Waste management, including:
 - Recycling of demolition waste;
 - Hazardous materials; and
 - Recycling of construction waste.

5.6 Traffic Management

Operational Traffic

The proposed development does not include any additional parking and is unlikely to generate any significant new traffic movements for the following reasons:

- Most people travel to an event at Homebush by way of public transport, particularly the Easter Show;
- The proposed development will not increase the population numbers of hall; and
- The proposed development represents an increase in GFA of only 15% and the additional GFA in the majority of cases will be used as an ancillary space to the existing exhibition halls and not a new event space in its own right.

Aurecon has confirmed this assumption, refer to their letter at **Appendix N**.

Sustainable Transport

The site is adjacent to Homebush Bay Train Station and a regional bus route located on Australian Avenue and is therefore highly accessible by public transport. In addition to this the broader Homebush Bay site also contains a large network of cycle paths which link up to nearby centres.

Further to the above the State Government has recently announced that the new West Metro Line will include a station on the Homebush Bay site. The proposed location of the station is in close proximity to the Showground Precinct.

In order to encourage greater use of public transport to the site the RAS provide a combined entry ticket to the Royal Easter Show which allows people attending the Easter Show to use their ticket on public transport to and from the show. There is also the potential to further expand this type of ticketing to other large events held in the Sydney Showgrounds, such as the Big Day Out.

Permanent bicycle parking is provided on Showground Road out the front of the Dome Building and the RAS has portable bicycle racks which are used for various events throughout the year.

Construction Traffic

The proposed construction traffic routes are shown in **Figure 20**. Construction access will be from gate 12 which is located on Australia Avenue. Vehicles accessing the site are likely to include mobile cranes, mobile concrete pumps and ready mix concrete wagons. Delivery of large prefabricated components will also occur.

McLachlan Lister have estimated that the number of truck deliveries for the project will be around 2,500 – peaking at 16 trucks per day with a maximum of approximately 35 movements on some days. These movements will be co-ordinated by the contractor so as to ensure that there is no congestion caused in Australia Avenue and also to ensure public safety.

Parking for contractors will be available within the existing car park located on the opposite side of Australia Avenue. Approximately 100 spaces per day will be required for construction staff.

