



THE SOCIAL ASPECT

PEOPLE AND PROJECTS. BALANCED.



Demast Smithfield Liquid Waste Recycling Facility

Social Impact Assessment

Social Aspect Consulting Pty Ltd ABN 57 676 178 340

Document control

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Date	26 September 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

The Social Aspect acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connections to land and water.

The Social Aspect is committed to honouring Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to land and water and their rich contribution to society.

Certification page

Lead author declaration

I, Dr Jamie Seaton, certify that this report contains information relevant to the SIA for the project, and that the information is not false or misleading. My qualifications and experience are listed below.

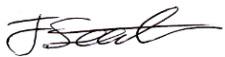
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1. Bachelor of Science Hons. (Human Geography)
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Experience:

I am trained in social science methods, and I have demonstrated social research skills in government, private and education settings. I have delivered numerous SIAs in both SIA Lead and SIA Technical Reviewer roles since the release of the first NSW SIA Guideline in 2017. I have experience in waste, energy, resources, transport, health, tourism, and the property development sectors among others.

Date: 26 September 2025



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this report

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared as part of a State Significant Development application (SSDA) under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the *NSW Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

This report has been prepared to address the Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs) (SSD-72775222) for the Demast Smithfield Liquid Waste Recycling Facility, issued by NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (NSW DPHI) on 29 July 2024. The SEARs nominated social impacts as being among the key issues that must be addressed via a SIA, prepared in accordance with the NSW DPHI's *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects* (NSW DPHI, 2023).

1.2. Objective of the social impact assessment

The SIA objectives are consistent with the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline For State Significant Projects* (SIA Guideline) (NSW DPHI, 2023) and the *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (Engagement Guidelines) (NSW DPHI, 2024). The SIA Guideline and Engagement Guidelines outline some mandatory requirements to be met by SIA practitioners in New South Wales (NSW) and provide a framework for identifying, evaluating and responding to social impacts. They provide guidance for stakeholder and community engagement, data collection, project refinement, and the monitoring and management of social impacts.

This SIA aims to:

- Identify the social locality for the project
- Outline the SIA methodology applied for the study
- Describe the stakeholder and community engagement activities undertaken during the SIA, and the outcomes of these activities
- Outline the existing social baseline for the project
- Identify, evaluate and respond to the predicted social impacts of the project.

In the SIA scoping phase (see Element Environment Pty Ltd, 2024) a 'basic' assessment was proposed for this SIA. As outlined in the SIA Guideline, a "basic SIA report may be appropriate for a project where there are minor impacts and/or the social issues are not relevant to the project" (NSW DPHI, 2023, p. 14). In this case, the SIA report would summarise the scoping and assessment undertaken in the first phase and may conclude that no further assessment is required. If minor impacts are identified, a basic SIA report that includes desk-top research and analysis may



adequately assess identified impacts. More details about this approach are provided in **Section 6** of this report.

Examples where a basic SIA report may be appropriate could include a warehouse on appropriately zoned land surrounded by other industrial developments” (NSW DPHI, 2023, p. 15).

1.3. Project description

1.3.1. Project overview

Demast Pty Ltd (Demast) own and operate a sludge dewatering plant (SDP) at 7 Long Street, Smithfield, New South Wales (NSW). The SDP is located within the Cumberland City Council local government area (LGA) and covers an area of approximately 0.46 hectares. The site is approximately 24.5 kilometres (km) west of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) and approximately 6.4 km south west of Parramatta CBD.

The existing SDP was approved under development consent (DA 2015/529) by Sydney Central City Planning Panel on 4 October 2016, which permits the SDP to process no more than 46,720 tonnes per annum (tpa) of liquid waste, including up to 640 tonnes of treated drilling mud.

Demast is seeking approval to upgrade the SDP by increasing the processing capacity of the plant from 46,720 tpa to 300,000 tpa via the SSDA.

The scope of the SSDA is hereafter referred to as ‘the project’.

1.4. Legislative context

1.4.1. Legislation

The EP&A Act sets the legislative context for this SIA. The objects of the EP&A Act are to:

- Promote the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment by the proper management, development and conservation of the state’s natural and other resources
- Facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment
- Promote the orderly and economic use and development of land
- Promote the delivery and maintenance of affordable housing
- Protect the environment, including the conservation of threatened and other species of native animals and plants, ecological communities and their habitats



- Promote the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal cultural heritage)
- Promote good design and amenity of the built environment
- Promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health and safety of their occupants
- Promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning and assessment between the different levels of government in the state
- Provide increased opportunity for community participation in environmental planning and assessment.

The SEARs (and therefore the SIA Guideline and Engagement Guidelines) are issued under the provisions of the EP&A Act and set legislative requirements that this SIA must accommodate.

1.4.2. State guidelines

Social impact assessment guideline

As described above, the SIA Guideline (NSW DPHI, 2023) details how social impacts of state significant projects should be identified, evaluated, responded to and, if appropriate, monitored and managed in accordance with the EP&A Act.

