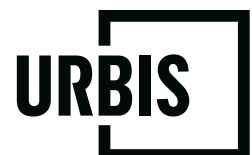




REQUEST FOR SECRETARY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Taronga Zoo Upper Australia
Precinct

Prepared for
TARONGA CONSERVATION SOCIETY AUSTRALIA
27 April 2020



URBIS STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS REPORT WERE:

Director	Sarah Horsfield
Consultant	Brigitte Bradley
Project Code	P%4764
Report Number	DRAFT

All information supplied to Urbis in order to conduct this research has been treated in the strictest confidence. It shall only be used in this context and shall not be made available to third parties without client authorisation. Confidential information has been stored securely and data provided by respondents, as well as their identity, has been treated in the strictest confidence and all assurance given to respondents have been and shall be fulfilled.

© Urbis Pty Ltd
50 105 256 228

All Rights Reserved. No material may be reproduced without prior permission.

You must read the important disclaimer appearing within the body of this report.

urbis.com.au

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Site Description	1
Development Description	2
Planning Framework	2
Key Environmental Issues.....	3
Project Timing	3
1. Introduction	5
1.1. Purpose.....	5
1.2. Overview Of Taronga Conservation Society Australia	5
1.3. Background.....	5
1.3.1. Early works DA	6
1.3.2. Scoping Meeting.....	6
2. The Site and Surrounds	8
3. The Proposal	9
3.1. Project Objectives	9
3.2. Development Description.....	9
3.3. Indicative Project Timing.....	10
4. Strategic Justification	11
4.1. NSW Premier and State Priorities	11
4.2. Greater Sydney Region Plan	11
5. Statutory Planning Framework	12
5.1. Commonwealth Legislation.....	12
5.1.1. Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999	12
5.2. State Legislation	12
5.3. State Environmental Planning Policies	13
5.4. Local Planning Framework	15
5.4.1. Zone Objectives.....	15
5.4.2. Heritage Conservation.....	15
5.4.3. Scenic Protection Area.....	15
6. Key Issues for Consideration	16
6.1. Secretary's Requirements	16
6.2. Built Form, Design And Visual Impact	16
6.3. Indigenous and European Heritage	17
6.4. Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna Impacts	18
6.5. Geotechnical and Contamination.....	18
6.6. Traffic and Parking.....	18
6.7. Bushfire.....	18
6.8. Acoustic Impacts.....	18
6.9. Water Quality and Stormwater Management	18
6.10. Air Quality	19
6.11. Utilities and Services.....	19
6.12. BCA and Access	19
6.13. Waste Management.....	19
6.14. Operational Management	19
6.15. Construction Management.....	19
6.16. Stakeholder And Community Consultation	19
7. Expected Deliverables	21
8. Conclusion	22
Disclaimer	23

Appendix A Concept Plans
Appendix B QS Report

FIGURES

Figure 1 Location of Upper Australia Precinct 8
Figure 2 Section 170 Heritage items 17

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Taronga Conservation Society Australia (**TCSA**) as the applicant, requesting that the Secretary issue requirements for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (**EIS**) to accompany a State Significant Development Application (**SSDA**) for the Upper Australia Precinct at Taronga Zoo. The Upper Australia Precinct will complete the redevelopment of the entire Australian Habitat section of Taronga Zoo and will represent central and northern Australia with animal species and landscapes that reflect the central Australian deserts and top end wetlands.

Pursuant to Schedule 2 of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (**SRD SEPP**) development on the Taronga Zoo site with a capital investment value (**CIV**) of more than \$10 million is identified as a State Significant Development (**SSD**). As the proposed development will have a CIV greater than \$10 million, the proposal will be classified as SSD (refer to QS costing provided at **Appendix B**).

The purpose of this report is to request that the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (**SEARs**) be issued for the preparation of an EIS that will accompany the SSDA in accordance with the requirements of section 4.12(8) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. To assist with this request for the SEARs, the following information is provided:

- Site details.
- An overview of the proposed development.
- A summary of the existing strategic and statutory planning framework.
- Identification of the key environmental assessment issues associated with the proposal and a brief examination of the likely extent and nature of any potential impacts.
- Details of preliminary consultation.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Taronga Zoo and its iconic Sydney harbourside location is one of the most popular tourist attractions in NSW. Established in 1916, the zoo occupies an area of 28 hectares, exhibits over 320 animal species and hosts more than 1.5 million guests each year with the aim of developing a deeper understanding of wildlife. In addition to the exhibition and display of animals, the zoo also provides support services for the breeding of critically endangered species and conservation research and education.

The zoo site makes a significant contribution to the Sydney Harbour landscape and contains extensive, established sub-tropical vegetation and landscape features as well as several identified heritage items. The site adjoins the Sydney Harbour foreshore and Sydney Harbour National Park (east and west). To the immediate north of the zoo site are low density residential areas.

The area that will contain the proposed Upper Australia Precinct is at the north-eastern corner of the zoo site, adjacent to Bradley's Head Road. It contains existing exhibits and infrastructure for Australian animals. The majority of the existing infrastructure in the precinct is over 30 years old and is identified for renewal and revitalisation as part of the zoo's strategic plan to improve facilities and enhance guest experiences.

The proposed development comprises the construction of the 'Upper Australia Precinct' which will complete the entire Australian precinct, including key attractions such as the nocturnal house, macropod trail and commercial Koala Encounters venue. The Upper Australia Precinct is one of the pillars of Taronga's Centenary Capital Plan and will be a major tourist destination for international tourists to view Australian wildlife. The renewal of this area of the zoo will enhance the native landscape strategy of the existing precinct and greater communicate the connection of wildlife to the environment. The proposal aims to enhance the guest experience and presentation of Taronga Zoo with a focus to improve the welfare of animals.

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The proposed works will completely upgrade the existing Upper Australia Precinct, including a new exhibit design and layouts. This will include demolition of existing structures and some excavation works, while still remaining sympathetic to the design intent of the original 1970s exhibits. The Upper Australia Precinct will display critically endangered Australian animals that form part of Taronga's wildlife conservation and education programs and upgrade “*star*” attractions including kangaroo, koala, platypus, wombat and emu exhibits. The proposal will incorporate the following works:

- Refurbishment of the existing Nocturnal House;
- Construction of a new Koala encounter and canopy walk;
- Extension of the existing Macropod walkthrough;
- Creation of a new eastern plaza and western pavilion;
- Upgrades to back of house facilities for animal care;
- Additional toilets and amenities for staff and visitors;
- Other supporting infrastructure and walkways; and
- Modifications to the existing ropes course including a new entrance.”

