Social Impact Assessment (SIA) – Project Duke Data Centre (2 and 10-22 Kent Road, Mascot)

Prepared for
Goodman

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Authorship and Declaration

This report has been prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced lead author and reviewed and approved by a suitably qualified and experienced co-author, who hold appropriate qualifications and have relevant experience in social science or related areas. The authors' qualifications, experience and demonstrated understanding of social impacts are outlined below:

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The author declares that this SIA report:

- Was completed on 26 September 2024
- Has been prepared in accordance with the Department of Planning, Housing and Industry's Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Development (2023)
- Contains all reasonably available and relevant information
- Was completed with an understanding of the authors' legal and ethical obligations
- Does not contain information that is false or misleading

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Executive Summary

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) report accompanies a detailed State Significant Development Application that seeks approval for a data centre and associated works in Mascot, NSW. The SIA has been prepared in response to the SEARs issued for the project (SSD-71368959).

This SIA evaluates the potential impacts of the proposal on the surrounding community, encompassing both the construction and operation phases of the project. The SIA draws on the analysis of the current and forecast social conditions of the defined social locality, along with details of the proposed development, to assess its likely social impacts. It also draws on the outcomes of community consultation that has been undertaken to date, and additional engagement specifically to inform this SIA.

The SIA has been prepared in accordance with the following documents:

- NSW's Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects as updated in February 2023 (the 'NSW SIA Guideline')
- *Technical Supplement – SIA Guideline February 2023*.

This SIA has identified that the project has the potential to support the wider digital revolution in NSW. Supporting the State's growing digital economy, the data centre is part of a broad effort to increase digital capabilities, with associated social benefits to individuals, businesses and communities.

During construction, there may be temporary negative impacts associated with construction activities – although these are somewhat limited in spatial distribution by the project's context in an industrial area and surrounded by busy roads. Additionally, there is some impact to visual landscapes for some residents in adjacent units. However this is relatively minor in scale and no particular sensitivities have been identified in the social baseline to this impact.

Other potential impacts relating to cybersecurity and the safety and wellbeing of workers during the 24/7 operation of the site will need to be proactively managed through the implementation of the recommendations of this report and throughout operation.

It is understood that the majority of identified negative impacts are capable of substantial mitigation, and the project team has committed to the additional social mitigation recommended by this Assessment (see Section 6.0 of this SIA). While the proposed development may introduce temporary disruptions and change, it brings substantial long-term social benefits. As such, the proposal is considered to present an overall positive social impact.

1 Introduction

This Report documents the process and outcomes of the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) undertaken by Mecone Group Pty Limited (Mecone) on behalf of Goodman Property Services (Australia) Pty Ltd (Goodman), for the proposed development of a data centre located at 2-22 Kent Road, Mascot (known as 'Project Duke'). This SIA forms part of the Project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) required under Part 4 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

The Project is a State Significant Development (SSD) under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021* (Planning Systems SEPP). A development application (DA) for the Project is required to be submitted under Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

1.1 Project summary

The proposed development (SSD-71368959) will seek approval for the construction of a 90 MVA Data Centre. The proposal seeks to demolish existing structures on the site, construct, fit out and the 24/7 operation of a Data Centre, with associated works.

The works subject to SSD-71368959 include the following:

- Site preparation works including demolition, bulk excavation, and removal of existing structures on the site, tree and vegetation clearing, and bulk earthworks,
- Construction, fit out and 24/7 operation of a 90 MVA data centre with a maximum building height of 40m (from natural ground level) and total gross floor area of 23,011m^2 comprising:
    - At-grade parking for thirty-four (34) car parking spaces and one (1) accessible car parking spaces,
    - Two (2) 12.5m loading dock spaces,
    - Four (4) levels of technical data hall floor space with one data hall on ground level and three (3) data halls on every other level,
    - Secure entrance lobby on ground level and ancillary office space on each level and mezzanine level,
- Provision of required plant and utilities, including:
    - Four (4) 33kV switch rooms on ground level
    - 783,000L above ground diesel storage tanks,
    - 4096kL above ground water storage tanks,
    - 63 diesel generators
- Acoustic screen parapet,
- Vehicle access provided via Gardeners Road and Ricketty Street,

- Pedestrian access provided via Ricketty Street,
- Associated landscaping and site servicing,
- Installation of services and drainage infrastructure.

The Site

The project is located on land known as 2 and 10-22 Kent Road, Mascot, legally referred to as Lot 1 DP529177 and Lot 1 DP1009083. The site is located on Country of the Gadigal people within the local government area of Bayside Council.

It has a land area of approximately 20,760m^2 with frontages to Ricketty Street, Kent Road and Gardeners Road, all of which are classified roads.

The site forms part of the Mascot West Employment lands which comprises a mix of land zoned for industrial, commercial and business park uses. To the east of the site is Mascot Station Town Centre which comprises a mix of retail, commercial, residential and recreational open space land uses.

Surrounding land uses in the immediate vicinity of the include:

- **North:** Gardeners Road, which is the LGA boundary with the City of Sydney. Further to the north is existing industrial development with Alexandra Canal beyond.
- **South:** Ricketty Street is immediately south, with predominantly one (1) to four (4) storey commercial and industrial development beyond.
- **East:** Kent Road is immediately to the east, with four (4) to 14 storey high density residential development beyond.
- **West:** To the west is light industrial development typically one (1) to two (2) storey in height.

The site is zoned E3 Productivity Support under the Bayside Local Environmental Plan 2012 (**BLEP 2021**). The proposal is permissible with development consent in the E3 zone and meets the zone objectives.

A summary of the site is provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Site summary

Item	Description
Site Area	20,760m^2
Ownership	Goodman
Legal Description	Lot 1 in DP529177 and Lot 1 in DP1009083

1.2 Requirement for SIA

Table 2 below specifies the Social Impact requirements with the SEARs for the SSDA with application number SSD-71368959.

Table 2: SEARs requirements for Social Impact

Issues and Assessment Requirements	Response
21. Social Impact	
Provide a Social Impact Assessment prepared in accordance with the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects.	Response provided throughout this report.

1.3 Review questions and responses

The review questions outlined by the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPHI, 2023) ('NSW SIA Guideline') are designed to confirm that the requirements of the Guideline have been fulfilled when considering the scale of social impacts associated with the proposed development. **Table 3** below outlines these review questions and indicates how they have been addressed in this SIA.

Table 3: Review questions and responses

Review Questions	Addressed by report (yes/no), relevant section
Does the lead author meet the qualification and experience requirements?	Yes – refer Authorship and Declaration.
Has the lead author provided a signed declaration?	Yes – refer Authorship and Declaration.
Would a reasonable person judge the SIA report to be impartial, transparent and suitably rigorous given the nature of the proposal?	Yes.
Proposal's social locality and social baseline	
Does the SIA report identify and describe all the different social groups that may be affected by the proposal?	Yes – refer Section 3, particularly Section 3.2.5.
Does the SIA report identify and describe all the built or natural features that have value or importance for people, and explain why people value those features?	Yes – refer Section 3.3.
Does the SIA report identify and describe historical, current, and expected social trends or social changes for people in the locality, including their experiences with this proposal and other major development proposals?	Yes – refer Section 3.
Does the social baseline study including appropriate justification for each element, and provide evidence that the elements reflect both relevant literature and the diversity of view and likely experiences?	Yes – refer Section 3.
Does the social baseline study demonstrate social-science research methods and explain any significant methodological data or limitations?	Yes – refer Section 3, with methodology provided Section 2.3.
Identification and description of social impacts	

Does the SIA report adequately describe likely social impacts from the perspectives of how people may experience them, and explain the research used to identify them? When undertaken as a part of SIA scoping and initial assessment, has the plan for the SIA report been detailed?	Yes – refer Section 5.
Does the SIA report apply the precautionary principle to identifying social impacts, and consider how they may be experienced differently by different people and groups?	Yes – refer Section 5.
Does the SIA report describe how the preliminary analysis influenced proposal design and EIS engagement strategy?	Yes – refer to project refinements outlined in Section 6.
Community engagement	
Were the extent and nature of engagement activities appropriate and sufficient or canvass all relevant views, including those of vulnerable or marginalised groups?	Yes – refer Section 4.
How have the views, concerns and insights of affected and interested people influenced both the proposal design and each element of the SIA report?	Refer methodology (Section 2), data gathering (Section 3 – 4), assessment an understanding of level of importance/concern (Section 5).
Predicting and analysing social impacts	
Does the SIA report impartially focus on the most important social impacts to people at all stages of the proposal, without any omissions or misrepresentations?	Yes – refer to approach taken to assessment (Section 5).
Does the SIA report analyse the distribution of both positive and negative social impacts, and identify who will benefit and who will lose from the proposal?	Yes – refer Section 5.
Does the SIA report identify its assumptions, and include sensitivity analysis and alternative scenarios? (including 'worst-case 'and 'no proposal 'scenarios where relevant.	'Worst case' and 'no proposal' scenarios are discussed in the EIS. For this SIA, comparison against a baseline scenario that does not include the proposal is a common methodology to address the alternative scenario requirement (see Section 3).
Do the evaluations of significance of social impacts impartially represent how people in each identified social group can expect to experience the proposal, including any cumulative effects?	Yes – refer Section 5.