The SIA Guideline outlines some mandatory requirements to be met by SIA practitioners in NSW. It provides:

- A rigorous framework to identify, evaluate and respond to social impacts
- Guidance on meaningful, respectful and effective stakeholder and community engagement
- Engagement on social impacts from project planning to post-approval
- The means to obtain reliable, relevant information, insights and analysis for decision-makers
- Advice on how the SIA can inform ongoing engagement, project refinement, monitoring, and adaptive management.

Community and stakeholder engagement guidelines

The Engagement Guidelines (NSW DPHI, 2024) sets out the requirements for effective engagement for state significant projects in NSW. The Engagement Guidelines outline the actions that NSW DPHI will take in relation to such projects, they identify opportunities for the community to participate in, and they set out requirements for proponents.

The Engagement Guidelines provide guidance to proponents on:



- Planning their approach to engagement
- Undertaking engagement to inform the development of the proposal and contribute to better planning outcomes
- Reporting back and demonstrating how engagement has shaped the project being assessed.

The project stakeholder and community engagement activities were undertaken in accordance with the Engagement Guidelines. See **Section 3** for the details.

1.4.3. Regional and local community plans and strategies

Regional plans which reflect the aspirations of the community have been developed by the NSW Government and local authority associated with the project. The regional and local plans outlined below are related to 'place-making' and improving the socio-economic circumstances of the respective populations. They each utilised input from a range of stakeholders and are, therefore, relevant to this SIA.

NSW Waste and Sustainable Material Strategy 2041

The NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 (NSW DPHI, 2021) updates the previous Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-2021 (NSW Environment Protection Authority, 2014) and focuses on waste reduction, recycling, environmental benefits, and economic opportunities. The strategy sets out specific targets for waste reduction, recovery rates, recycled content and litter reduction and commits to improving data collection and reporting. The progress towards these targets will be tracked annually and the strategy will be reviewed prior to 2027.

An objective of the strategy that aligns with the project is the NSW government's investment in the circular economy. Under the plan, the Government will require NSW departments to use products with recycled content on an 'if not, why not' basis and support research into new technologies and uses for recycled material through the new \$13 million Circular Innovation Fund. The Government will publish a directory of recycled material suppliers and report annually on the use of recycled content in Government procurement.

Demast provides recycled materials to the building industry and may be a supplier for future Government developments. To further develop NSW's circular economy, the project would increase Demast's capacity to service this initiative.

Central City District Plan

The Central City District Plan (District Plan) (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018) is a 20-year guide for managing growth in the Blacktown, Cumberland, Parramatta, and The Hills local government areas. It aligns with the Greater Sydney Region Plan (Greater Sydney Plan) (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018a) and bridges the gap between regional and local planning. The plan assists councils to plan for growth and



change, informs State agencies and the private sector, and reflects local values and aspirations.

The Greater Sydney Plan has been prepared concurrently with the District Plan to integrate land use, transport, and infrastructure across the region. All transport initiatives outlined in the District Plan are sourced from the NSW Future Transport Strategy (Transport for NSW, 2022), and all data is based on current Government published data sourced from State agencies. The focus is on identifying the Planning Priorities to achieve a liveable, productive, and sustainable future for the District, with objectives, strategies, and actions embedded in each priority.

Overall, the District Plan aims to manage growth in the context of economic, social, and environmental matters to achieve the 40-year vision of Greater Sydney. It provides a framework for local strategic planning statements and local environmental plans, the assessment of planning proposals, community strategic plans and policies, and guides decisions of State agencies, the private sector, and the wider community.

Table 1 contains the District Plan's priorities and describes their relevance to the project.

Table 1 Relevant objectives of the Central City District Plan

Planning priority	Strategic relevance to the project
Strategy 2.1.1 - Prepare land use plans and controls that value our heritage, encourage economic development, facilitate local infrastructure improvements and create.	If approved, the project would consolidate the region's industrial land use by improving waste management efficiency and building stronger economic relationships between industries.
Strategy 2.1.2 - Protect and improve our natural environment and ensure development has a positive impact on our city.	The project would divert waste from landfill and supply recycled products back into the building industry.
Strategy 3.3.3 - Provide access to sustainable waste services that keep our community clean and tidy.	The project would improve resource recovery, reducing the amount of waste that is disposed of in landfill.



Cumberland Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2018 – 2023

The *Cumberland Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2018-2023* (Cumberland Council, 2018) aims to address the challenges faced by the Western Sydney region in waste management and transition towards a circular economy. The strategy aims to replace the traditional linear view of waste management with the principles of a circular economy, by placing greater value on resources, driving innovative waste management and recycling solutions for recovery and recirculation of materials back into the economy.

To develop the strategy, consultation with the community was carried out to better understand their values, preferences, and concerns about waste management services. Cumberland Council has developed a community-centred strategy that includes six key areas with specific objectives and targets to be achieved over the next five years. The Strategy provides a framework for delivering waste management services and initiatives over five years through to 2023, aligning waste management services offered to residents from the former council areas and addressing the future needs of Cumberland residents.