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The proposed redevelopment is fully aligned with the strategic planning policy framework and addresses each of the State and local statutory planning controls that currently apply to the site, including:

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986
- Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- Native Vegetation Act 1997
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
- Heritage Act 1977
- Rural Fires Act 1997
- Roads Act 1973 (Roads Act)
- Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities and North District Plan
- State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011
- State Environmental Planning Policy No 55 – Remediation of Land
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007
- Sydney Harbour Catchment Regional Environmental Plan 2005
- Mosman Local Environmental Plan 2012

The proposed development has an estimated capital investment value of \$15,956,784 and is appropriately categorised as a State Significant Development (SSD) in accordance with the planning framework (refer to Section 5). Accordingly, a SSDA is to be lodged with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) seeking approval for the refurbishment of the Upper Australia Precinct.

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The SEARs request identifies the key environmental issues considered likely to warrant detailed assessment in the preparation of the EIS and lodgement of the SSDA (refer to **Section 6**). These include:

- Built form, design and visual impact;
- Indigenous and European Heritage;
- Vegetation and landscape impacts;
- Biodiversity, flora and fauna impacts;
- Geotechnical and contamination;
- Traffic and Parking;
- Bushfire;
- Acoustic Impacts;
- Water quality and stormwater management;
- Air quality;
- Utilities and services;
- Building Code of Australia and Accessibility;
- Waste Management;
- Sustainability;
- Operational Management;
- Construction Management; and
- Stakeholder and Community Consultation.

The SEARs request also includes indicative details regarding the stakeholder consultation process that will be undertaken during the preparation of the EIS and the formal assessment of the SSDA.

PROJECT TIMING

The project has been fast-tracked by TCSA as a result of the unforeseen issues that have impacted the zoo in 2020. Zoo visitation and revenue suffered dramatically over the summer peak period due to the devastating bushfires and now as a result of COVID-19, Taronga Zoo has shut their doors to the public.

This project is fully funded and 'shovel ready' for commencement of construction. An early works demolition package may also be pursued concurrently with Mosman Council to take advantage of an absence of guests to complete necessary early works, including demolition of Platypus House and bulk earthworks. Platypus House is listed on the Section 170 Register. Nevertheless, a request is made to the Secretary for the environmental assessment requirements with respect to the proposed demolition of Platypus House and bulk earthworks.

The project will deliver genuine economic benefits in these challenging times, with the intention to provide approximately 800 jobs including design, project management and construction over the 18-month design development and construction period.

The intention of the Upper Australia Precinct is to enhance the Australian animal precinct to provide domestic and international guests with a unique wildlife experience. The completion of the project will position Taronga Zoo as a continued global leader in the presentation and welfare of Australian animals. Now more than ever, it is critical that the project is delivered in time for when the economy does bounce back, and international tourists start returning to Taronga, Sydney and Australia.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE

In accordance with Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)*, this report requests the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (**SEARs**) for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (**EIS**) to accompany a State Significant Development Application (**SSDA**) for the proposed development of the Upper Australia Precinct at Taronga Zoo.

The Upper Australia precinct will represent the iconic landscapes and animals of the Australian bush. The Upper Australia precinct development will enable the applicant to continue its key conservation messaging and vision of securing a shared future for wildlife and people. By drawing on the Australian landscape and its animals, the Upper Australia project presents a unique opportunity to communicate Taronga's vision through landscape and architectural design. The Upper Australia precinct design is intended to immerse guests in the landscape and educate them about Australian wildlife. The design will be underpinned by Ecologically Sustainable Design (ESD) principles which will be reflected in the landscape and built form elements.

Development of the Taronga Zoo site that has a capital investment value (**CIV**) of more than \$10 million is identified as a State Significant Development (**SSD**) pursuant to Schedule 2 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SRD SEPP)*. The proposed development has a CIV greater than \$10 million and is classified as SSD for the purposes of the SRD SEPP (refer to QS costing provided at **Appendix B**) In accordance with section 4.5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* the Minister for Planning is the consent authority for SSD.

The purpose of this report is to provide information to support the request to the Secretary to assist in identifying the SEARs for the preparation of an EIS for the proposed development. This request for SEARs report should be read in conjunction with the Architectural Concept Masterplan prepared by Lahznimmo enclosed in **Appendix A** and a QS Report prepared by MBM enclosed in **Appendix B**.

1.2. OVERVIEW OF TARONGA CONSERVATION SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

The Zoological Parks Board Act 1973 (**Zoological Act**) is the Act that governs Taronga and Taronga Western Plains Zoos. A corporation named the "Zoological Parks Board of New South Wales" (**the Board**) is constituted under the Zoological Parks Board Act. The Board may also be called the Taronga Conservation Society Australia and the use of that name has the same effect for all purposes as the use of its corporate name.

Under Clause 5(2)(b) of the Zoological Act the Board shall, for the purposes of any Act, be deemed to be a statutory body representing the Crown.

Taronga Conservation Society Australia has a formal mandate, as defined in Section 15 of the Zoological Parks Board Act 1973, to:

- (a) carry out research and breeding programs for the preservation of endangered species;
- (b) carry out research programs for the conservation and management of other species;
- (c) conduct public education and awareness programs about species conservation and management; and
- (d) display animals for educational, cultural and recreational purposes.

The Upper Australia Precinct clearly meets these objectives, as it will display animals for educational, cultural and recreational purposes.

The zoo's animal management activities will ensure the Australian animal collection, its presentation and its care, are consistent with their overall animal strategy, conservation and education strategy and zoo vision.

1.3. BACKGROUND

Taronga Zoo has evolved over time from a Zoo that simply provides the traditional visitor experience of viewing animals in exhibits, to a Zoo that focusses on wildlife conservation, animal welfare and providing a range of visitor learning experiences. The zoo is one of Australia's most popular attractions, attracting more than 1.5 million visitors annually and contributes an estimated \$249 million per annum to the NSW economy.