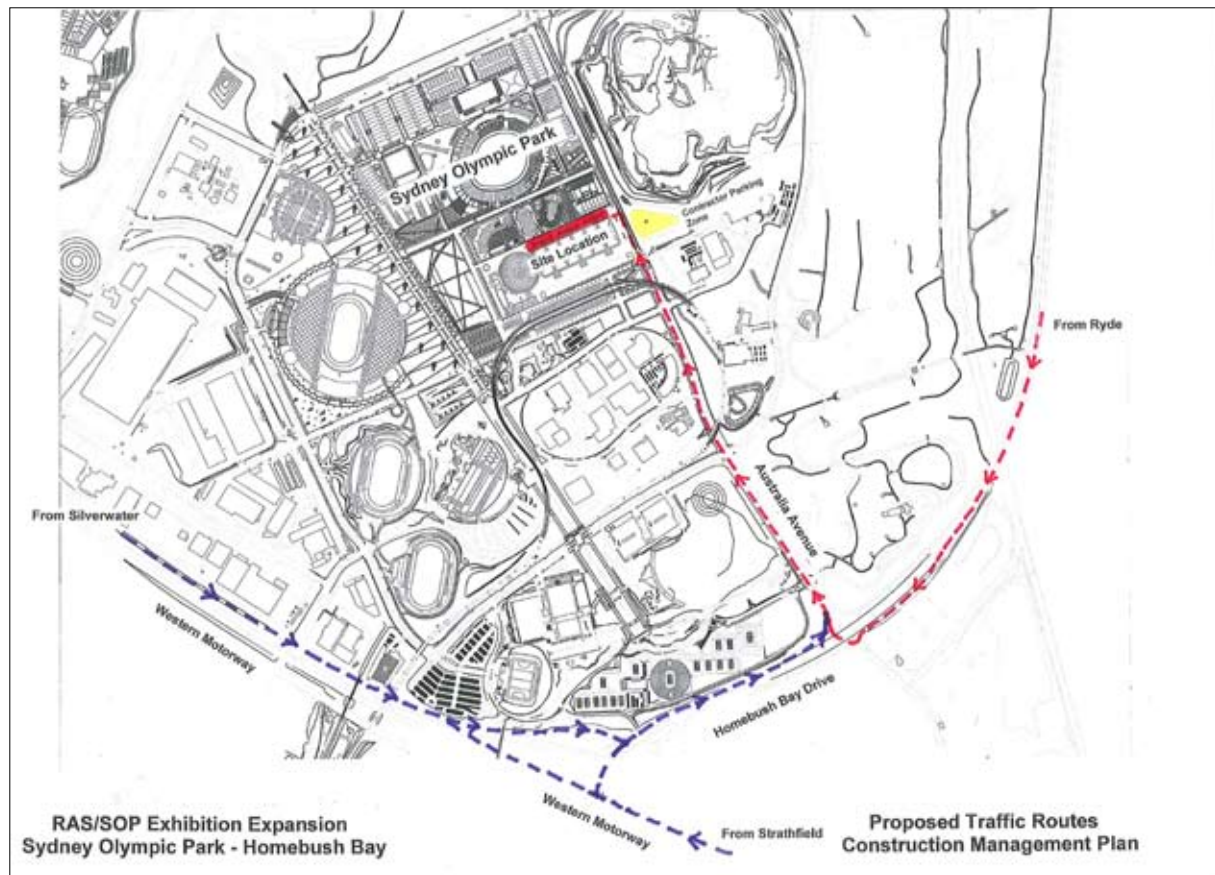


Figure 20 – Proposed construction traffic routes
Source: McLachlan Lister

5.7 BCA Compliance

Philip Chun Pty Ltd has reviewed the proposed development for compliance with the Building Code of Australia (BCA) (**Appendix K**).

Phillip Chun is of the opinion that the proposal has the potential to comply with the requirements of the BCA, however alternative solutions will be required for the following:

- Reduction of the fire rating of the buildings structure.
- Allow the use of timber construction in a type A building
- 20m to a single exit or point of choice to be exceeded from that already approved and allowed.
- 40m to an alternate exit / single exit to be exceeded from that already approved and allowed.
- 60m between alternate exits as measured back through the point of choice to be exceeded from that already approved and allowed.
- Aggregate exit widths from the building to be less than the deemed to satisfy provisions of the BCA and to vary from that already approved and allowed.
- Smoke hazard management to vary from BCA quantities and operation and to replace the natural ventilation previously approved.
- Allow the extension of the building where the extended portion would not be provided with sprinkler protection.
- Perimeter access may vary from the requirements where the 6 metre path may be greater than 18m from the building.

Phillip Chun are satisfied that all of the issues raised in their report can be dealt with in the next phase of design prior to the issue of a Construction Certificate.

5.8 Fire Safety

In order to ensure that the proposed development provides sufficient fire safety measures, Aurecon have prepared a fire safety assessment (**Appendix D**). New fired engineered mechanical smoke exhaust systems will be provided to Halls 2, 3 and 4 which will replace the existing natural smoke reservoir and natural ventilation via the operable louvred walls on the northern and southern sides.

New smoke exhausts will also be provided to the new concourse entrance areas on the northern side of the building.

5.9 Access and Mobility

Morris Goding Accessibility Consulting (MGAC) has reviewed the proposed development for compliance with Australian Standard 1428, BCA, the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the Sydney Olympic Park Access Guidelines. A copy of the assessment is included at **Appendix L**.

In preparing their assessment, MGAC has considered various user groups, including staff and visitors who may have:

- Sensory impairments;
- Mobility impairments; and/or
- Dexterity impairments.

With regard to ingress and egress, the proposed development will provide suitable paths of travel from the surrounding roads to the new concourse entry doors and the doors proposed are of a sufficient width (850mm) in accordance with SOPA's guidelines. Suitable emergency egress is also proposed and MGAC recommends that any emergency warning systems installed in the building include audible and visual warnings and signals in principal areas to assist people with sensory disabilities so as to be compliant with the SOPA Access Guidelines. A commitment to this effect is made at Section 6 of this report.

5.10 Acoustic Issues

Construction Acoustic Management

During construction works it will be necessary to undertake works outside of normal construction hours. Generally works will be undertaken during the following hours:

- Monday to Friday: 7.00am to 5.00pm;
- Saturday: 7.00am to 1.00pm; and
- Sunday / Public Holidays: No works.

As noted previously, some works will be undertaken outside of the above hours so as to avoid disruptions to scheduled events. Should noisy activities, such as piling, rock/concrete breaking, jack hammering or the like need to occur outside of the above hours, these will not take place before 9.00am or after 4.00pm.