Key focus area 1 is to avoid and reduce waste generation. This focus area directly aligns with the objectives of the project which would increase the capacity of the current operations to reduce waste generation in the area. Liquid waste generated in the region would be processed for reuse in the building industry.

Key focus area 2 of the strategy is to increase recycling and divert more liquid waste from landfill. The project would support this initiative by diverting waste that would otherwise be taken to landfill. Furthermore, the project would include several new low-impact waste streams, that will increase recycling capacity of the current operations.

2. The Social locality

2.1. Regional context

Though the project is based in the Cumberland Council, the suburb itself is shared between two separate LGA's – the Cumberland Council and Fairfield City Council. The Cumberland Council is a relatively newly formed council – as of 2016 and the combining of the Cities of Auburn, Parramatta and Holroyd. With over 70% of residents having been born overseas – along with the Fairfield City Council at over 50% – together they represent two of the most multicultural councils in Australia and a popular settlement location for migrants.

Both LGA's have a substantial local economic benefit and employment base of the largest industrial estate in the southern Hemisphere – the Smithfield Wetherill-Park Industrial Estate.



The Cumberland and Fairfield City Council areas extend between 25km-35km west of Sydney CBD. They incorporate two river / creek systems – the Hawkesbury-Nepean and Georges River – contributing to vital green spaces and protection for native vegetation amongst sprawling urban landscapes.

They are surrounded by the neighbouring local government areas of Penrith, Blacktown, Parramatta, and Liverpool and Canterbury-Bankstown.

According to MDCA (2017) when Europeans arrived in Sydney in the late 18th century, the Fairfield area was home to a clan of Aboriginal people known as the Cabrogal, whose name derived from the cobra 'worm' (actually a mollusc) which grows in submerged timber and was eaten by the Cabrogal. The precise extent of the lands over which the Cabrogal were custodians is unknown, but their estate possibly extended south to the Georges River and north to around the Prospect area. As of 2016 members of the Darug Tribe and Cabrogal Tribe make up around 1% of the total population – representing a lower percentage than the national average.

Fairfield City Council and Cumberland Council are accessible by rail, bus, car and well-connected cycleways and pedestrian paths. The M7, A28 and A22 are all key arterial roads linking key suburbs and industrial areas throughout Sydney – all of which travel through the Fairfield City Council. The M4, A28 and A6 are also key arterial roads linking Cumberland Council to key suburbs and industrial areas throughout Sydney.

2.2. Local context

The suburb of Smithfield is located in both the Cumberland Council and Fairfield City Council LGAs.

For the purposes of this report, the study refers to the suburb of Smithfield inclusive of both LGA's. The community profile and an analysis of Demast's project stakeholders are outlined below, in addition to the social baseline for the project.

2.3. The social locality

The project is located 1km away from what is considered the town centre of Smithfield – located on The Horsley Drive – a key east/west corridor linking Wetherill Park and Fairfield. It is also positioned 200m driving distance from the A28 – an important arterial road sprawling north/south across the Western Sydney area.

In recognition of the outcomes of the preliminary social impact assessment, the social locality developed for the project's SIA scoping phase and contained in the SIA scoping report (see Element Environment Pty Ltd, 2024) has been preserved for this study. The scoping report states the project site is surrounded by industrial land use and well separated from residential buildings. It also states that the extant primary and secondary data collected during the SIA phase 1 did not illustrate any substantial



social risks in relation to the existing SDP or project. As shown in **Figure 1** illustrates the social locality.

Figure 1
Social locality

Sludge Dewatering Plant
SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT





3. Engagement and SIA Methodology

In accordance with the SEARs, the methods described below enabled the collection of data to address the social impact categories defined in the SIA Guideline (refer **Appendix A**).

3.1. Internal project team workshop

An internal scoping meeting was held with the projects EIS lead and mapping specialist to:

- Understand the project, the site location, and its local context
- Determine the engagement and consultation activities
- Decide the research methodologies to be implemented for the SIA
- Discuss the social locality development and the potential for cumulative social impacts
- Identify and analyse stakeholders
- Identify and discuss existing project correspondence, including consultation and environmental records.

3.2. Literature review

Literature was reviewed to assess the potential social impacts (including cumulative impacts) predicted to arise from the project or from any other projects in development near the site. The following material was reviewed:

- The complaints register managed by the proponent
- Online media associated with the project
- NSW DPHI Major Projects Website.

3.3. Project introduction letter

In February 2023, a project introduction letter was distributed to approximately 1000 properties surrounding the project site (see distribution area in **Appendix B**). The distribution area included the nearest residential properties to the project site on Pavesi Street, Iris Street, and McRedie Road.