The Upper Australia Precinct has been fast-tracked by TCSA as a result of the unforeseen issues which have impacted Zoo visitation and revenue in 2020. Taronga Zoo is currently closed to the public, which is seen as an advantageous time to undertake works which are usually disruptive to visitors and ensure that project is delivered in time for the return of future domestic and international visitors.

1.3.1. Early works Local Crown DA

To ensure a majority of the most disruptive works can occur while there are no visitors to the zoo, an early works development application (**Local DA**) is likely to separately lodged with Mosman Council on behalf of the Crown for the demolition of Platypus House and bulk excavation works. As the proposed works are considered preliminary to the SSDA, some impacts including construction management will be assessed cumulatively.

Notwithstanding, a request is made to the Secretary for the environmental assessment requirements with respect to the proposed demolition of Platypus House and bulk earthworks.

1.3.2. Separate exempt works

Separate to the SSDA and potential Local DA, Taronga Conservation Society Australia (**TCSA**) will be undertaking the following associated temporary works:

- Demolition structures used for the exhibition, conservation and care of animals, which do not have any heritage significance and works taken are in accordance with the conservation policy outlined in the Taronga Zoo Conservation Strategy; and
- Animal relocations to temporary facilities and/or off-site removal to other facilities. The temporary enclosures will house some of the animal species during the construction of the exhibits.

These works are to be undertaken as exempt development as per Schedule 2 of MLEP 2012, as the works have a capital investment value of less than \$1 million.

1.3.3. Scoping Meeting with DPIE

An initial Scoping E-Meeting was held on 20 April 2020 via teleconference between the members of the project team and members of the Key Sites team at DPIE including:

- Cameron Sargeant, DPIE
- Minoshi Weerasinghe, DPIE
- True Swain, TCSA
- Kristine Marshall, TCSA
- Sarah Horsfield, Urbis
- Brigitte Bradley, Urbis
- Allie Barnier, Urbis

The key areas of discussion included the following:

- Project brief of the proposed development
- Urgency of the proposed works to TCSA
- Relationship with Early Works DA to be assessed by Mosman Council
- Timeframes of the project from initial scoping with the intention for approval by December 2020
- Consultation requirements in the current circumstances
- Confirmation that referral to the Foreshore Committee will be undertaken internally by DPIE
- Confirmation that the NSW Government Architects will not consider this SSDA due to the unique design requirements for animals and their enclosures.

1.3.4. Consultation with Mosman Council

A teleconference was held on 22 April 2020 between Sarah Horsfield (Urbis) and Planning staff at Mosman Council.

The key areas of discussion included the following:

- Project brief of the proposed SSDA development. Generally supportive of animal enclosure upgrades as this is the Zoo's core business.
- Relationship with SSDA to be assessed by DPIE and need to demonstrate works not pre-emptive.
- Timeframes and planning pathway for assessment
- Need to consider objective of excavation works in DA.

2. THE SITE AND SURROUNDS

Taronga Zoo is located at Bradleys Head Road, Mosman and is situated in the Mosman Local Government area (LGA). The site is bounded by Bradleys Head Road to the east, Athol Wharf Road and Sydney Harbour to the south, Little Sirius Cove to the west and Whiting Beach Road to the north.

Taronga Zoo is legally described as Lot 22 on DP843294 and is Crown Land managed by the TCSA (the Zoological Park Board).

The proposed Upper Australia Precinct is located at the north-eastern corner of the Taronga Zoo site as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The site of the proposal contains existing animal enclosures and associated infrastructure with no substantial built form elements. Minor demolition, bulk earthworks and vegetation works are included in the proposal. However, it is the overall design intent to adapt as much as possible to the existing topography of the site and retain as much of the site's significant vegetation as possible. Full consideration of the geophysical, biodiversity, vegetation and heritage values of the site will be undertaken as part of the EIS process.

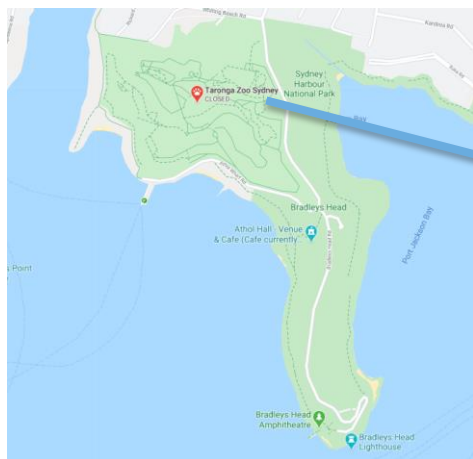
The site of the proposed Upper Australia Precinct is surrounded on three sides by existing zoo facilities and adjoins Bradleys Head Road near the northern main zoo entrance. Adjoining the subject site area, to the south, is the Australia Habitat Phase 1 and Taronga Wildlife retreat development which is completed and was open until COV-ID 19 forced its temporary closure. On the opposite side of Bradleys Head Road to the east of the site is Sydney Harbour National Park. The nearest residential areas to the proposal site are approximately 200m to the north on Bradleys Head Road and Whiting Beach Road. These areas are separated from the project site by the national park and the zoo's car parking, forecourt and main entrance building.

Existing uses and facilities in the Upper Australia Precinct area include:

- Avian wetland;
- Wild ropes course;
- Nocturnal House;
- Macropod walk-through;
- Koala experience; and
- Platypus house.

The existing facilities largely comprise open air exhibits, pathways, landscaping and associated infrastructure/servicing areas. The existing Platypus House is proposed for demolition. The existing Nocturnal House is intended to be refurbished and retained as a nocturnal animal exhibit. The design and structural alterations will form a critical piece of the final concept design for the proposal.

Figure 1 Location of Upper Australia Precinct



Picture 1 Taronga Zoo



Picture 2 General Location of Upper Australia Precinct

3. THE PROPOSAL

3.1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The SSD application will seek approval for the redevelopment of the existing exhibition areas and animal enclosures to create the Upper Australia Precinct. The completion of the Upper Australia Precinct will complete the redevelopment of the entire Australian precinct that includes the Taronga Wildlife Retreat. The area of the project currently contains Taronga Zoo's Australian animal collection including the nocturnal house, avian wetlands and commercial Koala Encounters venue.