As the nearest residential properties are located some 1.3km away from the site (**Figure 21**), it is not expected that the proposed construction works will generate any adverse acoustic impacts which would affect residential amenity. It is therefore considered that acoustic management will be dictated by event managers and their expectations of construction noise.

As outlined in the Preliminary Construction and Environmental Management Plan at **Appendix F**, construction works will be carried out so as to minimise noise impacts. This will be achieved by:

- Undertaking construction outside of event times,
- Undertaking work during agreed 'construction windows' between events,
- Relocating events to other parts of the site where possible or the time of the event,
- Use of construction techniques which reduce excessive noise (e.g. prefabrication, use of noise suppression devices etc), and
- Piling to be bored (CFA) rather than impact driven.

The principal contractor will be responsible for the preparation and implementation of a Noise Mitigation Strategy as part of the overall CEMP. The Noise Mitigation Strategy will nominate specific construction machinery to be used and will stipulate specific mitigation measures to be implemented so as to comply with the Industrial Noise Policy.

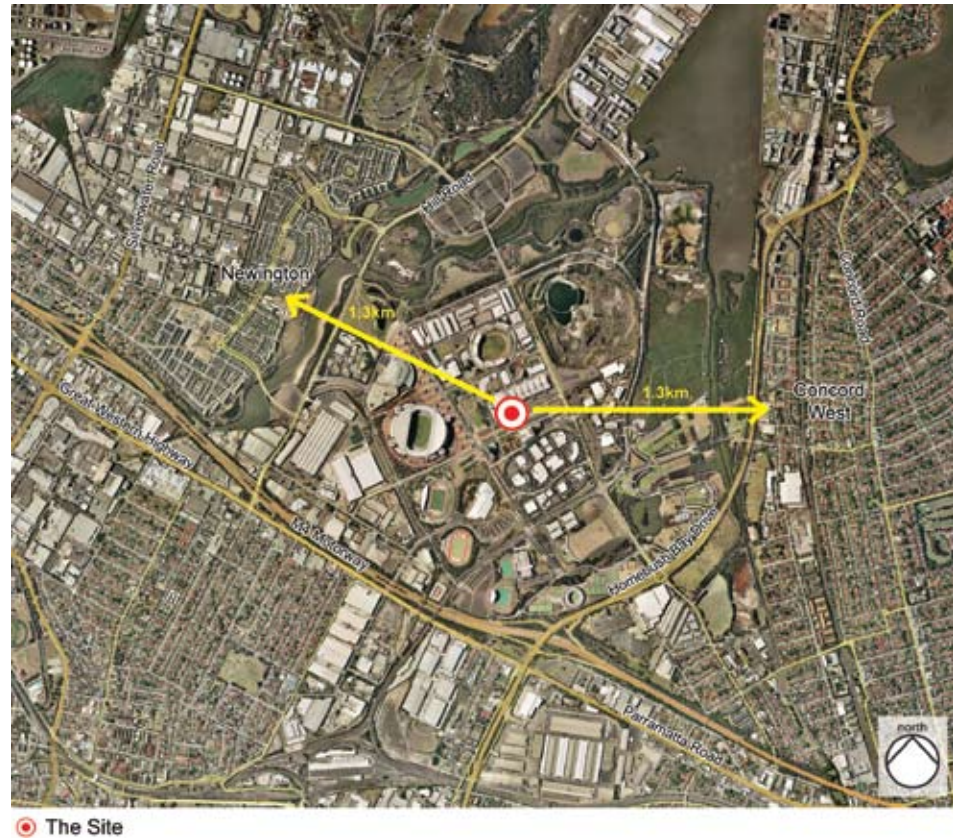


Figure 21 – Location of nearest residential properties

Operational Acoustic Management

Events at the RAS Hall are currently carried out in accordance with the RAS NSW Environmental Management Plan (**Appendix M**). The maximum noise levels permitted on the site as contained within the management plan have been determined by the Showground and Carnival Development Consent Conditions and the “Venue Operations Guide”(s) prepared by the Olympic Co-ordination Authority (OCA) in January 1998 which are based on background noise level tests at the nearest residents boundary. Noise management is currently based on the following:

- Outdoor Mass Audience Events: 65 dB(A) maximum at residential boundaries until 11pm, (subject to Liquor Licensing Board Average Maximum criteria of background noise plus 5dB 0700 to midnight and background noise only midnight to 0700).
- Continuous noise, commercial boundary = 80 dB(A).
- Fireworks - 100dB peak until 12am.
- Easter Show: L10 80 dB(A) at commercial boundaries and L10 45 dB(A) at residential boundaries until 11pm.

