



Australian Government



**Sydney Metro –  
Western Sydney Airport**

# Chapter 28

## Conclusion

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## 28 Project justification and conclusion

**This chapter presents the justification and a conclusion to this Environmental Impact Statement. The justification is based on the strategic need for the project and, in particular, how it would fulfil the project objectives of Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport and meet the objectives of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) (EP&A Act)*.**

### 28.1 Summary of strategic need

Sydney Metro is Australia's biggest public transport project. Services between Rouse Hill and Chatswood started in May 2019 on the first stage of this new stand-alone automated railway network, which is revolutionising the way Sydney travels. Sydney is expanding and the NSW Government is working hard to deliver an integrated transport system that meets the needs of customers now and in the future. The delivery of Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport is critical to keeping Sydney moving, linking residential areas with job hubs and the nationally-significant Western Sydney International airport.

The project would involve the construction and operation of a new metro rail line, around 23 kilometres long between St Marys in the north and the Aerotropolis Core precinct in the south including new metro stations at St Marys, Orchard Hills, Luddenham Road, Airport Business Park, Airport Terminal and Aerotropolis Core.

The project would be a city-shaping mass transit investment that would unlock and accelerate delivery of the vision for a new Western Parkland City, centred on the economic anchors of the Aerotropolis, Western Sydney International and the amenity of the South Creek green spine. It would provide an essential transport link to the existing Sydney Trains suburban rail network, certainty and structure for early public and private investment, and act as a catalyst for high-amenity centres, precincts and recreation areas. These factors all work as major attractors for significant resident and industry growth across the Western Parkland City.

The project would establish the first stage of a public transport system that would underpin Greater Sydney's growth and prosperity for generations to come. It would do this by:

- providing a fast, frequent mass transit link from the Aerotropolis and Western Sydney International to the existing Sydney Trains suburban rail network at St Marys – this would be a critical early connection to establish and maintain city-wide business-to-business connections, to provide high-quality worker access to a local job pool and to draw airport passengers westwards. This would ultimately safeguard economic success and the rebalance of Greater Sydney
- connecting metropolitan clusters – through linking the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Growth Investigation Area, the Western Economic Corridor, St Marys and the Greater Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown-Macarthur metropolitan clusters
- providing the foundations for an expanded 30-minute Western Parkland City – by connecting people to jobs, education, goods and services across an evolving hierarchy of metropolitan, strategic and local centres and delivering an expanded integrated transport network alongside the metro service.

Biophysical, economic and social considerations have been assessed in the context of the principles of ecologically sustainable development. This is discussed in Chapter 27 (Synthesis) and summarised below:

- Precautionary principle: The environmental risk analysis documented in Chapter 26 (Environmental risk analysis) addresses the potential impacts of the project. That analysis, together with the detailed assessment carried out in preparing this Environmental Impact Statement indicates that there would be no threat of serious or irreversible damage to the environment

- **Intergenerational equity:** The objectives of the project are essentially around connecting the Western Parkland City and ensuring an efficient and reliable public transport network to connect to Western Sydney International. This would benefit current and future generations. Once operational, the project would leave a positive legacy for future generations. It would provide long term benefits by providing a new transport linkage to the Western Parkland City and connection to Western Sydney International
- **Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity:** Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity has been considered throughout the project development and design stages. The construction footprint has been developed to avoid or minimise impact to areas of high ecological value. Detailed assessments have been carried out to identify flora and fauna impacts and a range of mitigation measures identified for implementation
- **Improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources:** The value placed on the environment was inherent in the development of the design. In addition, the costs associated with the planning and design of measures to avoid/minimise adverse environmental impacts and the costs to implement them have been built into the overall project costs. Ongoing design development together with specific issue-based management plans would represent further commitment to the recognition of the value of protecting environmental resources.

## 28.2 Achieving the project objectives

Table 28-1 provides an assessment of the project against the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport objectives as detailed in Chapter 2 (Strategic need and justification).