The theme of the proposed Upper Australia precinct will represent the iconic landscapes and animals of the Australian bush. Integral to the vision of the redeveloped precinct is the culture of Aboriginal Australians and their connections to wildlife, landscape and conservation and the ability to inform local and international visitors to the site of this element of Australian culture. The display of animals in this context will add a further dimension to their importance and contribution to the conservation and appreciation of the Australian environment.

3.2. DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The proposed works will completely refurbish the existing Upper Australia Precinct, including new exhibit design and layouts. This will include significant demolition of existing structures and some excavation works, while still remaining sympathetic to the design intent of the original 1970s exhibits. The demolition and excavation works is likely to be included in an early DA package to Mosman Council. Nevertheless, a request is made to the Secretary for the environmental assessment requirements with respect to the proposed demolition of Platypus House and bulk earthworks.

The Upper Australia Precinct will display critically endangered Australian animals that form part of Taronga's wildlife conservation and education programs and upgrade attractions including kangaroo, koala, platypus, wombat and emu exhibits.

The proposal will incorporate three main exhibits:

- The existing Nocturnal House building will be retained and undergo a major refurbishment to create an immersive experience for guests, including new exhibit design and layout, functional and operational planning and engineering services designs. The completion of Nocturnal House will provide Taronga Zoo with an innovative space to display nocturnal Australian animals providing significantly improved animal welfare outcomes.
- A new Koala Encounter and public koala canopy walk will be constructed to provide guests with a more naturalistic experience with koalas. An elevated walkway located 3-4 metres above the ground will be constructed within existing trees, the area will be supplemented with additional trees to create a forest. This will be located in the same vicinity as existing koala facility along Bradley's Head Rd.
- Macropod walkthrough will be extended to include the existing wetland area. The topography is to be retained and the exhibit will be heavily landscaped to enhance the presentation and welfare of the various macropod/kangaroos that will be housed in this large open range exhibit.

Additional works proposed as part of the Upper Australia Precinct redevelopment will include the following:

- Creation of a new eastern plaza and western pavilion;
- Upgrades to back of house facilities for animal care;
- Additional toilets and amenities for staff and visitors;
- Other supporting infrastructure and walkways; and
- Modifications to the existing ropes course including a new entrance.

3.3. INDICATIVE PROJECT TIMING

As outlined in **Section 1.3** it is likely that early works will be undertaken in 2020 as part of a Local DA to take advantage of the closure of the zoo to the public. SSDA works are estimated to be undertaken within 18 months including the relocation of animals back into the precinct.

Nevertheless, a request is made to the Secretary for the environmental assessment requirements with respect to the proposed demolition of Platypus House and bulk earthworks.

4. STRATEGIC JUSTIFICATION

4.1. NSW PREMIER AND STATE PRIORITIES

The NSW Premier has identified strategic priorities to address important issues affecting the people of NSW. The proposed refurbishment of the Upper Australia Precinct is consistent with a key Premier priority to maintain a strong economy and will ensure that when the zoo is reopened it maintains its international reputation as a world class facility for the education and conservation of Australian wildlife.

The proposed Upper Australia precinct upgrade will provide improved and enhanced facilities that will draw heavily on the zoo's ability to create positive connections between wildlife and people by providing direct access to wildlife.

4.2. GREATER SYDNEY REGION PLAN

The Greater Sydney Region Plan, *A Metropolis of Three Cities (Region Plan)*, is the NSW Government's overarching strategic plan for growth and change in Sydney. It is a 20-year plan with a 40-year vision that seeks to transform Greater Sydney into a metropolis of three cities being the Western Parkland City; the Central River City; and the Eastern Harbour City. It identifies key challenges facing Sydney including increasing the population to eight million by 2056, 817,000 new jobs and a requirement of 725,000 new homes by 2036.

The Region Plan aspires to deliver the following outcomes in the future development of the Sydney metropolitan area:

- Liveability – enhancing cultural and housing diversity and designing places for people;
- Productivity – developing a more accessible and walkable city and creating conditions for a stronger economy;
- Sustainability – valuing green spaces and landscape, improving efficiency of resources and creating a resilient City; and
- Infrastructure – ensuring infrastructure supports new developments and governments, community and businesses collaborate to realise the benefits of growth.

To achieve these goals and address the identified challenges, the plan includes 10 strategic directions that inform its specified potential indicators and objectives. The Upper Australia proposal will improve and enhance the existing zoo facilities and is generally consistent with the objectives and indicators of the Greater Sydney Region Plan.

In particular, the project will:

- Contribute to the creation of a city of great places by providing quality a quality recreation, cultural and education destination that identifies, conserves and enhances environmental heritage and environmental qualities;
- Provide economic benefits and contribute to job creation; and
- Protect and enhance green spaces and landscapes that contribute to the natural setting, visual significance and urban vegetation qualities of the Eastern Harbour city.

5. STATUTORY PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Upper Australia Precinct is classified as SSD pursuant to Section 4.36 of the EP&A Act. The proposal therefore seeks consent for SSD as described under Section 4.37 of the SRD SEPP. The Minister for Planning is the consent authority.

5.1. COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATION

5.1.1. Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (**EPBC Act**) aims to protect the environment and matters of national environmental significance, including flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage. While the site is a zoo, native flora and fauna is prevalent on site due to the high coverage of vegetation.

As part of the EIS, a Flora and Fauna Assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the NSW Framework, to investigate the extent of native vegetation present and to inform an assessment of potential impacts to potential threatened species, their habitat and ecological communities.

5.2. STATE LEGISLATION

State legislation applicable to the proposal are identified below in Table 3.