Since commencement of operation, RAS NSW has been undertaking noise level monitoring.

It is proposed that the above noise mitigation measures will continue without any alteration in light of the fact that the proposed additions will not result in a significant increase of people attending events or the way that the site is managed.

It is expected that the proposed enclosure of the new concourse will reduce some acoustic emissions from the site as people will be able to move between the halls without having to move outside of the building. Refer to Acoustic Statement at **Appendix O**.

5.11 Heritage

The site is not identified as being a heritage item and is not located within a Heritage Conservation Area it is however adjacent to the north eastern extension of the State Abattoirs Conservation Area which is defined by the former Railway Garden (see **Figure 22**). A line of large palm trees stretches along the eastern side of Showground Road to the intersection with Grand Parade is nominated as a significant element within the conservation area (**Figure 23**).

The *Abattoir Heritage Precinct, Sydney Olympic Park Conservation Management Plan - June 2003* (CMP), prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates Pty Ltd, guides development within and adjacent to the heritage precinct. The CMP notes the following:

“The Canary Island Date Palms have been incorporated with the new landscape and create a strong visual line down Showground Road towards the gate house. Associated with the road entry to the former Abattoir site remnant avenue plantations consisting mostly of Brush Box trees, which are aesthetically significant in framing important views to the Precinct...”

The survival of a row of large Canary Island Palms along Showground Road is a significant remnant feature of the historical cultural landscape.”

From the above description it can be interpreted that the vista down Showground Road, towards the gatehouse, is the significant element to be protected. The proposed extension to the RAS Exhibition hall will not be directly within this site line and as such should not have any adverse impacts on this aspect of the conservation area.

It is recognised that the Palm Trees form a significant component of this vista and as such tree protection measures will be put in place so as to ensure that the trees are not damaged during construction works. A commitment to this effect has been made in Section 6 of this report.