Are the evaluations of significance disaggregated to consider the likely different experiences for different people or groups, especially vulnerable groups?	Yes – refer Section 5. Discussion is provided to provide nuance and detail to every significant rating.
Responses, monitoring and management	
Does the SIA report propose responses that are tangible, deliverable, likely to be durably effective, directly related to the respective impact(s) and adequately delegated and resourced?	Yes – refer Section 6.1.
Does the SIA report demonstrate how people can be confident that social impacts will be monitored and reported in ways that are reliable, effective and trustworthy?	Yes – refer Section 6.2.
Does the SIA report demonstrate how the proponent will adaptively manage social impacts and respond to unanticipated events, breaches, grievances and non-compliance?	Yes – refer Section 6.2.

1.4 Report Overview

Following the NSW SIA Guideline this Report is structured as follows:

- **Section 1.0** and **Section 2.0:** Introduction, including a Project Overview, Assessment Requirements and Methodology
- **Section 3.0:** Social Baseline, consisting of the community profile
- **Section 4.0:** Field study
- **Section 5.0:** Social Impact Assessment
- **Section 6.0:** Mitigation and enhancement
- **Section 7.0:** Conclusion.

2 Methodology

SIA comprises a number of key phases that relate to:

- Developing an understanding of the social context and area of influence of a project
- the scoping of issues of importance and interest to key stakeholders and local communities
- an assessment and evaluation of social impacts that may occur as a result of a proposed project, and
- the identification of strategies to address negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

Further, SIA, when informed by local communities and stakeholders, affords opportunities to effectively identify, integrate and address social impacts of projects within planning, design, and development processes. This section outlines the key activities undertaken within each of these phases.

2.1 Assessment Requirements

This SIA has been prepared in alignment with the NSW SIA Guidelines. Further, this SIA has been prepared to address the Industry Specific SEARs issued on 29 May 2024, that included an assessment of social impacts in accordance with the NSW SIA Guideline.

According to the SIA Guideline, social impacts are the consequences that people experience when a new project brings change. These can include changes across:

- Way of life
- Accessibility
- Community
- Culture
- Livelihoods
- Decision-making systems
- Surroundings
- Health and wellbeing.

Two main types of social impacts may arise as a result of the proposed development:

- Direct impacts can be caused by the project which may cause changes to the existing community, as measured using social indicators, such as population, health and employment.
- Indirect impacts that are generally less tangible and more commonly related to matters such as community values, identity and sense of place. Both physically observable as well as psychological impacts need to be considered.

2.2 Social Locality

For this SIA, social localities have been chosen taking into consideration both localised social impacts and those likely to occur on a broader scale. The areas of social influence have been determined for the proposal based on consideration of:

- The construction activities and operational uses of the proposal.
- The likely scale and extent of potential direct and indirect impacts and benefits of the proposal on the social factors identified in the SIA Guideline. This includes indirect impacts that are

generally less tangible and more commonly relate to matters such as community values, identity and sense of connection to place.

- Cumulative impacts that may impact affected communities as a result of other transport, construction and major development processes underway within or proximate to the site.
- The potentially affected built or natural features that have social value or importance located on or near the construction sites, and the social characteristics of the areas likely to be affected by the proposal, as informed by the social baseline study and other technical assessments that inform the EIS.
- The community and stakeholder groups that would be most likely affected by the direct and indirect impacts, based on stakeholder and community engagement activities, and other available information sources.

The primary social locality for this assessment is the Mascot Statistical Area Locality (SAL) which represents the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) boundaries for the suburb of Mascot.

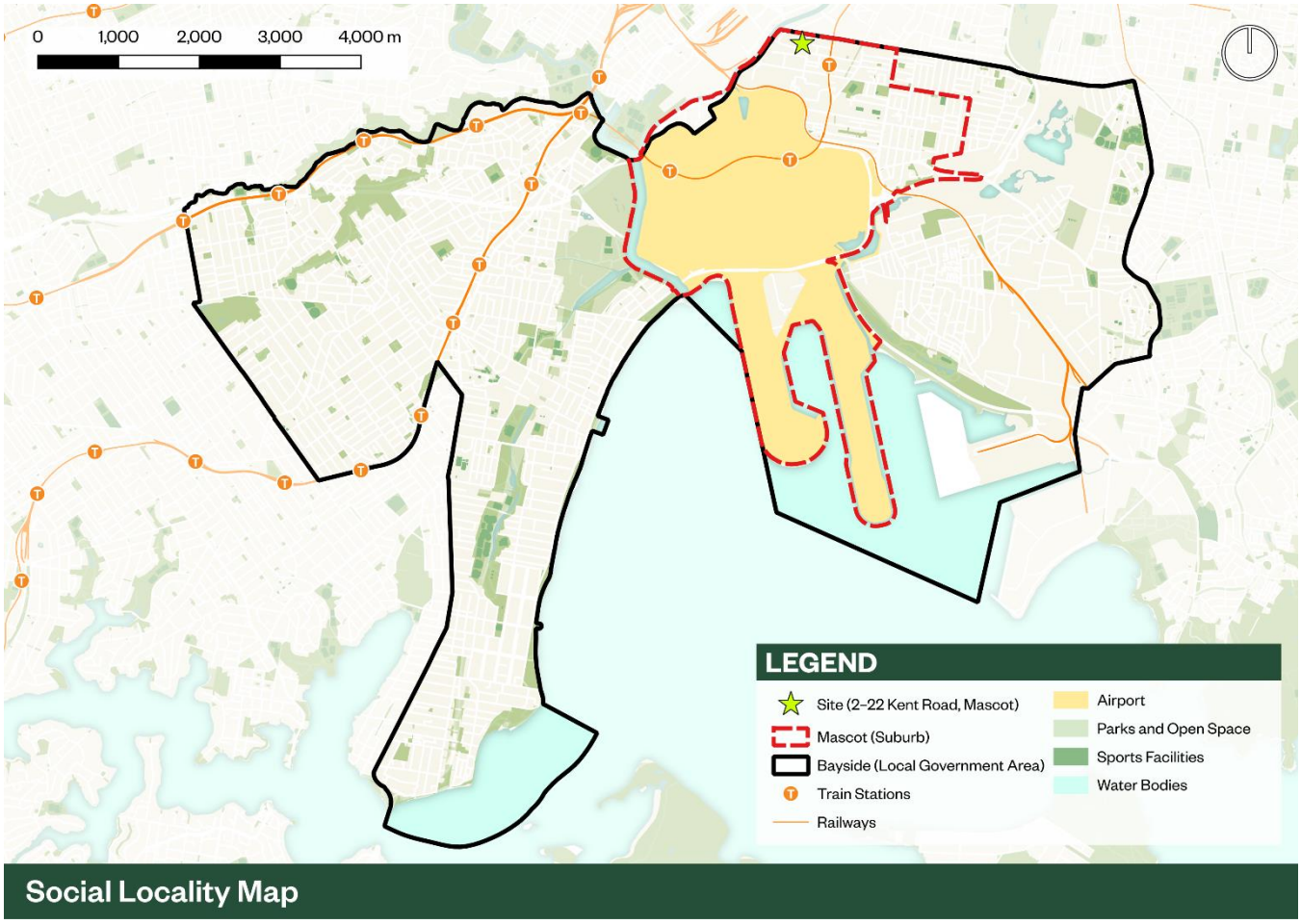


Figure 1: Social Locality Map

2.3 Social Baseline Profile

A social baseline profile gathers information from both primary and secondary data sources to inform an understanding of the existing social environment in which a project is proposed and of potentially

affected communities. The social baseline profile is a foundational component of SIA as it provides the basis for which social impacts associated with the Project may be predicted, assessed, monitored, and managed over time.

The NSW SIA Guideline outlines the key components of a social baseline profile, including:

- The scale and nature of the project
- Who may be affected, including identification of any vulnerable or marginalised groups.
- Any built or natural features on or near the project
- Relevant social, cultural, and demographic trends and other change processes
- The history of the proposed project and/or development in the area, including community response to previous change.

2.3.1 Data Sources

To gain an understanding of the demographic characteristics and composition of communities within the social locality and to ascertain how the Project may change or affect people, socio-economic and demographic data has been gathered and summarised from key publicly available datasets, including the ABS Census (2021) and the Social Health Atlas of Australia (PHIDU, 2020), as well as through a literature review of local and State government strategic plans.

2.4 SIA Field Study

SIA involves the participation and collaboration of people who have an interest in or those that are affected by a project. Engagement to inform this SIA has been undertaken in line with the NSW SIA Guideline.

A stakeholder identification process was undertaken for the Project to support the planning and delivery of community and stakeholder consultation to inform the SIA, as well as wider engagement activities. This process involved identifying stakeholders with an interest in the Project, or those directly and indirectly affected. This process has been outlined in **Section 4.**

Both quantitative and qualitative information collected through engagement activities has been analysed to inform the identification and analysis of social impacts associated with the Project, as outlined in **Section 4.1**. Similarly, outcomes of engagement have been utilised to inform the Engagement Outcomes Report as per **Appendix C** of the EIS.

2.5 Social Impact Evaluation

Social impacts associated with the Project have been evaluated by providing a rating of impacts according to impact characteristics, as defined in the NSW SIA Guideline. Dimensions of social magnitude used to conduct the impact evaluation are outlined in **Section 5.**

Section 5 provides an evaluation of the significance of each potential negative and positive social impact. The assessment includes the consideration of the **social significance** of each impact across the suite of factors, including the **likelihood** of each identified impact, along with the envisaged **duration, extent, and potential to mitigate/ enhance**.