The SIA Guideline recommends the 'precautionary principle' is applied to the study. This principle was applied to the decision about the project letter distribution area which extended beyond the social locality (on 2 separate letter-drop events; one during scoping and one in SIA phase 2). In other words, the precautionary approach was applied by contacting a greater number of property owners compared to the number expected to be affected by the project. The distribution area factored in potential transport routes and residential and business properties.



The purpose of the letter was to:

- Introduce Demast to the surrounding community
- Provide preliminary details about the project
- Invite feedback about the project
- Provide contact details for future correspondence.

Nil stakeholder correspondence was received from the letter recipients. This justifies the constrained social locality adopted for this study.

3.4. Project update letter

In September 2023, a project update letter was distributed to the same catchment associated with the project introduction letter distribution. The purpose of the update letter was to:

- Advise project stakeholders about the outcomes of the proponent's review of the project and how it might better meet the needs of the waste sector
- Identify the preliminary details of the project
- Describe the project need and justification
- Invite feedback about the project
- Provide contact details for future correspondence.

Nil stakeholder correspondence was received from the letter recipients.

3.5. Interview invitations

Semi-structured interviews formed part of the SIA methodology. Interview invitations were sent to:

- Three businesses in Long Street, Smithfield
- Cumberland City Council
- Gandangara LALC.

None of the organisations accepted the interview invitations despite repeated contact.

Cumberland Land Conservancy (a regional environmental group) was also contacted during the SIA. Information about the proposed development was provided to the organisation and it was invited to raise concerns or an interest in the project. A member of the conservancy forwarded the invitation to the Blacktown and District Environment Group for consideration. The response obtained from the organisations is incorporated into the SIA (refer to the assessment in **Section 6**).



3.6.Data limitations

The prominent lack of interest in the project among stakeholders is an obvious limitation affecting the data collected for the SIA. No interview invitations were accepted, and no responses were received to approximately 2000 project letters (i.e. two separate mail distributions of approximately 1000 letters) distributed in the social locality. If these efforts prompted a dialogue with project stakeholders and primary data was obtained, then the data would have informed the SIA.

A low community response rate could be a data limitation, but it could also be interpreted as an indication of the community/stakeholders having little interest in the project.



4. Existing Social Baseline

This chapter contains the social baseline developed for the project. The baseline is the nominated set of social indicators for communities potentially affected by the project. It provides a point of comparison; it can be used as reference data against which to measure the impacts of the project as it develops, and/or to determine the adequacy or otherwise of existing facilities (Vanclay, 2015).

The community profile of the suburb of Smithfield has been adopted for the project's social baseline.

4.1. Community profile

Table 2 contains the Smithfield community profile, sources from the 2021 Census of Population and Housing data (ABS, 2021).

Table 2 Community profile

Characteristic	Smithfield	NSW
Population	13,160	8,072,163
Male	49.2%	49.4%
Female	50.8%	50.6%
Median age	38	39
Average children per family (families with children)	2.1	1.8
Average people per household	3.1	2.6
Median weekly household income	\$1,300	\$1,829
Average number of motor vehicles per dwelling	1.8	1.8

4.2. Population Projections

Over the next 20 years NSW population is projected to increase by over 20%, or 1% annually. Both LGA's - Cumberland and Fairfield City – are forecasted similar growth, 1.3% and 0.81%. This estimates the combined population of the two LGA's to be over 500,000 by 2041.



4.3. Indigenous Population

Currently the Indigenous population makes up 1.3% of the Smithfield population. This is below the national average of 3.2%. The Indigenous population is also characterised by a lower median age (23 years) when contrasted against the median age of the wider suburban population, illustrating it as a relatively younger population sub-group.

4.4. Place of Birth

The Smithfield population has a higher proportion of residents born overseas when compared to NSW and Australia. **Table 3** contains this data for the Smithfield population.

Table 3 Place of birth (Smithfield population)

Birthplace (Australia vs overseas)	Percentage of population
Both parents born overseas	72.9%
At least one parent born overseas	7.4%
Both parents born in Australia	13.7%
Not stated	6.1%
<i>Both parents born overseas – NSW</i>	39.4%
<i>Both parents born overseas – Australia</i>	36.7%

4.5. Employment

The Smithfield population's participation in the labour force is slightly lower than the NSW population with 71.5% of people 15 years and older currently employed, compared to NSW at 84.9% (ABS, 2021). Regarding participants in the labour force in Smithfield on the Census enumeration night, 44.9% were employed full time, 26.6% were employed part time and 28.1% were either away from work or unemployed and looking for work. These figures represent an 8.9% unemployment rate for the suburb, higher than the national average of 5.1% (ABS, 2021).

4.6. Existing social infrastructure

Social infrastructure refers to facilities and services that enhance the social capacity of communities and may include infrastructure related to health, housing, youth, aged care, leisure, community safety facilities and road safety (Franks, 2012).



The social infrastructure in the social locality will provide a reference point against which social impacts may be measured if the project proceeds. Such impacts can take the form of a decrease in the quantity, diversity, or capacity of the existing social infrastructure, courtesy of demand from an expanded workforce and their relatives relocating to an area.