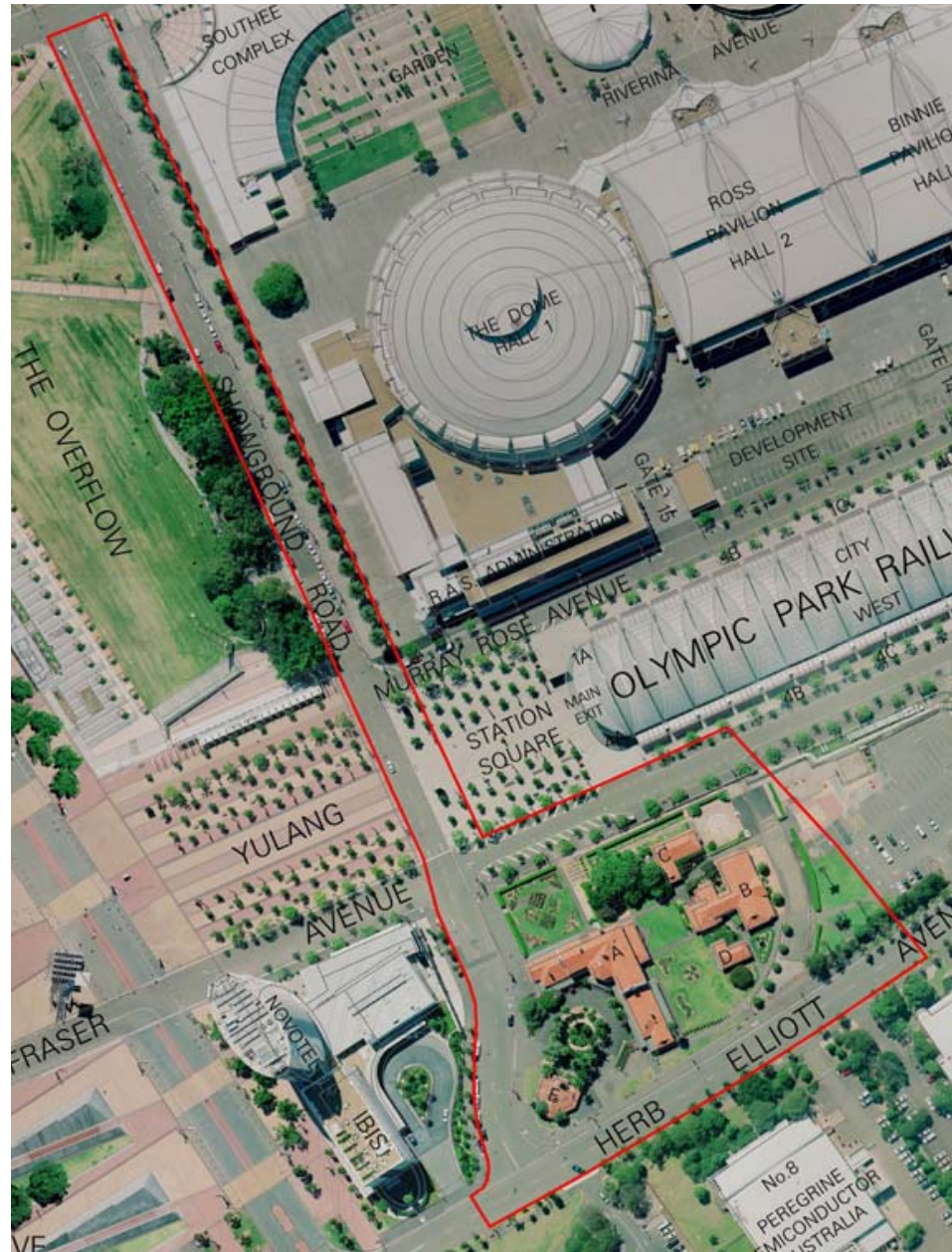


Figure 22 – Abattoir Heritage Precinct
Source: Graham Brooks and Associates Pty Ltd