Magnitude of impact generally considers the following dimensions:

- Extent – Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g., near neighbours, local, regional, future generations)?
- Duration – When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g., over particular proposal phases) or permanent?
- Severity or scale – What is the likely scale or degree of change? (e.g., mild, moderate, severe)?
- Intensity or importance – How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? This might depend on the value they attach to the matter; whether it is rare/unique or replaceable; the extent to which it is tied to their identity; and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change?
- Level of concern/interest – How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes, concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessments of likelihood, duration and/or intensity.

Each impact is assigned an overall **significance rating**, which considers both the **likelihood** of the impact occurring and the **consequences** should the impact occur. The assessment also sets out recommended **mitigation, management and monitoring measures** for the identified impacts.

The social impact significance matrices specified in the SIA Guideline have been adapted for the purposes of undertaking this SIA (see below).

		Magnitude level				
		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood level		Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
A	Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
B	Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
C	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
D	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
E	Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Figure 2: Social Impact Significance Matrix
Source: SIA Guideline (DPHI 2023).

Magnitude level	Meaning
Transformational	Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community.
Major	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
Moderate	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people.
Minor	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable.
Minimal	Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

Figure 3: Defining Magnitude Levels for Social Impacts
Source: SIA Guideline (DPHI 2023).

Likelihood level	Meaning
Almost certain	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)
Likely	High probability
Possible	Medium probability
Unlikely	Low probability
Very unlikely	Improbable or remote probability

Figure 4: Defining Likelihood Levels for Social Impacts
Source: SIA Guideline (DPHI 2023).

3 Social Baseline

3.1 Legislative and policy context

The SIA has drawn on State legislation and State, regional and local strategy and policy to identify the relevant legislative and policy context to inform the SIA. Particular policies of relevance to this SIA are summarised in the table below. A more detailed summary of the legislative and policy position in relation to the proposal is provided in the EIS.

Document Name	Description	Relevance to SIA
Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities	The Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities[1] sets a 40-year vision (to 2056) for the Greater Sydney Region and establishes a 20-year plan to manage the Growth of Greater Sydney in the context of social economic and environmental matters. The Plan states that Greater Sydney is growing and that by 2036, the NSW Government will need to deliver over 725,000 new homes for an additional 1.36 million people and places for 817,000 additional jobs.	The themes relevant to the SIA for the proposal are: • A city for people • A city of great places • Jobs and skills for the city • A city in its landscape • A city supported by infrastructure These themes enable a key understanding of the ambitions and aspirations for the Greater Sydney Region, covering aspects such as sustainable development, improved infrastructure and community well-being. They serve as a framework to identify relevant factors, ensuring that the SIA aligns with regional goals and addresses the needs and expectations of the local community. This alignment helps to ensure that the proposal supports the broader strategic vision for the area.
Eastern City District Plan	The Eastern City District Plan[2] is a plan implementing A Metropolis of Three Cities at a district level. The Plan guides the local strategic planning in Bayside, Burwood, Canada Bay, Inner West, Randwick, Strathfield, Sydney, Woollahra, and Waverley LGAs (which make up the Eastern City District).	The plan outlines the strategic planning aspirations for the broader district encompassing the proposal. It helps identify factors important to the local community and socio-economic aspirations. The site is situated within the Bayside LGA and the Eastern City District of the Greater Metropolitan Sydney. Green Square–Mascot is identified as a Strategic Centre and major asset along the well-connected

[1] Greater Sydney Commission 2018, *Greater Sydney Regional Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*
[2] Greater Sydney Commission 2018, *Eastern Harbour City District Plan*

		Eastern Economic Corridor from Macquarie Park to Sydney Airport. Additionally, the plan sets Willoughby's 5-year housing target from 2016 to 2021 at 10,150 dwellings. This has been updated to 10,100 for 2024–2029 by the recently released NSW Government Housing Targets.
Bayside Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)	The Bayside Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)[3] sets out the 20-year vision for land use in the LGA, the special character and values that are to be preserved and how change will be managed into the future.	The LSPS contains a number of planning priorities relevant to the proposal and SIA, including: • The LSPS recognises the projected population growth in Bayside and emphasizes the need to accommodate this growth through well-planned housing development with diverse housing options to cater to different household needs. • The LSPS highlights the importance of economic development and job creation. • The LSPS emphasises the need to provide adequate infrastructure and services to support the growing population including transportation networks, community facilities, open spaces and social services. The Bayside LSPS recognises the economic significance of the Sydney Airport and Port Botany precinct, envisaging it as a key employment hub and catalyst for economic growth. The LSPS identifies the area surrounding the airport, including Mascot, as suitable for further commercial and industrial development, with a focus on high-tech industries and businesses. This strategic direction aligns with the proposed data centre project in Mascot, which would contribute to the area's economic development by creating jobs and attracting investment.

[3] Bayside Council 2020, *Bayside Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)*

		By aligning with the LSPS, the SIA can ensure that the proposal supports the strategic land use direction for the local study area and broader LGA.
Mascot Station Town Centre Master Plan	The Mascot Station Town Centre Precinct Masterplan[4] guides future private and public development as the Mascot Station Town Centre redevelops. It aims to create a vibrant and diverse town centre, where a spacious, high-quality public domain is the setting for thriving activities and cohesive built form.	The Mascot Station Town Centre Precinct is a pivotal area for growth and development within Bayside LGA, designated as a Growth Centre in both state and local planning strategies. While the site itself is not in the precinct, it is in close proximity to it and fronts the boundary of the precinct. The masterplan focuses on the transformation of the precinct into a vibrant town centre, capitalising on its strategic location, accessibility, and existing infrastructure. The plan aims to strike a balance between residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments, while ensuring the provision of essential amenities such as public open spaces and transportation infrastructure. As such, the strategy directly influences the SIA by shaping the parameters for development within the Mascot Station Town Centre Precinct.
Bayside 2032 Community Strategic Plan (CSP)	Bayside 2032 Community Strategic Plan (CSP)[5] outlines the community's long-term vision and priorities for Bayside LGA over the next decade. It identifies four key themes and outcomes that the LGA seeks to achieve and targets against which it will measure its progress.	The CSP provides an overview of the community's aspirations and needs. It is therefore important in developing the baseline for understanding the specific values and priorities of the local study area. It helps inform and shape future development proposals in alignment with local expectations and goals.
Bayside Local Housing Strategy 2020–2036	The Bayside Local Housing Strategy 2036[6] is a 20-year plan designed to guide the location, quantity and type of future residential development in the Willoughby LGA. It aims to accommodate the projected need	The strategy focuses on meeting the majority of this housing need with medium density development and ensuring that the LGA has a variety of dwelling types able to accommodate the diverse housing needs of the LGA's current and future residents.

[4] Botany Bay Council 2012, *Mascot Town Centre Precinct Masterplan*
[5] Bayside Council 2018, *Bayside 2032 Community Strategic Plan (CSP)*
[6] Bayside Council 2020, *Bayside Local Housing Strategy 2020–2036*

	for 26,000 additional dwellings from 2016 to 2036.	The strategy informs the SIA by ensuring that proposed developments align with long-term housing goals, meet projected demand, and contribute to vibrant and sustainable communities within the Bayside LGA.

3.2 Socio-demographic profile

3.2.1 Population and demographic composition

Population Size and Growth

The population of the Mascot SAL was 21,591 people at the 2021 Census.[7] This is a considerable increase from 14,772 people in 2016. Similarly, the Bayside LGA grew from 156,058 people in 2016 to 175,184 people in the 2021 Census[8]. This positive demographic trend highlights the area's potential for further development and investment.

Population projections are not available at the SAL level. However, at the LGA level, it is projected that the population will grow to 195,269 by 2041.[9] This represents a 10.6% increase compared to that projected across NSW (21%) between 2021 to 2041.[10] This suggests that while Bayside LGA is experiencing population growth, it is at a lower rate compared to the overall growth projected for the State. However, this growth still signifies a notable demographic shift within the LGA.

Age Profile

Data regarding age distribution within a population can provide insights into potential needs, values and vulnerabilities within communities. For instance, individuals under the age of four and those aged 65 and above are generally considered more susceptible to health impacts, while older populations may exhibit less adaptability to change.

In 2021, the median age of the population in the Mascot SAL was 30 years old.[11] This is significantly younger than the median age of 35 across the Bayside LGA and 39 across NSW.[12] The age profile of the SAL indicates a high proportion of the population within the 20–34-year-old age brackets and a low

[7] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – QuickStats*
[8] ABS 2016 Census, *Botany Bay & Rockdale LGAs – QuickStats; ABS 2021 Census, Bayside LGA - QuickStats*
[9] NSW Population Projections 2022, *LGA (ASGS 2020) Projections 2001-2041*
[10] NSW Population Projections 2022, *State Projections*
[11] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – Community Profile*
[12] ABS 2021 Census, *NSW State/Territory – Community Profile*

proportion within the 80 years and above age brackets compared to the NSW average.[13] This reflects a high proportion of young adults, suggesting that the area has less families with elderly members.

3.2.2 Housing and households

Household Composition

The average household size in the Mascot SAL and Bayside LGA was 2.5 persons in 2021[14]. This is slightly smaller than the average household size of 2.6 across NSW.

Non-family households comprised 43% of households in the SAL, slightly above Bayside LGA (38%) and considerably above the NSW average (35%). Couples with no children are also highly represented in the Mascot SAL at 27% compared to the Bayside LGA average of 22% and NSW average of 23%. This reflects the large number of younger adults in the SAL and the predominance of apartment housing in the SAL. The household composition of the SAL, compared to Bayside and NSW is provided in the table below.