Conversely, an influx of staff and their families, or changes to the footprint of a project may stimulate new social attributes of the communities, bolster organisational capacities and contribute to the supply of services.

The project's social locality predominantly comprises industrial land use. Subsequently, social infrastructure in the area is limited. Chifley Street Reserve (near the intersection of Britton Street and Long Street) and Tait Street Park (near the intersection of Long Street and Tait Street) are two isolated open spaces that are available for use by the public.

5. Stakeholder analysis

Project stakeholders contribute to social conditions in the social locality. For the SIA, the project's stakeholders were identified via desktop research, the SEARs, and conversations with the project team. **Table 4** lists the most prominent stakeholders and their predicted interest in the project.

Table 4 Project stakeholders

Stakeholder	Description	Predicted interest
• Wanless Waste Management • J&R Magnetics • Zifam Pinnacle Health Care • Conveyor and Plant Services • Delta Auto Body • AI engineering • Dj Stone • AI Budget Auto Dismantlers	Industrial estate businesses (on Long Street, Tate Street and Britton Street)	Amenity Traffic conditions and road safety Business revenue
• Pavesi Street • Iris Street • McRedie Road	Property owners and tenants associated with residential properties that are closest to the project site	Traffic conditions and road safety Environmental sustainability



Stakeholder	Description	Predicted interest
• Cumberland Council • Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water • Environment Protection Authority • Heritage NSW • Transport for NSW • Sydney Water • Endeavour Energy	Government agencies nominated in the SEARs	- Demand for services - Environmental sustainability - Heritage impacts - Traffic conditions and road safety - Legislative compliance
• Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council	The Aboriginal Land Council associated with the land on which the project is located	Social impacts for First Nations people
• Blacktown & District Environment Group • Cumberland Land Conservancy	Local and regional community and environmental groups	Environmental sustainability

6. Assessment of Social Impacts

This assessment of the social impacts predicted to arise from the project is structured according to the social impact categories in section 4.3 of the SIA Guideline (NSW Government, 2023). The categories are defined in **Appendix A**.

As described in **Section 1.2**, a ‘basic’ assessment was conducted for the SIA and this section of the report is consistent with that level of assessment. The assessment is limited to a review of the technical studies commissioned for the EIS as they relate to potential social impacts, and the feedback received from a regional environmental group representative. For the purposes of this SIA, where it was determined that the project would be unlikely to impact a particular category, that category is not discussed below. Only those considered applicable to the project receive attention. The predicted significance levels of all identified social impacts were determined using the social impact significance matrix in **Table 5**.



Table 5 Social impact significance matrix

Defining Likelihood level of social impact	
<i>Likelihood level</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<i>Almost certain</i>	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)
<i>Likely</i>	High probability
<i>Possible</i>	Medium probability
<i>Unlikely</i>	Low probability
<i>Very unlikely</i>	Improbable or remote probability
Defining magnitude levels for social impacts	
<i>Magnitude level</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<i>Transformational</i>	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.
<i>Major</i>	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
<i>Moderate</i>	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time or affecting a group of people.
<i>Minor</i>	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable
<i>Minimal</i>	Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.



Defining magnitude levels for social impacts					
Magnitude Level					
Likelihood Level	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

6.1. Assessment of non-enhanced positive impacts

6.1.1. Health and well-being

According to the SIA Guideline, health and well-being is a social impact category related to physical and mental health, especially for those who are highly vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, plus wellbeing of individuals and communities. It encompasses stress, anxiety, and uncertainty - or hopes - about a proposal, and fears/hopes for the future.

The existing SDP provides a permanent site for the processing of waste material generated by non-destructive excavation activities associated with the infrastructure and construction sectors across the Greater Sydney region. Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in demand for such services. The processing plant and equipment at the SDP have suitable capacity to accommodate the processing of additional waste material and if planning consent is obtained for the project, it would enable this service to continue at a greater capacity and ensure less material is disposed at landfill sites.

People living in metropolitan areas are often concerned about the environmental impact of waste being sent to landfills because it contributes to significant pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Landfills release harmful methane, a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change, as organic materials break down without oxygen. Additionally, landfills can contaminate surrounding soil and water with hazardous chemicals, posing health risks to nearby communities.



Moreover, waste reuse and recycling helps to conserve natural resources and reduce the strain on landfills, prolonging their lifespan and reducing the need to open new waste disposal sites. It also promotes a circular economy, where materials are continuously reused, reducing the demand for new products and lowering overall production costs. People in metropolitan areas may also be concerned about the aesthetics and space limitations caused by overflowing landfills, and recycling offers a more sustainable solution that aligns with their growing environmental awareness and psychology.

If the Project proceeds, it is predicted that people in Greater Sydney would support the principal of recycling that it would foster. On this basis, it is expected that the Project would yield positive social impacts to health and well-being of people in Greater Sydney. Without enhancement, the impact is forecast to be of **medium** significance, being possible to occur and of a minor magnitude.