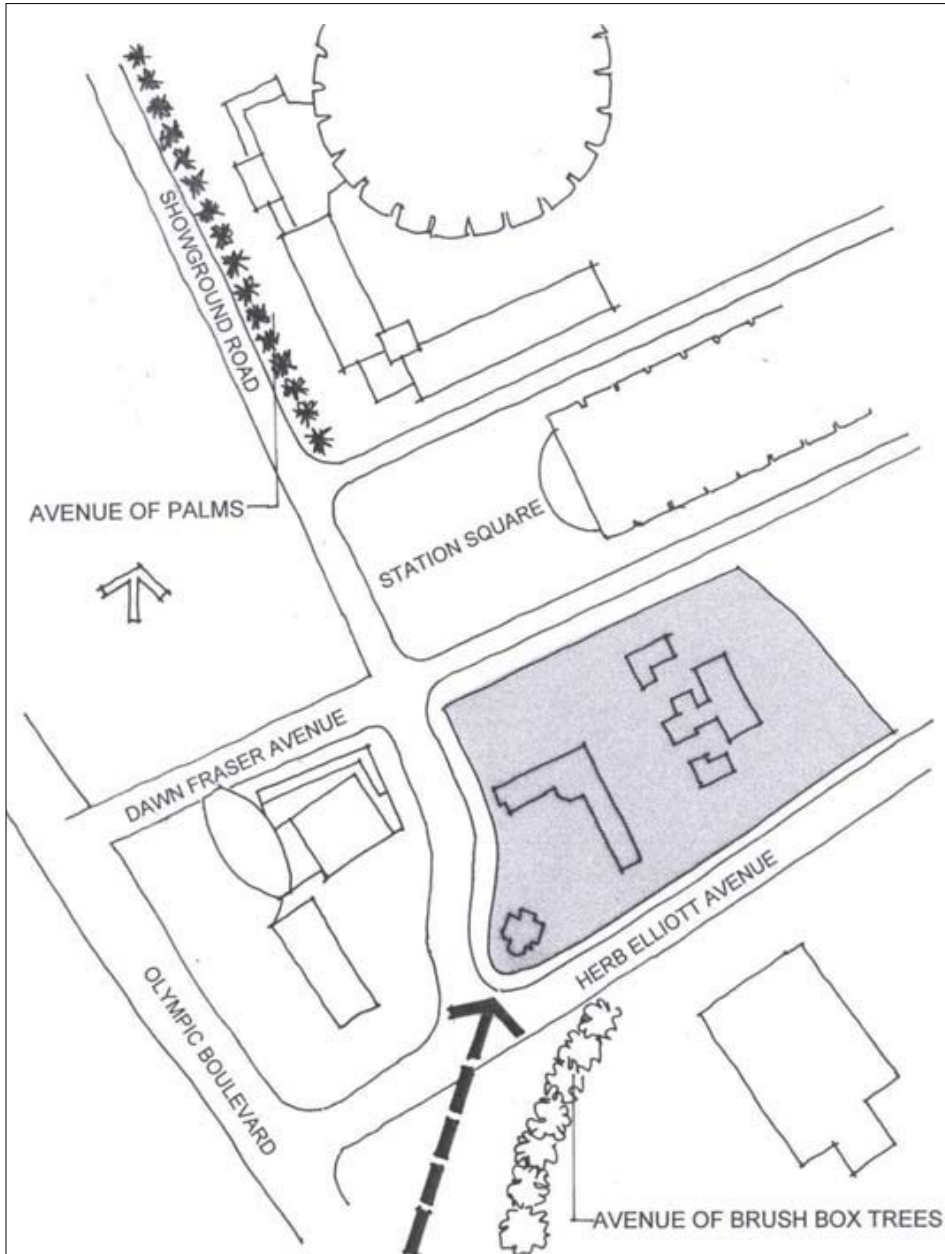


Figure 23 – Significant Avenue Plantations within the Abattoir Conservation Area
Source: Graham Brooks and Associates Pty Ltd

5.12 Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

The proposed development has been designed with the key principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in mind as outlined below:

- The concourse addition has been designed to be a lightweight structure with a predominantly glass façade that allows for surveillance into and out of the exhibition building;
- No 'entrapment' or blind spots will occur;
- Signage will be installed so as to assist with way-finding;
- Lighting which identifies public areas and safe routes already exists in the area and will be maintained as part of this application; and
- Installation of additional security cameras.

5.13 Consultation

During the preparation of the design of the proposed development, the RAS and Cox Richardson have consulted with the Sydney Olympic Park Authority as the key stakeholder in the area. Consultation with residents in the broader regional area was not considered necessary in this instance given the significant distance between the nearest residential property and the proposed development.

6.0 Draft Statement of Commitments

In accordance with the Director-General's Environmental Assessment Requirements, the proponent is required to include a Draft Statement of Commitments in respect of environmental management and mitigation measures on the site. **Table 4** outlines the commitments made by RAS NSW to manage and minimise potential impacts arising from the project.

Table 4 – Draft Statement of Commitments

No.	Key Issue	Commitment	Timing
1.	Operation of Sydney Olympic Park	The Building Contractor shall take all reasonable steps to ensure the maintenance of pedestrian and vehicular accesses and services in Sydney Olympic Park. Where interruptions are unavoidable, these will be negotiated with any affected businesses and facilities.	Throughout the duration of the proposed works.
2.	Accessibility	Any emergency warning systems installed within the building will include audio and visual warnings in principal areas.	Prior to an Occupation Certificate being issued.
3.		Each of the proposed accessible toilets will comply with AS1428.2	Prior to an Occupation Certificate being issued.
4.	Construction Management	Once appointed, the principal contractor will prepare a detailed Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) addressing the key issues listed in the preliminary CEMP prepared by McLachlan Lister.	Prior to works commencing.
5.	Tree Protection	A Tree Protection Plan will be prepared by the appointed contract which will outline tree protection measures for the heritage palm trees on Showground Road and the Fig Tree located on Riverina Avenue	Prior to works commencing on Riverina Avenue.

7.0 Conclusion

The Project Application seeks approval for alterations and additions to the Royal Agricultural Society Exhibition Hall. In particular approval is sought for:

- Demolition of existing service pods on the north western side of the exhibition hall;
- Excavation and installation of piles;
- Construction of a new concourse along the north western side of the exhibition hall to provide covered connection between the halls and entrance;
- Creation of a new secondary entrance to Australia Avenue;
- New floor, glazed screen, doors and canopy to the external walkway of the Dome Building;
- Construction of 3 new single storey service pods within the new concourse structure providing toilet facilities and meeting room areas;
- Installation new operable internal walls so to enable the further division of the exhibition space for smaller events;
- Upgrade of the existing air-conditioning system within the hall including installation of new ducting in the roof space; and
- Resurfacing of Riverina Avenue with two-toned concrete and relocation of 4 existing trees on the northern side of Riverina Avenue.

The preceding environmental assessment demonstrates that the matters for which approval is sought are consistent with the zoning and development controls contained for the site under SEPP (Major Development) 2005 and the draft Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2030, and will have no adverse environmental impacts.

The development will improve the function and operation of the RAS Exhibition Hall, which is consistent with the Master Plan principle of reinforcing Sydney Olympic Park as *'the premier major-venues event precinct in NSW for major cultural, entertainment, recreation and sporting events'*.

The Draft Statement of Commitments has been prepared to inform the detailed design of the development and manage construction and on-going environmental impacts. As such, we have no hesitation in recommending this Project Application be approved.