Family Composition	Mascot	Bayside	NSW
Couple family with no children	2,536 (27%)	16,545 (22%)	751,139 (23%)
Couple family with children	1,845 (19%)	18,744 (25%)	906,393 (28%)
One-parent family	520 (5%)	6,188 (8%)	306,450 (9%)
Other family	227 (2%)	1,202 (2%)	33,330 (1%)
Two- or more family households (with or without children)	350 (4%)	3,273 (4%)	138,650 (4%)
Non-family household (single or group household)	4,057 (43%)	27,712 (38%)	1,137,859 (35%)

Table 4: Household composition

Household tenure and cost

The median weekly rent in the Mascot SAL was $600 in 2021.[15] This was moderately above the median across the Bayside LGA ($500) and notably higher than the broader State ($420).[16] In the

[13] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – Community Profile*
[14] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – Community Profile*
[15] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – Community Profile*
[16] ABS 2021 Census, *NSW State/Territory – Community Profile*

Mascot SAL, 33.8% of renter households paid greater than 30% of their household income to rent – slightly lower than the NSW average of 35.5%.

3.2.3 Socio-economic Factors

Household income

In 2021, the median weekly household income in the Mascot SAL was $2,254[17]. This was higher than the median weekly household income for Bayside LGA ($1,959) and higher than the median for NSW ($1,829).While this indicates a generally higher than average income, this does not necessarily reflect overall socio-economic status and there is considerable variation to within.

Resident Workforce

Of the residents over age 15 in the Mascot SAL, there were 12,284 people employed – either part-time, full-time or away from work – at the time of the 2021 Census[18]. This accounts for 94% of the labour force in the SAL. Approximately 5.9% of the labour force was unemployed, which is slightly higher than the rate for Bayside LGA (5.5%) and NSW (4.9%).

Of the residents employed in Mascot, most were working in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (12.1%); Accommodation and Food Services (12%); Financial and Insurance Services (12%), Retail Trade (8%); and Accommodation and Food Services (7%) industries.

Employment Industries

The table below shows the top industries of employment in the Mascot SAL in 2021[19], illustrating a concentration of transport, postal and warehousing workers. The large number of jobs available in this industry can be attributed to Mascot SAL including Sydney Airport.

Industry of Employment	Number of Jobs	% of Jobs in Mascot
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	26,018	53.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	3,167	6.5%
Public Administration and Safety	3,086	6.3%
Retail Trade	3,040	6.2%
Administrative and Support Services	2,597	5.3%

Table 5: Top industries of employment in the Mascot SAL

[17] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – Community Profile*
[18] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – Community Profile*
[19] TfNSW, Travel Zone Projections 2022

With Bayside providing 96,705 jobs in 2021, it is noted that Mascot alone accounted for about 50% of the total jobs in the LGA[20]. It is therefore a significant employment area for the region and wider State.

Businesses

Business counts are not available at the SAL level. In June 2023, there were 18,843 businesses in the Bayside LGA[21]. Most of these businesses were in Construction (18.4%); Transport, Postal and Warehousing (13.7%); Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (12.6%); Rental, Hiring and Estate Services (12.4%); and Retail Trade (6.2%) industries.

3.2.4 Access and movement

In 2021, approximately 28.4% of residents commuting from Mascot to work travelled via a vehicle, either as a driver or passenger, while only 14.5% opted for public transport.[22] Of these private modes, 94.8% were by car, 4.0% by motorbike and 1.0% by truck. Mascot has a higher than LGA and state average of public transport commutes due to the transit-oriented development at Mascot station. Bayside reflected similar trends of high vehicle usage, with 37.8% of residents commuting from the LGA to work by car, while 10.6% took public transport.

3.2.5 Vulnerable communities

Socio-Economic Index for Area (SEIFA)

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a tool designed to evaluate the welfare of Australian communities. These indexes are developed by the ABS, derived from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing and are calculated through principal component analysis. The index of relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage,[23] presented in the table below, represents a spectrum from advantage (high values) to disadvantage (low values), based on Census variables.

Advantages and Disadvantages		
Location	**Score**	**Percentile**
Mascot Station Precinct	1,097	95
Bayside LGA	1,045	82

Table 6: SEIFA Index

SEIFA results reveal that the Mascot station precinct is within the top 2% most advantaged areas in Australia and the highest in the Bayside LGA. The Bayside LGA as a whole being within the top 18% of most advantaged LGAs. This indicates that both areas exhibit favourable socio-economic conditions

[20] ABS 2021 Census, *Bayside LGA – Community Profile*
[21] ABS 2023, *Counts of Australian Businesses by LGA, June 2019 to June 2023*
[22] ABS 2021 Census, Mascot QuickStats, *Method of Travel to Work*
[23] .idcommunity 2021, *Bayside Council SEIFA by profile area*

relative to other suburbs and LGAs nationwide, likely characterised by higher average incomes, better access to education and employment opportunities, and enhanced infrastructure.

Need for assistance (Disability)

Disability can restrict mobility, employment opportunities and access to financial resources. The need for assistance dataset provides insights into the disability status of individuals in the local study area by identifying the proportion of people who require help with core activities (self-care, mobility, and communication) due to a disability, long-term illness or advanced age.

About 2.8% of the Mascot SAL reported having a need for assistance with core activities in 2021.[24] This was lower than that reported of Bayside LGA (5.0%) and considerably lower than NSW (5.8%).[25] This indicates that the local study area does not have a substantial proportion of people in need of assistance, likely owing to its younger demographic relative to the LGA and NSW.

[24] ABS 2021 Census, *Mascot SAL – Community Profile*
[25] ABS 2021 Census, *NSW State/Territory – Community Profile*

4 Field study

Respectful, inclusive and meaningful engagement is a fundamental part of SIA, alongside other research activities. It provides first-hand insights into what people value and how they expect a project to affect them. It also helps to focus the scope of the SIA on the things that really matter.

It is important to recognise that engagement and public participation is only one component of an SIA. It is aimed at both providing the community the opportunity to meaningfully inform this assessment, as well as increasing the rigour of the assessment through direct insights from affected communities.

The following methodology for the SIA engagement has been developed in line with the community engagement objectives outlined in Appendix A of the NSW SIA Guideline (see table overleaf).

Table 7: Stakeholder engagement for SIA – activities

Level of participation	Engagement technique	Purpose in SIA	Key stakeholders	Completion
Sharing information	• Surveys and fact sheets	• Identifying affected and interested people, groups, organisations and communities • Helping people to understand the proposal and the SIA • Addressing questions, concerns and complaints •	Government agencies; local community and businesses	Engagement with a variety of government agencies has occurred. The Engagement Report provides additional detail. Community and stakeholder notification has included an extensive letter drop, through both a mail out and doorknocking, conducted by Mecone Social Planning. Detailed information on this process is provided in the Engagement report. A project information sheet has been provided to all residents and businesses within the distribution catchment.
Consulting to collect information and insights	• Surveys and interviews • Face to face meetings and telephone/video calls	• Identifying and predicting social impacts • Collecting data, evidence and insights • Demonstrating early engagement • Confirming data,	Local community and businesses; Bayside Council; City of Sydney	Through the notification process, a survey containing questions developed to inform this Social Impact Assessment was provided for residents and businesses to complete. A copy of this survey is provided in the Engagement Report. Close engagement has occurred with the local RAPs as part of the development of

		assumptions and findings •		the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Report by Artefact. Further detail is provided in that report.

4.1 Community survey

There were three responses to the community survey distributed to the local community, which encompassed approximately 2,868 dwellings. The distribution area for the survey is illustrated in the following figure.