6.1.2. Access

The SIA Guideline defines ‘access’ as a social impact category relating to how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities. This includes impacts on how people use roads and other access routes (e.g. severance, restrictions, and/or improvements in access), and project-related transport issues.

One of the intended outcomes that the Project intends to create, is a reduction of the number of heavy vehicles required to take slurry material to landfill. There is a potential positive social impact that could occur if this outcome is achieved.

Excessive traffic on local roads can create a range of issues. For example, journey times can be lengthened, emissions and acoustic disturbance can increase, and the condition of road pavements can deteriorate. These issues can become a source of frustration and stress for road users and it is this frustration that would potentially be lessened for road users on the routes between the project site and landfill locations. Subsequently, the project is predicted to create a positive social impact of **medium** significance (possible to occur, minor magnitude) for these roads users if it proceeds.

6.2. Assessment of unmitigated negative impacts

6.2.1. Surroundings

Surroundings, according to the SIA Guideline, includes ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity. Acoustic, air-quality, and waste-water impacts are associated with this social impact category. The project may potentially negatively influence these characteristics in the social locality. Each impact is evaluated separately below using outcomes of the technical assessments commissioned for the EIS.



Acoustic impacts

Muller Acoustic Consulting Pty Ltd (2024) conducted a noise impact assessment of the project to predict whether or not it would comply with relevant noise guidelines, if it proceeds. In particular, the noise assessment quantified potential operational noise emissions associated with the proposed increase in processing limit of the SDP to 300,000tpa and additional heavy vehicle movements.

The study concluded that:

- The project's operational noise levels would comply with relevant noise requirements for operations during all assessment periods (day, evening and night) under noise enhancing meteorological conditions.
- Noise emissions from heavy vehicle airbrake release at the SDP is predicted to be below the EPA trigger levels for sleep disturbance at residences
- The increase in vehicle movements associated with the project would be insignificant compared to the existing high traffic volumes along the transport route
- The project's potential noise impacts are acceptable without further management measures being required.

In recognition of the noise study and taking a precautionary approach, it is predicted the project would create a negative social impact of **low significance** (unlikely to occur, minor magnitude) if it proceeds.

Air-quality impacts

Odour impacts can irritate some people by triggering allergic reactions, headaches, or heightened sensitivity in the respiratory system. Strong smells, whether from perfumes, cleaning products, or environmental pollutants, can lead to discomfort or even nausea in sensitive individuals. Those with conditions like asthma, migraines, or chemical sensitivities may experience worsened symptoms due to overpowering scents, causing difficulty in breathing or a decline in overall well-being. These reactions can be not only physically uncomfortable but also emotionally distressing, as prolonged exposure to unpleasant odours may lead to anxiety or stress.

For the EIS, an air-quality impact assessment was conducted by Todoroski Air Sciences (2024) to evaluate the potential air quality impacts associated with the project. The study concluded that the project would comply with the applicable air-quality criteria and would not lead to any unacceptable level of environmental harm or impact in the surrounding area. Furthermore, the report stated that the project "would not result in air pollution that would significantly impact upon the amenity of residential and industrial land uses" (Todoroski Air Sciences, 2024, p.30)

Noting the above results and a lack of concerns about air-quality issues raised by project stakeholders, the project's potential negative impact on surroundings (air-quality) is predicted to be of **low significance** (unlikely to occur, minor magnitude) if it proceeds.



Waste-water and runoff

It is understandable that people living near industrial facilities may have environmental concerns related to onsite stormwater and runoff management due to the potential for contaminants, such as hazardous chemicals, heavy metals, and toxins, to be carried into nearby water sources. Runoff management measures can influence the containment or overflow of waste materials. If these measures are inadequate, waste materials may contaminate local rivers, streams, or groundwater. This can in-turn pose health risks to nearby residents in a range of ways, for example, by affecting drinking water quality, agricultural crops, and recreational areas. It is important to note that even perceived (as opposed to actual) water quality impacts might cause anxiety for some people.

The opinions of a regional environmental group representative are relevant to the SIA when considering the project's potential impact on waste-water, runoff and the environment surrounding the project site. After considering the project details, the environmental group representative had concerns about the adequacy of the first flush capture system which retains the first 10 mm of rainfall runoff that falls on the project site. The individual was not confident this capacity was sufficient, and he had concerns about stormwater being transferred to Prospect Creek via stormwater pipes where he predicted it might degrade flora and fauna inhabiting the creek.

The Integrated Water Management Strategy (Martens, 2025) prepared for the project provides commentary on the adequacy of the first flush capture system and potential for external environmental influence. It states:

"The proposed development does not include any significant changes to the current site drainage configuration as the proposed change in operating volumes does not alter the need for site stormwater management systems" (Martens, 2025, p.13).