Legislation	Relevant Requirements	Application to Upper Australia Precinct
NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	The EP&A Act establishes the framework for the assessment and approval of development and activities in NSW. The Act also facilitates the making of Environmental Planning Instruments which guide the way in which development should occur across the State. Division 4.1 of the EP&A Act establishes the requirements for State significant development.	The proposed development has a CIV of approximately \$16 million and therefore meets the threshold for SSD. An SSD application must therefore be made to the Minister for Planning, accompanied by an EIS. Refer to Appendix B for the QS Report.
Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986	The Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986 identifies the need for approvals to be given for the Zoo to exhibit animals, with certain animals requiring specific permits. The Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986 will ensure the safety and well-being of animals through the design and approval of animal enclosures.	TSCA sees animal welfare as being of paramount importance. Its enclosure designs will exceed the minimum specified standards by a considerable margin. The proposed exhibit designs seek to deliver high quality environments contributing to animal welfare.
Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (Biodiversity Act)	The aim of the Biodiversity Act is to maintain a healthy, productive and resilient environment for the greatest well-being of the community, now and into the future, consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.	The EIS and supporting documentation will demonstrate the way in which the proposal will avoid or minimise impacts to any retained biodiversity.
NSW Native Vegetation Act 1997 (NV Act)	The NV Act applies to State protected land and native vegetation that is identified by the Minister for Planning.	Pursuant to section 4.41 of the EP&A Act, SSD is exempt from the need for an authorisation under section 12 of the Native Vegetation Act 2003 to clear native vegetation.
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NPW Act)	The NPW Act aims to prevent the unnecessary or unwarranted destruction of relics and the active protection and	Pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act, SSD is exempt from the need for a section

	conservation of relics of high cultural significance. The provisions of the Act apply to both indigenous and nonindigenous relics.	90 permit for the removal of items of Aboriginal heritage. Due to the site's location in close proximity to known archaeological items, an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Archaeology (ACHA) will form part of the EIS and supporting documents.
NSW Heritage Act 1977 (Heritage Act)	The Heritage Act protects heritage items, sites and relics in NSW older than 50 years regardless of cultural heritage significance. Approval from the NSW Heritage Council is required for any direct impacts on a state listed heritage item. Approval from the Heritage Council under section 139 of the Heritage Act provides for the application for a permit.	The site is not a State Heritage listed item under Part 3A of the Heritage Act. Pursuant to Section 170 of the Heritage Act all state government agencies including Taronga Zoo must keep and administer a database of heritage assets called a Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register. The proposal will result in substantial works to items identified on the Section 170 register and the whole site is also identified under the Mosman LEP as a local heritage item. The EIS and supporting documentation will demonstrate the way in which the proposal will avoid or minimise impacts to any heritage significance.
NSW Roads Act 1973 (Roads Act)	Section 138 of the Roads Act requires the consent of NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) for work in, on, under or over a public road.	Any works proposed to a public road as part of the proposed development would require the consent of the RMS. Consultation would be undertaken with the RMS during the preparation of the EIS to ensure adequate consideration of potential issues affecting public roads within or surrounding the site.
NSW Rural Fires Act 1997 (Rural Fires Act)	The Rural Fires Act requires consideration of potential bush fire impacts on development at the planning assessment stage in order to protect people and property from the effects of bush fire. Section 100B requires a bush fire authority to be issued prior to undertaking certain types of development on bushfire prone land.	The site is identified as bushfire prone land. Pursuant to section 4.41 of the EP&A Act, SSD is exempt from the need for a bushfire safety authority under Section 100B of the Rural Fires Act. The EIS will include a Bushfire Assessment Report.

5.3. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICIES

State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) applicable to the proposal are identified below in Table 4.

Legislation	Relevant Provisions
SEPP (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SRD SEPP)	Schedule 2 of the SRD SEPP states development on the Taronga Zoo site with a capital investment value (CIV) of more than \$10 million is identified as a State Significant Development (SSD). As the proposed development will have a CIV of \$15,956,784 the proposal will be classified as SSD (refer to QS costing provided at Appendix B).

	<p>The Determination of State Significant Applications Planning Circular PS 11-022 issued on 30 September 2011 sets out the delegations of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure to determine SSD under the EP&A Act. All applications made by or on behalf of a public authority are to be determined by the Minister.</p> <p>TCSA can be defined as public authority under the EP&A Act and consequently the Minister for Planning and Environment is the determining authority for any SSD lodged by or on behalf of the TCSA.</p>
SEPP No 55 – Remediation of Land (SEPP 55)	<p>The provisions of SEPP 55 require a consent authority to consider the potential contamination of land prior to the determination of a development application. Where land is identified as potentially contaminated, the consent authority must be satisfied that it is either suitable in its contaminated state for the purpose proposed or can be sufficiently remediated to become suitable.</p> <p>Given the site is currently being used for zoo exhibits, and the use is proposed to continue, contamination is an unlikely issue. However, contamination has been considered and investigations will be undertaken and included in the EIS to ensure the site is suitable for the proposed use.</p>
State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (ISEPP)	<p>ISEPP aims to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure by providing a consistent planning framework that applies across NSW.</p> <p>The SSDA may be referred to relevant utility service providers to confirm that the siting and layout of the proposed development will not impact on relevant easements and/or infrastructure corridors. As this application is essentially for a redevelopment of existing animal enclosures it is unlikely to result in any impacts of utility services.</p>
Sydney Harbour Catchment Regional Environmental Plan 2005 (SHREP 2005)	<p>SHREP 2005 is a deemed SEPP and applies to Sydney Harbour and the surrounding foreshores and catchment. The planning instrument provides planning principles to guide future development and a range of matters when considering DAs within the foreshores and waterways of Sydney Harbour, including planning controls for strategic foreshore sites.</p> <p>Under SHREP 2005 the site is identified within the Foreshores and Waterways Area, listed as a “Strategic Foreshore Site”. The site does not have any heritage listing under SHREP 2005. Development listed in Schedule 2 of the SHREP 2005 is required to be referred to the Foreshores and Waterways Planning and Development Advisory Committee (Foreshore Committee) prior to determination. The proposed zoological exhibits fall within the definition of a ‘flora and fauna enclosure’. As such, the proposal may require referral to the Foreshore Committee.</p> <p>Given the proposed ‘flora and fauna enclosure’ will replace existing facilities and its location, materiality and built form of proposed structures will integrate with the landscape and sit below the tree canopy, it is envisaged the proposal will result in any visual, scenic or environmental impacts on Sydney Harbour and its foreshore. A visual impact assessment from the foreshore or harbour will not be required to support this SSDA.</p> <p>Development consent must not be granted for development on the site, being a strategic foreshore site unless there is a master plan for the site and consideration has been made to this master plan. The Taronga Zoo has an approved master plan “Zoo 2000 – The view to the future” and the Australian Precinct forms part of the master plan.</p>

5.4. LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The *Mosman Local Environmental Plan 2012* (MLEP 2012) is the principal local environmental planning instrument applying to the site. There are no building height or floor space ratio controls that apply to the site. Key relevant planning controls are discussed below.