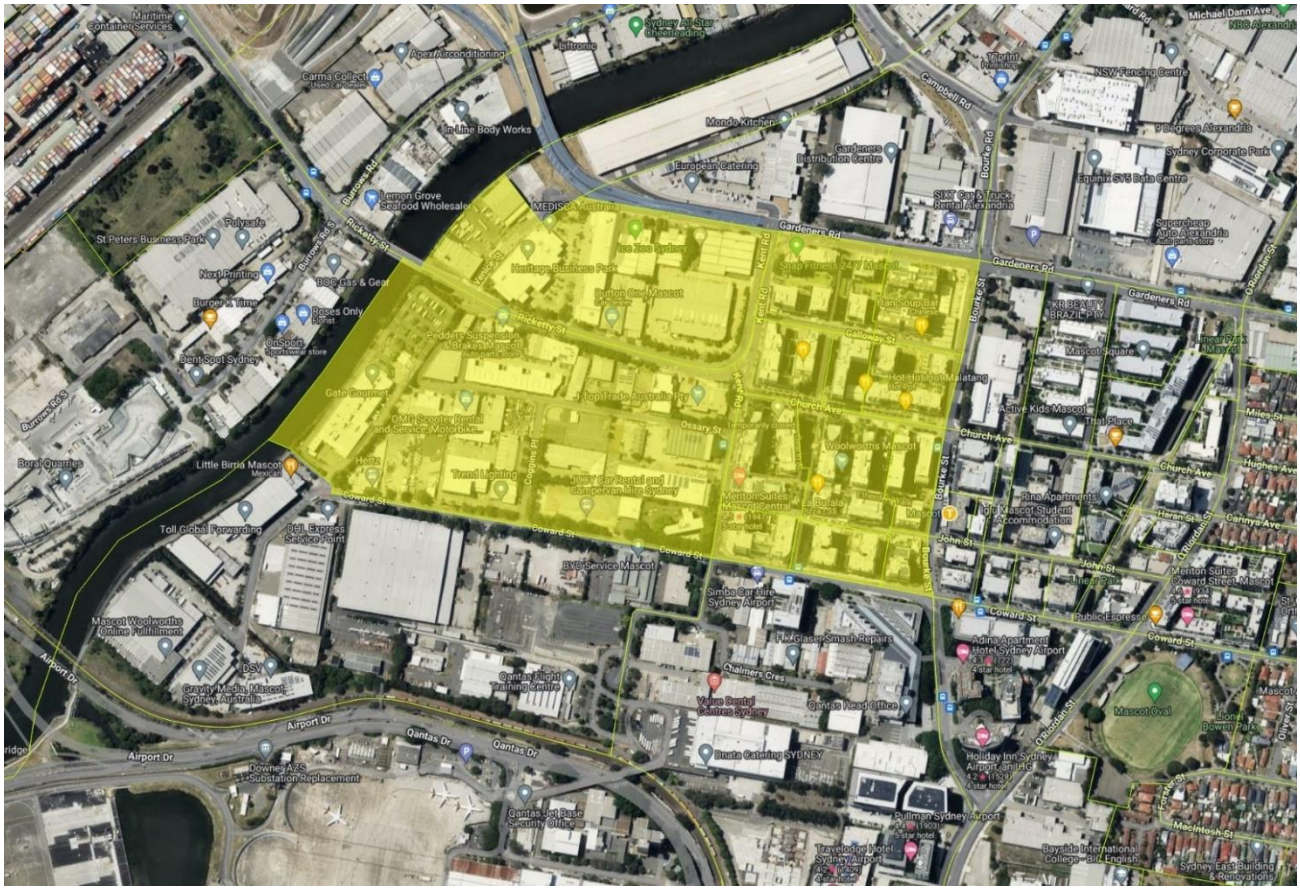


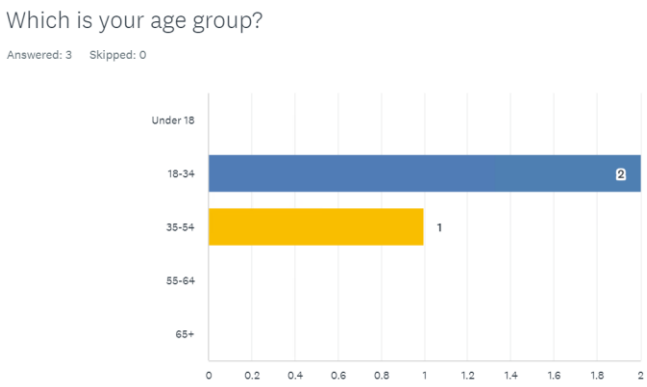
Figure 5: Distribution area – Community Survey

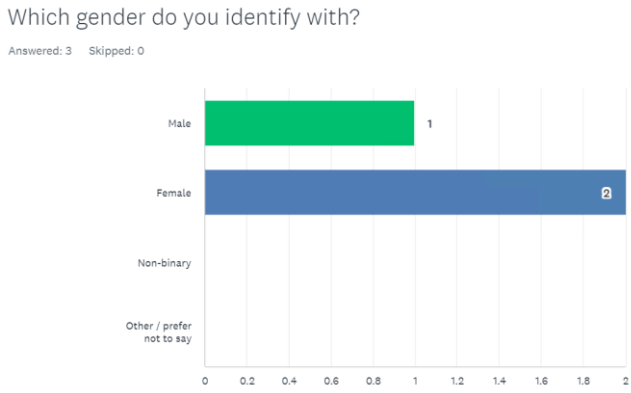
This is a response rate of 0.1%. This section summarises the survey responses received; however, given the small sample size, each of the responses should be considered as representing individual feedback (as opposed to general community sentiment). It is noted that the survey was available for over two weeks, with submissions received after formal closing time included in this SIA.

4.1.1 Overview of Respondents

Of the three responses received, two were from females and one was from a male. Two respondents were in the 18–34 age group while one was in the 35–54. None of the respondents identified as being

of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. The three respondents have lived in Mascot for varying durations – two years, five years and eight years.





4.1.2 Key Themes

Positive attributes of Mascot

The respondents identified a number of positive attributes about Mascot, being:

- Its convenient location – being in close proximity to the airport and city, with good public transport accessibility, including its train station.
- A pleasant environment – a vibrant, diverse and friendly atmosphere with parks, cafés, modern buildings and variety of restaurants.
- A balanced suburb – a balance between suburban peace and access to city excitement.

Perceived project benefits

Respondents were asked to rate different benefits of the project on a scale of 1–7, with 1 being not important and 7 being extremely important. The average ratings are provided below:

- Increased direct employment during construction: 3/7
- Increased direct employment during operation: 2.33/7
- Increased indirect employment as a result of the project: 3/7
- Economic benefits for local businesses due to the influx of workers: 3/7

Issue	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Increased direct employment opportunities during the construction phase	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Increased direct employment opportunities during the operational phase	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Increased indirect employment opportunities as a result of the project	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Economic benefits for local business due to the influx of workers in the area	1	1	1	0	0	0	0

The respondents did not identify any possible strategies that could be put in place to enhance the positive impacts associated with the project.

In relation to how Goodman could support the local community, one response was received to “invest more for community”.

Perceived project impacts

The respondents were similarly asked to rate different impacts of the project on a scale of 1–7, with 1 being not important and 7 being extremely important. The average ratings are provided below:

- Increased noise to households during construction: 7/7
- Increased noise to households during operation: 7/7
- Changes to the landscape and visual amenity: 7/7
- Changes in air quality during construction due to dust generation and/or vehicle emissions: 6.33/7
- Increased traffic during construction causing short term disruption to road users: 7/7
- Increased traffic during operation causing disruptions to road users: 7/7
- Potential for impacts to items or sites of Aboriginal heritage: 4.33/7
- Potential for the Project to change sense of place for the community: 5.67/7

Issue	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Increased noise to households during construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Increased noise to households during operation	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Changes to the landscape and visual amenity	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Changes in air quality during construction due to dust generation and/or vehicle emissions	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Increased traffic during construction causing short term disruption to road users	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Increased traffic during operation causing disruptions to road users	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Potential for impacts to items or sites of Aboriginal heritage	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Potential for the Project to change sense of place for the community	0	0	0	1	0	1	1

One respondent provided additional feedback stating that they strongly oppose any construction projects in the area.

In relation to strategies that could be put in place to manage or mitigate negative impacts associated with the project, two responses were received – one to create new roads for trucks and the other to locate the project in another place.

4.2 Feedback on social impacts from local government

Engagement with Bayside Council has identified some additional potential social impacts for validation in this assessment. These impacts are raised by Council on behalf of the community. Potential social impacts raised include:

- The bulk of the building and its ‘large and inactive façade’ when considering its relationship to Kent Road and comparison to existing buildings on the street. Council requested that the design of the

building adopt a high-quality material pallet and avoidance of concrete panels and painted finishes, with specific attention to the Kent Road façade
- Solar access for neighbouring residential development owing to potential overshadowing from the project
- Potential view loss
- A requested inclusion of an outdoor staff area
- Potential for solar glare and glint due to rooftop solar panels on surrounding residential development
- Potential for noise, vibration, and air quality to create adverse amenity impacts for nearby receivers.

Where relevant, these impacts have informed the scoping assessment and identification of potential impacts to be assessed in this report. Further detail on project responses for all identified potential impacts is described in detail in the Engagement Outcomes Report.

4.3 Assessment of adequacy

The NSW SIA Guideline outlines the following two criterion to assess the sufficiency of engagement conducted to inform the SIA:

- Were the extent and nature of engagement activities appropriate and sufficient to canvass all relevant views, including those of vulnerable or marginalised groups?
- How have the views, concerns and insights of affected and interested people influenced both the project design and each element of the SIA report?

The community engagement undertaken as part of the SSDA process is considered to deliver on the NSW SIA Guideline requirements for this SIA. This assessment is on the basis that limitations with the engagement process have been identified and mitigated proactively. For this project, this is the limited sample size for the SIA Survey. The small sample size for the SIA survey, because of limited completions, limits its ability to be representative of a general community experience of impacts. As such, the survey has not been relied upon in the impact assessment and individual responses have been incorporated as representing individual views of interested parties. The assessment has involved a higher-than-average level of desktop research and validation to mitigate against the small sample size.

It is noted that previous consultation activities conducted with residents for other State Significant Development Applications also received limited feedback. For example, SSD-42544484 represents a proximate, recent and comparable project. No feedback was received before lodgement as of 7 October 2022, as reported in the *Engagement Outcomes Report* (Urbis, 2022) accompanying the SSDA. It is noted that the distribution catchment for that project overlaps significantly with this project's catchment. Comparison with previous engagement can be useful in understanding whether lack of feedback is project-specific or characteristic of a social locality, due to either lack of interest, consultation fatigue, or another factor.

Overall, there is considered to be sufficient opportunity provided for community engagement to meaningfully inform the preparation of this SIA in line with the NSW SIA Guideline.

5 Social Impact Assessment

This section discusses and analyses the issues and impacts (both positive and negative) in relation to the Project with analysis framed in accordance with the social impact categories outlined in **Section 2.0** and the NSW SIA Guideline.