"The proposed development shall not alter the effect of the site stormwater system on the receiving environment. No change to imperviousness (which could lead to increased flows) and no change to the site stormwater capture (which could lead to reduced flows) shall occur" (Martens, 2025, p.14).

"As there is no change in imperviousness and no change in landuse (and therefore pollutant generation), the proposed development will achieve a neutral effect on stormwater quality" (Martens, 2025, p.15).

This assessment acknowledges the valid concerns of the environmental representative. Considering the commentary in the water management strategy prepared for the project, it appears the projects potential surroundings (waste-water and runoff) impacts are perceived and that if the project proceeds, the likely impact to people would be negligible. Subsequently, this assessment finds an impact of **low significance** (unlikely to occur, minor magnitude) is appropriate.



6.2.2. Access

Access was defined as a social impact category in **Section 6.1.2** and the project's potential positive influence on it was discussed. The project may also, however, create a potential negative impact on access in the social locality in relation to traffic congestion.

If the project proceeds, there would be an additional 24 inbound and 24 outbound heavy vehicle trips per day visiting the SDP. This additional volume of heavy vehicles has potential to add congestion to the road network, interfere with the productivity of existing businesses in the industrial area, and create stress and anxiety for road users.

In the absence of any community feedback obtained from the engagement activities conducted for this SIA, the technical study commissioned for the EIS was relied upon for the evaluation of social impacts. A *Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (SCT Consulting, 2024) concluded that the project would not have a significant impact on the traffic and transport system around the project site given that:

- There would be minimal impacts on traffic delay and degree of saturation at the surrounding intersections during the peak hours
- There is limited impact on traffic conditions at the site access
- The proposed larger vehicle types can be accommodated
- There is no impact on the public transport and active transport network.

Acknowledging the above results and adopting a precautionary approach, it is expected that the project would yield an impact of **low significance** (unlikely, minimal magnitude) on access to the traffic network.



6.3.Cumulative impacts

Social and other impacts from two co-located major projects can cause cumulative impacts if they occur simultaneously or consecutively. A search of the NSW government major project portal was conducted on 16 December 2024 to identify any major developments in Smithfield that might combine with the project's predicted impacts to create cumulative social impacts. Three relevant developments were identified. **Table 6** lists the developments and provides a cumulative impact assessment description and rating.

Note that stress from traffic impacts is the only negative cumulative impact predicted to occur in combination with the other developments in Smithfield. The collective negative impact of these developments and the project is deemed to be of **medium** significance (possible and minor magnitude). The SIA reports for the respective developments give no confidence that they would create cumulative social impacts in relation to noise, air-quality and waste-water.

Table 6 Potential cumulative social impacts

Development name	Address (and distance from the Project)	Planning application stage	Description	Cumulative impact description
Smithfield Recycling Centre	132-144 Warren Road, Smithfield, NSW (approx. 700m)	Assessment	Use of an existing warehouse (operating 24 hours 7 days a week) to receive up to 150,000 tonnes per annum of domestic and commercial recyclable materials and sort these materials into categories for transportation to dedicated reprocessing facilities.	The SIA conducted by MRA Consulting Group (2022) identified the warehouse development as having a low social impact associated with traffic impacts. However, there is potential for it and the project to generate cumulative traffic impacts, given the development's proximity to the project and its



Development name	Address (and distance from the Project)	Planning application stage	Description	Cumulative impact description
				planning application stage.
Britton Street Multi-Level Warehouse	15-21 Britton Street, Smithfield (approx. 450m)	Response to submissions	Demolition of on-site structures, construction and 24/7 operation of a multi-level warehouse and distribution centre, comprised of 3 buildings connected by hardstand, 2-3 storeys in height, gross floor area of 108,896 m2, and ancillary offices.	Like the project, the warehouse development would increase the volume of heavy vehicles using the local road network. The SIA results (Hill PDA, 2024) predicted the development would yield a negative impact on access (traffic congestion) of low significance. Nevertheless, considering that the development is on Britton Street which joins Long Street, it is likely there will be a cumulative traffic impact derived from the warehouse development.



Development name	Address (and distance from the Project)	Planning application stage	Description	Cumulative impact description
Smithfield Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)	6 Herbert Place, Smithfield, NSW (approx. 400m)	Determination	Construction and operation of a battery energy storage system (72 MW / 260 MWh) at the Smithfield Energy Facility	Like the project, the BESS development would increase the volume of heavy vehicles using the local road network. The SIA results (Hill PDA, 2023) predicted the development would yield a negative impact on access (traffic congestion on local roads). It was anticipated that this would occur only during the construction of the development, not during operation. Nevertheless, considering that the development is on Herbert Street which joins Long Street (and the nearby Britton Street) it is likely that there will be a cumulative traffic impact derived from the BESS



Development name	Address (and distance from the Project)	Planning application stage	Description	Cumulative impact description
				development for a temporary period whilst it is being built. The advanced stage of the development's planning application adds confidence to this prediction. It is feasible that, if planning consent is granted, the development would occur whilst the project is operating.