5.4.1. Zone Objectives

The site is zoned 'SP1 Special Activities' under MLEP 2012 and is identified on the zoning map as "Zoological Gardens". The only uses permitted on the site with development consent is for the purpose shown on the Land Zoning Map including any development that is ordinarily incidental or ancillary to development for that purpose. The proposed redevelopment of the Upper Australia Precinct is considered permissible with consent.

The redevelopment of the Upper Australia Precinct is also consistent with the zone objectives in that it:

- relates to the special land use of "zoological gardens" as designated to the site;
- is development that is in keeping with the established use and special characteristics of the site and
- will include appropriate measures to minimise adverse impacts on surrounding land.

5.4.2. Heritage Conservation

Taronga Zoo site contains several locally listed heritage items, identified as Item I34 being the "Rainforest Aviary", "Elephant House", "bus shelter and office", "floral clock" and "upper and lower entrance gates". None of these items are located within the Upper Australia Precinct. Notwithstanding, the impact on listed heritage items will be addressed in the EIS.

Taronga Zoo and its surrounds also contains a number of archaeological items listed in MLEP 2012 including:

- Item A494 "Sites of Curlew and Mia Mia Camps" at Sirius Cove Road on Bushland between Little Sirius Cove and Whiting Beach. This item is situated on Lot 22 DP 843294 but is located outside of the Zoo's perimeter fence line.
- Item A482 "Former Athol Wharf Tram Terminus, including escarpment and retaining walls" on Athol Wharf Road and is described as "Road Reserve adjacent to Taronga Zoo Ferry Wharf".
- Item A483 "Site of first wharf serving Taronga Zoo" on Athol Wharf Road and is described as the Taronga Zoo Ferry Wharf.

None of these items are located in or directly adjacent to the Upper Australia Precinct site. Notwithstanding, the impact on archaeological items will be addressed in the EIS.

5.4.3. Scenic Protection Area

Pursuant to clause 6.4 of MLEP 2012, the site is identified as a "Scenic Protection Area". Development consent must not be granted to any development on land in a Scenic Protection Area unless the consent authority is satisfied that:

- measures will be taken, including in relation to the location and design of the proposed development, to minimise the visual impact of the development to and from Sydney Harbour, and
- the development will maintain the existing natural landscape and landform.

The proposed works involve built form which remains below the existing tree canopy of the precinct, replace or upgrade existing animal exhibits and will not be visible from Sydney Harbour or the foreshore.

Additionally, Clause 6.4 and Clause 5.9 of the MLEP 2012 require consideration of the preservation and protection of existing natural landscape and landforms, as well as the clearing of vegetation to make way for the new exhibits. Minimal tree removal is proposed. Notwithstanding, these matters will be addressed in the EIS. An Arborist Report will be prepared to assess the impact of the proposal on the existing trees. A Landscape and Public Domain Plan will also be to highlight any trees and planting to be removed, as well as replacement trees included as part of the proposal.

6. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1. SECRETARY'S REQUIREMENTS

The key issues arising from the proposed development are discussed below. This information has been prepared to assist the Department of Planning & Environment in identifying requirements for preparing the EIS to support the DA. The key considerations associated with the project are as follows:

- Built form, design and visual impact;
- Indigenous and European Heritage;
- Vegetation and landscape impacts;
- Biodiversity, flora and fauna impacts;
- Geotechnical and contamination;
- Traffic and Parking;
- Bushfire;
- Acoustic Impacts;
- Water quality and stormwater management;
- Air quality;
- Utilities and services;
- Building Code of Australia and Accessibility;
- Waste Management;
- Sustainability;
- Operational Management;
- Construction Management; and
- Stakeholder and Community Consultation.

6.2. BUILT FORM, DESIGN AND VISUAL IMPACT

The submitted concept plans prepared by Lahznimmo Architects enclosed in **Appendix A** provides a preliminary indication of the proposed built form which includes minimal structures and will integrate with the existing landform of the site.

The Upper Australia Precinct is located approximately 200 metres from the nearest residential boundary and visually separated from adjacent neighbouring properties. It has limited visibility from the public domain, the foreshore or Sydney Harbour.

The EIS will address the height, bulk and scale of the proposed development within the context of the locality. The EIS will also address the design quality with specific consideration of the use of colours, materials, finishes and landscaping. A landscape plan will be submitted with the EIS package to proposed landscape works associated with the proposal.

It is the intention of the design to remain below the existing tree canopy and retain the majority of existing trees to reduce visual impacts from Sydney Harbour and Bradleys Head Road and provide built form which is sympathetic to the natural character of the precinct. Given the proposed built changes are low scale with minimal tree removal proposed, the EIS will address potential view impacts but will not require a formal view impact assessment from the foreshore or harbour.