5.1 Neutral to low social impacts

This section outlines the social impacts considered to have a neutral to low impact on the community. These were not considered as having a significant impact on the community based on the scoping assessment and are not included for more detailed appraisal. This rating has been further confirmed based on feedback arising from engagement activities for the project.

Social impact category	Impact assessment summary
Way of life	**Construction activities generating dust, noise and vibration impacting daily routines for neighbouring residents and workers** While construction impacts are themselves subject to environmental impact management, they can comprise social impacts when they are experienced negatively by the community. A negative experience of construction impacts may include: • Physical impacts to health and wellbeing • Direct psychological impacts attributed to physical elements • Indirect psycho-social impacts attributed to the perception of change to an environment that construction activities can create and the lessening of items of value. For example, noise impacts that reduce the perceptibility of ambient bird sounds that a resident has come to associate with their area, and the wider community associate as a component of their sense of place, will have psycho-social impacts and should be considered in this SIA. Mecone has reviewed the relevant technical reporting (see Section 5.1), the site context (see Section 3), and level of expressed concern (see Section 4). This process has found that this project's construction activities are unlikely to significantly affect daily routines because: • There are existing busy road corridors separating the site from neighbouring residents and workers (Gardeners Road, Kent Road, and Ricketty Street). These are all classified as state roads. While this could indicate additional cumulative impact from this project, it is also apparent that these buildings have been designed to minimise impact from existing dust, noise, and vibration from the highway and surrounding industrial zoned land and that additional construction noise and vibration is in the context of an existing soundscape characterised by road traffic (see Noise and Vibration Assessment reviewed above). • The Noise and Vibration Assessment (see above) has identified a relatively low risk of impacts during construction and operation for neighbouring residents. The only exception is an exceedance in noise levels for some neighbouring receivers during specific parts of construction, being the excavation of hard rock. Given the temporary nature of this impact in duration, and limitation of impact to specific hours of the day where construction

Social impact category	Impact assessment summary
	occurs, SIA recommendations focus on small mitigation and management to assist in minimising the negative experience of this impact for neighbouring residents. Overall, impacts to way of life due to construction impacts are considered to be low.
Community	**Scale of proposal in context of social locality** Impacts to community character, composition, and cohesion has been identified as minimal. The number of additional construction and operational workers is small in the context of existing numbers, noting the historic use of the site and surrounding area for industrial uses. **Impact to local character** It is understood that there may be some concern regarding the loss of 'Lunatiques' antique store which previously occupied the site, and the proposed height, scale, and massing being potentially detrimental to the character of the social locality. This concern has been expressed by at least one community member during engagement to inform this SIA. However, it is understood that the existing site is characterised by ageing warehouse-style buildings with numerous additions. There is some existing landscaping, although this is not of a substantial quality or aesthetic value. It is understood that the current proposal incorporates considered planting and materials palette that positively responds to its local context (see Design Report). Further, the building occupied by the 'Lunatiques' business is not of itself a structure with a high local character value. It is further understood that the Lunatiques business has, at time of writing, ceased to operate on the site. In this context, this SIA has identified a low risk of social impact arising for local character changes. The related issue of visual amenity impact is addressed in Section 5.3.2 below.
Access	**Traffic movements associated with construction activities** This Proposal has been assessed as having a potential minor negative impact to local traffic and accessibility during construction. As identified in the Traffic Impact Assessment (see Section 5.1 above), there are no anticipated adverse impacts on the surrounding road network due to construction traffic. Located at the intersection of major roads and highways, traffic is not anticipated to interact with local streets or where pedestrian environments are more sensitive to truck movements. **Traffic and change in traffic patterns during operation** This Proposal has been assessed as having a potential minor positive impact to local traffic and accessibility during operation. As identified in the Traffic Impact Assessment (see Section 5.1 above), there is a daily net decrease in traffic generation of the site by 173 vehicles daily. This is in part due to the high levels of traffic generation that the 'Lunatiques' antiques warehouse generated, compared to relatively low movements during operation for the proposed data centre.
Culture	**Impacts on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage**

Social impact category	Impact assessment summary
	The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Report (see Section 5.1 above) has identified that although there are strong existing cultural heritage values and significance for the wider area, the proposal is not in itself impacting cultural heritage negatively. The proposal, in incorporating some interpretation (see Design Report), may have a minor positive impact on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.
Health and wellbeing	**Stress, anxiety, and uncertainty about the proposed use** Data centres are a relatively novel land use in Australia. As such, they may generate some community concern and uncertainty regarding the levels of environmental, amenity, and community impacts. However, given the location of this proposal in the context of an existing industrial landscape with a variety of factory-type uses, the significance of this potential impact is considered to be lower than in an average location. It is further noted that no community concern has been identified in relation to the data centre as a land use in direct engagement for this project. In this context, it is assessed that the significance of this impact is low.
Surroundings	**Flooding** Flood impacts intersect with issues of human health and crisis management, which are social impacts. While it is understood from a review of the Flood Impact and Risk Assessment (see Section 5.1 above) that there are some underlying flood risks due to low-elevation land and proximity to waterways susceptible to flooding, the Flood Impact and Risk Assessment has concluded that the • Potential for flooding to impact workers on-site, during operation, is minimal • Potential for this proposal to negatively affect flood risk for surrounding residential and industrial land uses is low. On this basis, there is assessed to be a low risk of social impact occurring from flooding. **Energy and water use during operation** While data centres can attract high energy and water use to support operations, it is understood that ensuring that the NSW electricity grid and Sydney basin water supply is adequate to support the delivery of additional data centres remains a government priority (see Section 3.1 and 5.3.1).

Social impact category	Impact assessment summary
	It is understood that largescale data centres such as the Proposal can, in this context, have some minor advantages in terms of increased energy efficiency and reduced carbon emissions over smaller-scale facilities. [26] In addition, it is understood that this project includes: • Provision of 4360m2 PV panels on the roof (Design Report, Section 5.11) • Requirement for 100% green energy for any future tenants, embedded into lease agreements (see Design Report, Section 5.11) • 90% on-site rainwater and stormwater is reused in heat rejection system (Design Report, Section 5.11). Overall, the chance of flow-on social impacts occurring because of this project's energy and water use is considered to be substantially minimised, resulting in a significance rating of low. Mitigations in relation to this potential impact are addressed comprehensively in other technical reporting prepared for this SSDA (See Section 5.1 above).
Livelihoods	**Employment during construction** It is understood that the proposal's construction workforce will consist of approximately 600 direct full-time equivalent workers. Various construction roles will be necessary for the project, including surveyors, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, bricklayers, roofers, riggers, concreters, engineers, architects, supervisors, plasterers, pipefitters, metalworkers, among others. These roles will demand a range of qualifications, from TAFE certifications including apprenticeships, certificate level, and diploma level qualifications, to degree qualifications in construction, civil, or engineering. Given that the likely workforce will draw from the Greater Sydney region, the initial rating for this positive social impact is assessed as of low significance given the minor impact of construction worker numbers in the context of Sydney's population. **Employment during operation** The operational workforce for the data centre is projected to comprise approximately 30 direct FTE specialised and related full-time roles. This workforce will be essential for the effective functioning of the facility, covering a diverse range of responsibilities. Among the crucial roles to be filled during operation are positions in facility management, security, customer service, IT professionals, and general business functions.

[26] See in International Energy Agency (IEA) Energy in Buildings and Communities Programme (EBC) Working Group. (2022, March). *International review of energy efficiency in Data Centres*. IEA EBC Building Energy Codes Working Group. Retrieved from https://www.iea-ebc.org/Data/publications/EBC_WG_BECs_Data_Centers_March_2022.pdf

Social impact category	Impact assessment summary
	With consideration that the proposal will deliver direct employment opportunities which align with Council and State aspirations and the existing workforces and skills in the locality, employment during operation is assessed as a minor social benefit.
Decision-making systems	**Influence project decision-making through SSDA process (including the development of this SIA)** Providing channels for the community to influence project decision-making is a potential positive impact arising from the SSDA process. It is important to provide the community with the opportunity to be part of the project's decision-making process, allowing Goodman to create a social license to operate within the local community. Ongoing engagement with the community and stakeholders is crucial for Goodman to monitor and manage social impacts throughout the project lifecycle. Implementing a grievance mechanism to address community complaints and concerns is also important to anticipate and mitigate potential impacts in the early stages of the project.

5.2 Medium to transformational social impacts

The following section provides a detailed assessment of the significant social impacts of the proposed development. The significant impacts are assessed with any planned mitigation measures to determine the residual impact level.

5.2.1 Contributing to NSW digital economy

Supporting economic development and access to digital services generates positive social impacts directly supporting livelihoods and ensures that communities have the digital infrastructure needed for essential services like education, healthcare and communication. The digital economy has significant impacts on various economic, social, and cultural fields, including changes in the way people work and interact with each other, promoting more flexible and remote work arrangements, and increasing global connectivity.

Data centres have been identified as contributors to the NSW digital economy, acting as vital infrastructure that supports a range of digital activities and services. For example, the Australian Digital Economy Strategy 2030 identifies that data centres are 'formidable technological structures…and the cornerstones of the technological revolution". This is supported by the State Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2042 (2022), which notes that competitive high-speed digital connectivity supported by the data centre is fundamental to social and economic outcomes. It identifies, however, that inconsistent access, affordability, quality and reliability of connectivity across NSW are key issues.