7. Impact Enhancement, Mitigation, and Residual Impacts

This final section of the report discusses project refinements, enhancements of predicted positive social impacts, and mitigation measures for some of the predicted negative social impacts identified in **Section 6.2**. The project's social impacts are then re-evaluated, and residual social impacts are predicted. The residual social impacts are the outcomes of the project's SIA.

7.1. Project refinements

The Project team did not identify opportunities for project refinements in any of the community or stakeholder feedback obtained about the SSD, or in internal discussions.

7.2. Enhancement of positive social impacts

The SIA identified that the project would create the following two positive social impacts:

- Health and well-being (environmental awareness)
- Access (less heavy vehicle movements between the project site and landfill sites).

In each case, it is expected that a positive social impact of medium significance (possible to occur, minor magnitude) would be created by the project. The project team did not identify any means to enhance these predicted impacts beyond their non-enhanced significance.

7.3. Mitigation of negative social impacts

As discussed earlier in this report, community and stakeholder engagement outcomes were limited. In response to the project's perceived waste-water/runoff impact held by the regional environmental group representative (refer **Section 6.2.1**), there is an opportunity to disseminate the relevant commentary of Martens (2025) to him with the aim of reducing anxiety about the degradation of Prospect Creek. This represents a social impact mitigation measure and the provision of this information is a commitment already given to the environmental group representative.

Other mitigation measures are recommended in the air-quality assessment commissioned for the EIS and these will be adopted by the project if it proceeds. The application of some of these measures would offset the project's forecast negative air-quality impacts. These measures recommended by Todoroski Air Sciences (2024) include:

- Undertaking all dewatering activities within the existing building at the site
- At all times storing all processed materials in dedicated stockpiles to reduce the potential for tracking onto roads and wind erosion



- Material handling should be restricted at times of adverse weather (e.g. high winds causing a visible dust plumes)
- Regular cleaning of all trafficked road on-site using street sweeper or similar equipment
- Limiting speed on site
- Ensuring engines of on-site vehicles are switched off when not in use
- Where practicable, fitting vehicles with pollution reduction devices
- Maintaining and servicing vehicles according to manufactures specifications
- Conducting an initial “sniff” test to identify the odorous nature of the material to prevent any malodourous material being processed at the site.

Assuming these air-quality impact mitigation measures would be implemented by the project, a revised impact of **low significance** (very unlikely, minimal magnitude) would be considered appropriate.



7.4. Summary of social impacts

Table 7 provides a summary of the project's predicted social impacts and their characteristics. Residual impacts have been determined on the basis that negative impact mitigation measures would be applied by the project.

Table 7 Social impact summary

Impact to people	Social impact category	Affected parties	Likelihood and magnitude of impact	Impact significance rating (non-enhanced/unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement / mitigation measures	Likelihood and magnitude of impact	Residual impact significance
Predicted positive impacts								
Alignment with environmental awareness and psychology	Health and well-being	Greater Sydney population	Possible and minor	Medium	Operation	Nil suggested	Possible and minor	Medium
Reduced landfill trips and lessened stress for road users	Access	Road users on route between Project site and landfill locations	Possible and minor	Medium	Operation	Nil suggested	Possible and minor	Medium



Predicted negative impacts								
Irritation and discomfort from acoustic impacts	Surroundings	Businesses near the Project site	Unlikely and minor	Low	Operation	Nil suggested	Unlikely and minor	Low
Irritation and discomfort from air-quality impacts	Surroundings	Businesses near the Project site	Unlikely and minor	Low	Operation	Measures recommended by Todoroski Air Sciences (2024)	Unlikely and minor	Low
Waste-water and runoff	Surroundings	People that interact with Prospect Creek and the downstream environment	Unlikely and minor	Low	Operation	Convey commentary about waste-water and runoff management to the regional environmental group	Unlikely and minor	Low
Traffic congestion leading to increased stress for road users	Access	Road users in the industrial estate	Unlikely and minimal	Low	Operation	Nil suggested	Very unlikely and minimal	Low



7.5. Impact monitoring and management

The practical arrangements for monitoring and managing social impacts can be integrated into the overarching environmental management systems.

Environmental management plans applicable to the operation of the project would be developed and would provide a framework for social impact management and monitoring. The management plans would provide a mechanism to manage social issues identified by the SIA relating to acoustic, air-quality, traffic and waste-water/runoff impacts.

In addition to the environmental management plans, it is recommended that Demast develop and implement an operational communications and community engagement plan for the SDP if one does not already exist. The plan should:

- Be implemented prior to the EIS exhibition
- Provide a program for the ongoing analysis of social risks and opportunities arising from the SDP. This would include a regular analysis of complaints to see if there are any emerging issues relating to the project.
- For the SDPs neighbours, provide a point of contact who can promptly respond to queries or requests.



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Appendix A – Social impact categories (source: NSW DPHI, 2023)





Appendix B – Letter distribution area