6.3. INDIGENOUS AND EUROPEAN HERITAGE

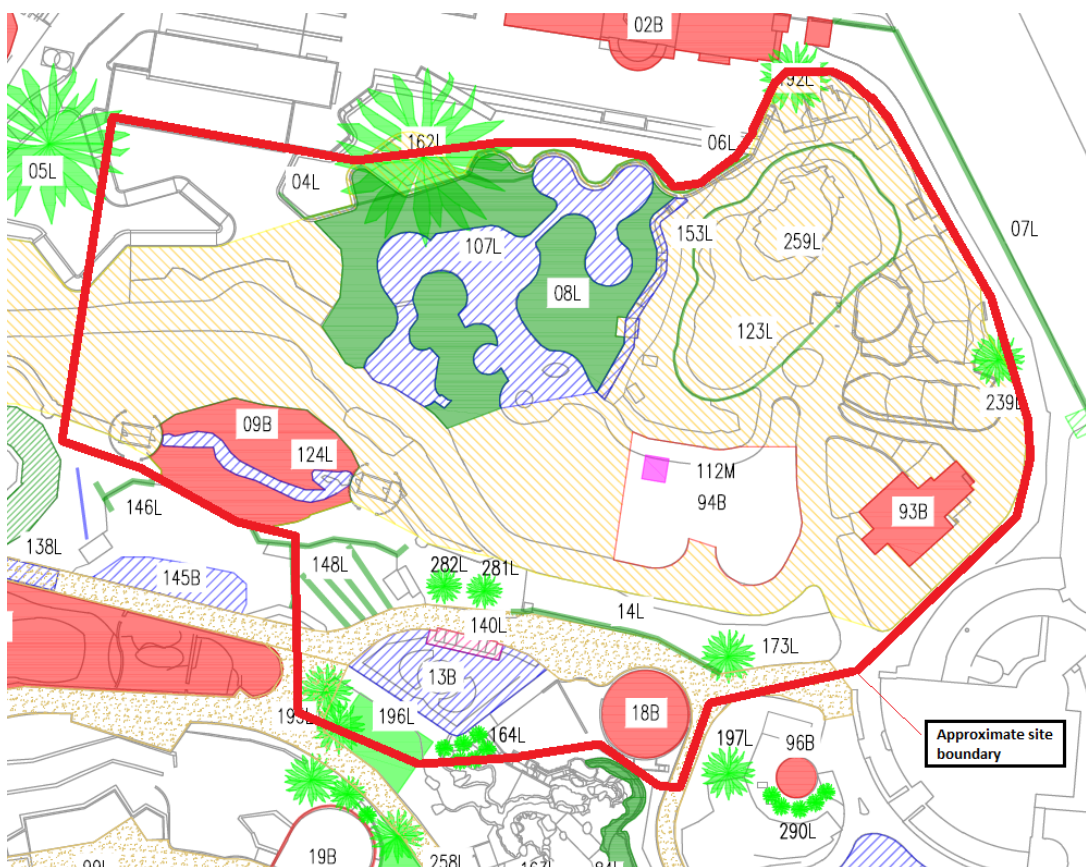
Upper Australia Precinct is not identified as a heritage item listed in SREP 2005 and the location of the development is not situated with proximity to any heritage item listed in SREP 2005. The Taronga Zoo site contains several locally listed heritage items, identified as Item I34 in MLEP 2012 being the “Rainforest Aviary”, “Elephant House”, “bus shelter and office”, “floral clock” and “upper and lower entrance gates”. None of these items are located within the Upper Australia Precinct.

Although Taronga Zoo is not listed on the State Heritage Register, as a crown authority, a database of heritage assets called a Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register is required. The Register identifies over 250 individual built and landscape heritage items within Taronga Zoo. The proposal will directly affect and involve substantial alteration to the following Section 170 register items, shown in Figure 2:

- Australian Wetlands ponds (107L);
- Stoneworks and rock benches at Waterbird Lake (08L);
- Bridge over Australian Wetlands ponds (153L);
- Landscaping within Australian sections (123L);
- Eucalyptus punctata and Lophostemon remnants within and around Macropod (walkthrough) enclosure (259L);
- Circular Monkey pit enclosure (18B);
- Concrete stair with roughcast balustrade, associated with the Floral Clock Lawn (140L);

Platypus House (93B) is proposed for demolition. This is likely to be sought under a separate Local Crown DA to allow equitable access into the redeveloped precinct. All other items within and adjacent to the project area will be retained and preserved as part of the proposal.

Figure 2 Section 170 Heritage items



Source: TCSA

In accordance with Clause 5.10 of MLEP 2010, both a Heritage Impact Assessment (**HIA**) and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (**ACHA**) will be prepared as part of the EIS to assess the impact of the proposed development on European and Aboriginal heritage items on the site. The Taronga Zoo Conservation Strategy July 2002 was endorsed by the NSW Heritage Office and provides the policy framework for the conservation, interpretation, management and use of the site as part of the implementation of the Master plan. This document will be a key consideration for the preparation of the documents.

6.4. BIODIVERSITY, FLORA AND FAUNA IMPACTS

The zoo contains significant natural biodiversity and provides habitat for native flora and fauna. Where possible, existing vegetation is being retained and integrated into the landscape design of the proposal. Some vegetation removal and impacts are expected as a result of the proposal. The proposal includes the removal of some of the existing vegetation on the site and substantial alterations to the site's landscaping to allow for equitable access to the precinct. Existing significant vegetation will largely be retained and integrated into the overall landscape design for the site.

The EIS will include a comprehensive arboricultural and biodiversity review of the existing vegetation and habitat on the site and identify all vegetation proposed for removal and retention as part of the proposal. An assessment of the site's biodiversity values and likely impacts of the proposal will be undertaken to inform the EIS for the proposal.

6.5. GEOTECHNICAL AND CONTAMINATION

Based on previous works undertaken on the zoo site, no geotechnical or contamination issues are expected. Appropriate geotechnical and contamination investigations will be undertaken to enable structural design and to address statutory contamination requirements with the majority of excavation works likely to be undertaken as part of the Local DA to be assessed by Mosman Council.

6.6. TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The proposal involves the reconfiguration and upgrade of existing zoo facilities and animal enclosures and will not change the zoo's visitor capacity or staff numbers. Local parking and traffic conditions will not be significantly altered by this proposal.

A Car Parking and Traffic Impact Assessment will be prepared by a suitably qualified consultant for inclusion in the EIS. It will demonstrate that the existing parking and public transport arrangements and altered servicing arrangements will be sufficient to serve the new exhibit.

6.7. BUSHFIRE

The site is designated as bushfire prone land. A bushfire report will be included in the EIS, which will provide details regarding any proposed bushfire management or mitigation measures required for the proposal.

6.8. ACOUSTIC IMPACTS

As the proposal does not include any additional land uses and is essentially a refurbishment of an existing animal precinct, it is not anticipated there will be any adverse impacts associated acoustic impacts on the surrounding residential land uses. Notwithstanding, a Construction and Operational Noise Report will be provided as part of the EIS. The report will provide a detailed assessment of potential noise and vibration impacts caused by the proposed construction and operations activities associated with the proposal, together with recommendations to mitigate against these.

6.9. WATER QUALITY AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater impacts will be assessed by a qualified consultant and the assessment will be provided with the submission of the EIS. A Stormwater Management Plan and Sediment & Erosion Control Plan will accompany the EIS submission and will provide details regarding proposed on-site stormwater management, as well as any proposed water capture and reuse and erosion and sediment control measures required to mitigate offsite impacts.