Mecone undertook a review of desktop research relating to the benefits of the digital economy to validate the scale of this project's impact. Key findings include:

- **Economic growth:** The digital economy is recognised as a primary driver of economic growth and development and is continually expanding due to its impact on economic and business activities. Data centres contribute to this economic growth by attracting investment, creating

jobs and enabling innovation. They are crucial for supporting businesses that rely on digital infrastructure. The use of digital technologies and electronic communication has resulted in a significant shift towards online business interactions, leading to improved user experiences, faster processing, and easier access to services and products.[27]

- **Digital transformation:** Data centres play a crucial role in supporting the ongoing digital transformation across industries in NSW by providing essential digital infrastructure. The cloud capabilities of modern data centres enable advanced technologies such as AI, machine learning, and data analytics, which are key drivers of productivity and innovation. A report on the benefits of hyperscale cloud for the Australian economy[28] highlights that these advanced technological functions, including AI, machine learning, AR/VR, and data querying, have led to significant productivity gains, generating an additional $3 billion in benefits for Australian businesses.
- **Improved connectivity:** Data centres enhance connectivity in the region, improving access to digital services for businesses and communities. This increased connectivity not only supports local economic activities but also helps bridge the digital divide between urban and rural areas. By facilitating access to global markets, hyperscale cloud has unlocked more than a 40% increase[29] in revenue for Australian businesses, broadening their opportunities to service online customers throughout the country.

In this context, the provision of a data centre contributes to a cumulative social benefit in the form of supporting NSW's growing digital economy – with flow-on social and economic benefits.

Table 8: Assessment – contributing to NSW digital economy

Field	Assessment
Magnitude assessment	
Extent	Cumulative social impact extending state-wide given wider benefits to supporting the State's digital economy
Duration	Ongoing
Importance/level of community interest	High level of importance, noting research undertaken (identified above).
Sensitivity/distributional equity	Moderate distribution of benefits across the economy, noting that growth in the digital economy is of benefit across most business types and both urban and regional areas (see research identified above). For example, a recent study on the economic, environmental and social impacts of data centres in the United States

[27] Xia, L., Baghaie, S., & Sajadi, S. M. (2023). *The digital economy: Challenges and opportunities in the new era of technology and electronic communications*.
[28] Mandala Partners. (2023). *Hyperscale Cloud and Its Benefits to The Australian Economy*. Retrieved from https://mandalapartners.com/posts/hyperscale-cloud-and-its-benefits-to-the-australian-economy
[29] *Ibid*

	identified a direct link between the delivery of data centres and increased digital connectivity for residents and businesses in more rural areas.[30]
Impact rating (with standard construction management)	
Likelihood	**Likely**. There is a high chance that the delivery of this project will positively impact on NSW's digital economy.
Magnitude	**Major**. The relative contribution of this proposal is considered highly significant. While the overall impact of data centre development on NSW's digital economy is transformational, the proposal's contribution should be viewed in the context of the existing 81 operational data centres in NSW and the 11 currently under construction. Sydney is the largest data centre market in Australia and the second largest in the Asia-Pacific region.[31]
Social Significance Rating	**High**
Experience	Positive

5.2.2 Impacts to surroundings for neighbouring residents

Changes to existing views of residents living in adjacent apartments has been identified as a potential social impact. There is likely to be some value attached to these views, including:

- Aesthetic value, such as impacts to sense of place and wider visual values of streetscape or landscape
- Property value, and associated emotional anxiety regarding any actual or perceived impacts
- Wellbeing value, including the effect of any changes to landscapes on peoples' ability to gain mental health and wellbeing benefits from vistas.

The NSW SIA Guideline, 'Scoping Worksheet' (DPHI, 2021) notes the following in relation to impacts to aesthetic value and amenity:

> *When considering perceptions of adverse impacts on amenity, an evaluation must be made of the reasonableness of those perceptions. This evaluation involves 'the identification of evidence*

[30] *PwC. (2023). Economic, Environmental, and Social Impacts of Data Centers in the United States. Data Center Coalition. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/63a4849eab1c756a1d3e97b1/t/65037be19e1dbf4493d54c6e/1694727143662/DCC-PwC+Impact+Study.pdf*

[31] Property Council of Australia. (2024). *Renewable and AI potential puts Australia on data centre map*. Retrieved from https://www.propertycouncil.com.au/property-australia/renewable-and-ai-potential-puts-australia-on-data-centre-map

that can be objectively assessed to ascertain whether it supports a factual finding of an adverse effect on amenity…': Telstra Corporation Ltd v Hornsby Shire Council [2006] NSWLEC 133

Mecone has reviewed the *Visual Impact Assessment (*'VIA') (Urbis, **Appendix O**) from a social impact perspective, and has made the following findings:

- The VIA undertakes an analysis of views for residents at 671 Gardeners Road, opposite the site. The analysis concludes that views potentially affected do not include views of iconic or highly valued landscapes, including of the city skyline. The analysis identifies that the majority of the dwellings are likely unaffected by the proposal as a result of their balcony and window orientations. There are, however, some apartments for whom views of a vista will be reduced.
- The VIA undertakes an analysis of views for residents at 12 Galloway Street, opposite the site. The analysis concludes that while views are affected, views from dwellings in the northern section will retain views to the north which are likely to be more valued than views to the west which are to be blocked. While views for the majority of dwellings are identified as unlikely to be affected, there remains some apartments for whom some level of view will be impacted.
- The VIA undertakes an analysis of views for residents of 7-9 Kent Road, opposite the site. The analysis concludes that while views are affected, views north and south are unaffected and views west from dwellings in the southern half of the building are less impacted given the availability of alternative view angles. While views for the majority of dwellings are identified as unlikely to be affected, there remains some apartments for whom some level of view will be impacted.

It is noted that no direct feedback has been received from community members expressing concern regarding impacts to property and use and enjoyment of private open space. However, one community member did express concern relating to the aesthetic value of the structure itself and the increase in bulk and scale compared to the existing structure on the site. Bayside Council further raised this concern on behalf of community members.

The *Visual Impact Assessment* (VIA) has not identified any specific mitigations. It is understood that the project has been refined based on the feedback raised by Bayside Council, including considerable design amendments improve the development's relationship to Kent Road which has largely been guided by SDRP design advice. Key design changes have included:

- Improved landscape and building setbacks to Kent Road
- Improve landscaping and tree planting response to Kent Road
- Greater articulation of building façade.

The following table summarises the initial rating for this impact area. This rating assumes that standard construction management techniques are adopted.

Table 9: Assessment – changes to landscape values

Field	Assessment
Magnitude assessment	
Extent	Immediately adjacent neighbours and local community members

Duration	Permanent change, with potential acute impact during construction and beginning of operation. Any impact is expected to decrease in intensity over time as residents become accustomed to the change.
Importance/level of community interest	Limited direct evidence of community interest. High level of presumed importance particularly for immediately adjacent neighbours with views directly impacted based on an understanding of the affected social values.
Sensitivity/distributional equity	No particular sensitivity to this impact has been identified.
Impact rating (with standard construction management)	
Likelihood	**Possible.** This dimension has been assessed based on the medium probability of a negative experience of changes to landscape values.
Magnitude	**Minor.** This dimension has been assessed based on an understanding that any deterioration to landscape values is expected to be • Mild, noting that the proposed height is lower than many adjacent residences and that existing structure on-site are of an industrial character • For a small number of people, given the limited number of persons directly impacted by view loss and/or have directly expressed impact • Who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable, given the relative absence of particular sensitivities to change identified in the social baseline of this report.
Social Significance Rating	**Medium**
Experience	Negative

Section 6 proposes approaches to avoid, mitigate and manage this potential social impact.

5.2.3 Cybersecurity of tenants and users

Data centres are critical for the operation of businesses, organisations, and government services, storing valuable and sensitive information that demands robust protection. Cybersecurity is vital, as research from Oxford Academy (2018) shows that cyberattacks can lead to data theft, service disruptions, and loss of public trust in digital systems. Physical security is equally important, with unauthorized access potentially resulting in hardware tampering or vandalism, which could halt operations (ISA, 2020). Effective surveillance and access control measures are essential to prevent such breaches.

These security considerations align with broader strategic priorities, such as the Australian Digital Economy Strategy and the A Metropolis of Three Cities plan, which emphasize the importance of public trust in technology. For the proposed data centre, ensuring high levels of security supports NSW's goal of becoming a leader in digital technology, as outlined in the State Infrastructure Strategy and the Australian Digital Economy Strategy 2023.

It is understood upon review of the Design Report prepared for this SSDA that this proposal responds to this cybersecurity consideration by:

- Providing a perimeter fence-line around entire site boundary with a minimum 3m clearance zone within the ‘secure side’
- Secure entry for pedestrians and car trap at main vehicular access point

- Security office and internal gateline.

It is understood based on the literature review that by supporting 'hyperscale cloud' technology, modern data centres can decrease the likelihood of a successful security breach by 30% due to high investments and global threat intelligence, preserving an estimated $480 million annually within the Australian economy.[32] This is a relevant factor to consider in assessing the likelihood of this impact in the context of modern data centre development.

The following table summarises the initial rating for this impact area.

Table 10: Assessment – cybersecurity of tenants and users

Field	Assessment
Magnitude assessment	
Extent	Cybersecurity generally concerns all technology users and is essential to functioning of social and economic institutions. For this project, impacts relating to cybersecurity extend directly to the future tenant of the site and their end-users.
Duration	Ongoing
Importance/level of community interest	Cybersecurity is an important area of interest, as identified in the desktop research outlined above.
Sensitivity/distributional equity	The future tenant's sensitivity to this potential impact is unknown. Taking the precautionary approach, it is assumed for this assessment that they will be highly sensitive to cybersecurity impacts (e.g. holding sensitive and/or personal data, breaches resulting in national security implications etc.)
Impact rating (with standard construction management)	
Likelihood	**Very unlikely –** it is understood that data centres have a relatively low chance of being subject to cybersecurity breaches, given the high levels of security attached to these facilities in design and operation.
Magnitude	**Major –** if a breach did occur, it would result in a substantial deterioration to social and economic areas of value, although acute in nature (i.e breaches are generally short-lived).
Social Significance Rating	**Medium**
Experience	Negative

It is noted that some potential social risks are inherent to particular development typologies, and approaches relating to ongoing monitoring and management of community concern are possible responses.

[32] Mandala Partners. (2023). *Hyperscale Cloud and Its Benefits to The Australian Economy*. Retrieved from https://mandalapartners.com/posts/hyperscale-cloud-and-its-benefits-to-the-australian-economy

Section 6 proposes approaches to avoid, mitigate and manage this potential social impact.

5.2.4 Operation worker health, wellbeing and safety

Ensuring worker health and safety, and overall wellbeing, is an important aspect of workplace design. As a social impact, it is relevant to an assessment of 'health and wellbeing' under the NSW SIA Guideline.

There are two primary dimensions to this potential impact:

- **Mental health and wellbeing for shift workers:** According to current job listings posted for data centre technicians in Sydney, there is a mandatory requirement to work non-standard business hours including evening and night.[33] Shift work is correlated with negative impacts to health and wellbeing. For example, shift work increased the total risk of negative mental health outcomes (such as depression and anxiety) by 28% among 28,431 workers, according to a study by Torquati et al.[34] As the predominant workforce for data centres, this indicates an additional importance for achieving health and wellbeing given the 24/7 operation and shift-work nature of employment likely to occur at the site.

- **Women's safety:** given the 24/7 operation of the facility, worker safety travelling to and from the site, particularly at night, is an essential consideration for ensuring worker health and wellbeing. This includes both actual physical safety and perceived safety, noting that the perception of travel being unsafe has the potential to reduce female and other vulnerable groups' participation in employment at the facility.

There are numerous measures available for the future operator of the data centre to substantially manage and mitigate these potential impacts. It is recommended that the future Operational Management Plan implement robust requirements including:

- A buddy system for workers travelling to and from the centre by foot during off-peak times (e.g. 8pm – 7am).
- Alignment with WorkCover NSW's Health and Safety Guide *ShiftWork: How to devise an effective roster*.[35]

[33] See, eg., Seek.com.au; Indeed.com.au.
[34] Torquati L., Mielke G.I., Brown W.J., Burton N.W., Kolbe-Alexander T.L. Shift Work and Poor Mental Health: A Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Studies. Am. J. Public Health. 2019;109:e13–e20.
[35] SafeWork NSW. (n.d.). *Shiftwork: How to Devise an Effective Roster*

- Training and education on healthy sleep practices for night-time shift workers. This is recommended to include alignment with the Oxford Sleep Research Society's 'Healthy Sleep Practices for Shift Workers Guidelines'.[36]

The following table summarises the initial rating for this impact area.

Table 11: Assessment – operation workers health, wellbeing and safety

Field	Assessment
Magnitude assessment	
Extent	Social impact extending to future workers on-site only
Duration	Ongoing
Importance/level of community interest	High level of importance, particularly regarding the tangible physical safety considerations for evening workers and the direct mental health impacts for shift workers on-site.
Sensitivity/distributional equity	No particular sensitivity to the impact identified based on a review of likely workforce.
Impact rating (with standard construction management)	
Likelihood	**Likely** The likelihood of this impact occurring is high. The research on shift work indicates that, without mitigation, there is a high chance of tangible impacts to mental health and wellbeing occurring. Impacts regarding actual safety are unlikely. However, while intangible, impacts relating to perceptions of safety have a high chance of occurring given the industrial nature of the site and surrounds and the busy roads which would be encountered by evening and early morning shift workers attempting to travel home via public transport.
Magnitude	**Moderate** The magnitude assigned to this impact is moderate. This is on the basis that impacts to individual's health and wellbeing, physical and mental, is generally noticeable. Given that this is experienced by a group of people, and is ongoing, moderate is assessed as the most appropriate magnitude level.
Social Significance Rating	**High**
Experience	Negative

Section 6 proposes approaches to avoid, mitigate and manage this potential social impact.

[36] Shriane, A. E., Rigney, G., Ferguson, S. A., Bin, Y. S., & Vincent, G. E. (2023). Healthy sleep practices for shift workers: consensus sleep hygiene guidelines using a Delphi methodology. *Sleep, 46*(12). https://doi.org/10.1093/sleep/zsad229

6 Mitigation and enhancement

6.1 SIA recommendations

The following recommendations aim to avoid and mitigate any identified significant negative impacts and enhance the social benefits. It also outlines the significance of any residual impacts. Where more detailed assessment is required, this is identified and should form part of the SEARs for future SIA to accompany detailed development applications for individual stages of the project.

Table 12: SIA recommendations

Impact	Initial rating	Project refinements	SIA recommendations to avoid, minimise and enhance	Significance of residual impact
All	*n/a*	*n/a*	Preparation and implementation of a robust **Communications and Engagement Strategy** for the construction and initial operation of the site. This Strategy should include detail regarding complaints management, channels of communication for local residents and businesses, and regular project updates including for major construction works.	*n/a*
Contributing to NSW digital economy	High (Likely-Major) significance of a positive impact	N/A	To enhance this social benefit, the project team should consider introducing a mechanism to provide a **Social Procurement Strategy** for construction and operational stages. This should include provision of a percentage target for local employment and the employment of persons experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. This may include as a contractual requirement for future contractors and tenants.	**Very High (positive)** Social procurement significantly enhances the distributional equity of employment benefits, generating a high chance ofpositive impact from employment associated with major projects.
Changes to landscape values for neighbouring residents	Medium (Possible-Minor) significance of a negative impact	Multiple refinements made (refer section 3.4.1 and 6.1.2 of EIS).	No additional social recommendation proposed.	**Medium (Possible-Minor)** Significant of impact remains noting unmitigable for some visual impact to occur. Project refinement has reduced this significance and magnitude as far as possible, balancing

Impact	Initial rating	Project refinements	SIA recommendations to avoid, minimise and enhance	Significance of residual impact
				other parameters (e.g. security).
Cybersecurity of tenants and users	Medium (Very unlikely – Major) significance of a negative impact	The project has been substantially refined to respond to security risks. See detailed in Section 5.3.3 and the Design Report).	No additional social recommendation proposed.	**Medium (negative)** No change due to inherent risk associated – ongoing monitoring and management through operational plan of management will be required.
Operation worker health, wellbeing and safety	High (Likely-moderate) significance of a negative impact	In response to this potential social impact, there are a proposed 28 spaces of locked bike storage, along with 3 showers and 28 lockers for worker use. This has a direct impact on worker health and wellbeing.	Operational management plan to implement: 1. A buddy system for workers travelling to and from the centre by foot during off-peak times (e.g. 8pm – 7am). 2. Alignment with WorkCover NSW's Health and Safety Guide *ShiftWork: How to devise an effective roster*.[37] 3. Training and education on healthy sleep practices for night-time shift workers. This is recommended to include alignment with the oxford Sleep Research Society's 'Healthy Sleep Practices for Shift Workers Guidelines'.[38]	**Low (negative)** It is considered that proposed mitigations are capable of substantially decreasing the likelihood and severity of this potential impact.

[37] SafeWork NSW. (n.d.). *Shiftwork: How to Devise an Effective Roster*
[38] Shriane, A. E., Rigney, G., Ferguson, S. A., Bin, Y. S., & Vincent, G. E. (2023). Healthy sleep practices for shift workers: consensus sleep hygiene guidelines using a Delphi methodology. *Sleep, 46*(12). https://doi.org/10.1093/sleep/zsad229

6.2 Management and monitoring

The post-approval of a project should ideally include continuous mitigating, enhancing, monitoring and managing of social impacts, as per the SIA Guidelines. This management can help to ensure negative impacts are better mitigated, positive impacts are further amplified and that you maintain and enhance your positive working relationships with communities and stakeholders. The monitoring and adaptive management of social impacts aim to protect and enhance the social environment throughout the life of the project, starting during construction.

The mitigation and management of other potential impacts that interrelate with social impacts will contribute to the mitigation and management of social impacts of the proposed project. The preparation of the Construction Management Plan and the Operational Plan of Management should include reference to this SIA to ensure that impacts that cannot be fully mitigated can be managed, and unexpected consequences addressed proactively.

7 Conclusion

This SIA has concluded that the proposed development will have a net positive social benefit to the communities identified in this assessment.

This SIA concludes that the overall social outcome, subject to appropriate mitigation of temporary construction impacts, will be positive. Temporary impacts during construction can be managed through implementation of relevant technical reports, communications strategies, legislative requirements, and conditions of consent. Engagement with the local community and stakeholders during construction is strongly recommended to minimise impacts.

The assessment concludes that the identified negative social impacts of the Project can be reasonably mitigated or managed to reduce their significance, while positive impacts will increase in significance if appropriate enhancement measures are put in place.