6.10. AIR QUALITY

It is not anticipated there will be any adverse impacts associated with air quality. During construction, air quality will be managed through appropriate dust mitigation measures through use of an Air Quality Management Plan. This plan will address both the cumulative impacts associated with the entire Zoo and Upper Australia Precinct in isolation.

6.11. UTILITIES AND SERVICES

All required services for the proposed development are available and some augmentation may be required. Further information will be provided as part of the EIS.

6.12. BCA AND ACCESS

A Building Code of Australia (BCA) Report will be submitted as part of the EIS to confirm that the proposal will be capable of complying with the relevant provisions of the BCA.

An Access Statement will be prepared by a qualified accessibility consultant to ensure the proposed development will be capable of providing universal access to all required areas in accordance with relevant Australian Standards.

6.13. WASTE MANAGEMENT

A Construction Waste Management Plan and an Operational Waste Management Plan will be prepared and accompany the EIS. The plans will detail proposed waste management practices including storage, collection points and method for removal. Where possible, all demolition, construction and operational waste will be reused or recycled. Where needed, the plans will review the cumulative impacts of works proposed as part of the local DA and SSDA.

6.14. OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The proposal will operate within the existing hours of operation for the zoo. The EIS will be accompanied by a plan of management relating to the care of animals and procedures for the daily operation of the Precinct.

6.15. CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

A Preliminary Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be submitted with the EIS and will outline the key management measures to be implemented during construction of the proposed development.

6.16. STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

As mentioned in **Section 1.3.2**, preliminary consultation processes were discussed with DPIE in the initial scoping meeting.

Consultation with Mosman Council has taken place in advance of this request. We trust that this initial consultation will assist to understand the scope of works proposed to be assessed by Council and DPIE.

It is recognised that there will be a number of stakeholders who will require consultation throughout the preparation of the EIS. These may include but are not limited to:

- The local community, particularly neighbouring residents
- Mosman Council
- Environment Protection Authority
- Office of Environment and Heritage and Heritage Council
- Primary Industries
- NSW Rural Fire Service
- Community Groups including Headland Preservation Group, Mosman Parks and Gardens and members of the local aboriginal community

- Taronga Zoo's internal community, including staff, volunteers and supporters.

Due to the current social distancing measures in place, we trust that some flexibility in our approach will be acceptable to DPIE.

In accordance with the Regulations, the EIS will be placed on formal public exhibition once the Department of Planning & Environment review the document as being 'adequate' for this purpose. Following this exhibition period, the applicant will respond to matters raised by notified parties.

7. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

To assist in confirming the SEARs, we have conducted an examination of what the expected deliverables will be to accompany the EIS. These include:

- Site survey;
- Architectural Drawings and design report;
- Landscape Plans;
- Biodiversity Impact Assessment;
- Bushfire assessment letter;
- Arboricultural impact assessment;
- Acoustic Report – construction and operational;
- Transport Impact Assessment;
- Historical Archaeology and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Archaeology (ACHA);
- Heritage Impact Statement;
- Conservation Management Strategy (Taronga Zoo Conservation Strategy 2002);
- BCA report and compliance statement;
- Access report;
- Stormwater Concept Plan;
- Sediment and Erosion Concept Plan;
- Stage 1 Environmental Site Investigation;
- Geotechnical Report;
- Construction Management Plan;
- Construction Waste Management Plan;
- Operational Management Plan;
- Waste Management Operational Plan;
- Cost estimate/QS report

8. CONCLUSION

This report documents a proposal for the redevelopment of the Upper Australia Precinct which forms part of the broader Australian Precinct of Taronga Zoo.

The proposal has an estimated CIV of approximately \$16 million. Pursuant to the provisions of the SRD SEPP, the proposal is classified as SSD and consent is required from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, via the submission of a SSDA. The first step in the SSDA process is a request for SEARs for the project. This report is a formal request for SEARs for the Upper Australia Precinct project.

This project represents a significant opportunity to promote and enhance the Taronga Zoo as place of conservation and education, as well as an important tourism facility within Sydney Harbour. This proposal accords with the State, Regional and Local strategic initiatives to promote tourism in NSW whilst preserving the scenic qualities of Sydney Harbour.

The proposal will require the submission of a State Significant Development Application and accompanying EIS. This report has been prepared in support of a request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements, as set out in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000.

DISCLAIMER

This report is dated 27 April 2020 and incorporates information and events up to that date only and excludes any information arising, or event occurring, after that date which may affect the validity of Urbis Pty Ltd (**Urbis**) opinion in this report. Urbis prepared this report on the instructions, and for the benefit only, of Taronga Conservation Society Australia (**Instructing Party**) for the purpose of SEARs Request (**Purpose**) and not for any other purpose or use. To the extent permitted by applicable law, Urbis expressly disclaims all liability, whether direct or indirect, to the Instructing Party which relies or purports to rely on this report for any purpose other than the Purpose, and to any other person which relies or purports to rely on this report for any purpose whatsoever (including the Purpose).

In preparing this report, Urbis was required to make judgements which may be affected by unforeseen future events, the likelihood and effects of which are not capable of precise assessment.

All surveys, forecasts, projections and recommendations contained in or associated with this report are made in good faith and on the basis of information supplied to Urbis at the date of this report, and upon which Urbis relied. Achievement of the projections and budgets set out in this report will depend, among other things, on the actions of others over which Urbis has no control.

In preparing this report, Urbis may rely on or refer to documents in a language other than English, which Urbis may arrange to be translated. Urbis is not responsible for the accuracy or completeness of such translations and disclaims any liability for any statement or opinion made in this report being inaccurate or incomplete arising from such translations.

Whilst Urbis has made all reasonable inquiries it believes necessary in preparing this report, it is not responsible for determining the completeness or accuracy of information provided to it. Urbis (including its officers and personnel) is not liable for any errors or omissions, including in information provided by the Instructing Party or another person or upon which Urbis relies, provided that such errors or omissions are not made by Urbis recklessly or in bad faith.

This report has been prepared with due care and diligence by Urbis and the statements and opinions given by Urbis in this report are given in good faith and in the reasonable belief that they are correct and not misleading, subject to the limitations above.

APPENDIX A

CONCEPT PLANS

APPENDIX B

QS REPORT