**Table 28-1 Assessment against the project objectives**

<b>Project objectives</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Safe and customer focussed transport service	The project would deliver easy, safe and accessible transport services that meet the needs of customers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing a new rail line to areas where this is currently not available</li> <li>• providing a new connection to Western Sydney International.</li> </ul>
Successful airport and Western Parkland City	The project would support the long-term success of the Western Sydney International and the Western Parkland City by optimising land use and development, transport and green infrastructure.
Attracting knowledge and internationally competitive jobs	The project would support Western Sydney's international competitiveness and productivity by supporting employment precincts and attracting knowledge-intensive jobs.
Realising the 30-minute city	The project would connect Western Sydney communities with an integrated transport network to maximise the 30-minute city catchment of the Western Parkland City and adjoining cities and regions.
Great places with an increased housing supply	The project would facilitate the development of the Western Parkland City to create liveable, vibrant and environmentally sustainable precincts and places with a diverse mix of new dwellings. The project would provide transport infrastructure to allow for improved access within the Western Parkland City, including to the Aerotropolis and Western Sydney International. The project would support the delivery of the Aerotropolis as a primary centre for Greater Sydney, supporting the planned urban growth and safeguarding the long term success of the three cities vision.
Delivering a value for money solution	The project would ensure a value for money, sustainable and deliverable solution to support the long-term growth of the Western Parkland City.

### 28.3 Objects of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The objects of the EP&A Act provide a policy framework within which the justification of the project can be considered. Table 28-2 outlines those objects and provides comment on their relevance to the project

Table 28-2 Relevance of the Objects of the EP&A Act to the project

EP&A Act Objects	Comments
<p>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</p>	<p>The project has been designed to avoid impacts on the environment and to minimise the need for land acquisition, as well as impacts on existing development and local communities.</p> <p>The project has been designed to conserve the State's natural and other resources. During construction and operation of the project, opportunities would be taken to reduce material use and maximise the use of materials with low embodied environmental impact, where practical.</p>
<p>To facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment</p>	<p>Sustainability has been a key driver for the project. The project will be guided by a Sustainability Plan (see Chapter 17 (Sustainability, climate change and greenhouse gas)). Further details on addressing the principles of ecologically sustainable development are also provided in Chapter 27 (Synthesis).</p>
<p>To promote the orderly and economic use and development of land</p>	<p>The project would provide a new transport link to Western Sydney International and connect the planned urban growth associated with the Western Sydney Aerotropolis and broader Western Parkland City. This would boost the economic productivity of Western Sydney and unlock planned land use outcomes, planned precincts and urban renewal areas within the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Growth Investigation Area and Western Sydney Aerotropolis.</p> <p>The project has been designed to minimise impacts to the surrounding natural and built environments, and to minimise disruption to existing development patterns. Provision of a mostly in tunnel metro system is an orderly and economic approach to delivery of the project in the context of future and existing development along the corridor.</p>
<p>To promote the delivery and maintenance of affordable housing</p>	<p>The project would provide public transport accessibility to future growth areas including the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Growth Investigation Area and Western Sydney Aerotropolis and an affordable transport option for future residents.</p>
<p>To protect the environment, including the conservation of threatened and other species of native animals and plants, ecological communities and their habitats</p>	<p>Direct impacts to terrestrial biodiversity have been largely avoided and/or minimised through measures including extensive sections of bored tunnel under areas of important biodiversity, and alignment development to avoid impacts where possible (see Chapter 6 (Project development and alternatives)).</p> <p>The project's impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecology have been assessed in detail and measures to avoid, mitigate and offset potential impacts on native animals and plants have been developed (see Chapter 11 (Biodiversity)).</p>

EP&A Act Objects	Comments
To promote the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal cultural heritage)	<p>The design development of the project has included a focus on avoiding or minimising potential Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage impacts. This has included developing a tunnel alignment and where possible selecting construction sites that avoid potential direct impacts to heritage items and potential archaeological sites (see Chapter 6 (Project development and alternatives)).</p> <p>Impacts on heritage items would be minimised during construction and works would be carried out in accordance with relevant management strategies for specific heritage items where impacts are unavoidable (see Chapter 12 (Non-Aboriginal heritage) and Chapter 13 (Aboriginal heritage)).</p>
To promote good design and amenity of the built environment	<p>Landscape character and visual amenity impacts from the project would be managed in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Framework, which specifies key operational requirements, environmental management procedures, and a communications and consultation strategy.</p> <p>The approach to design and placemaking for the project, as well as place and design principles for each of the metro stations and facilities, is provided in Appendix E (Design Guidelines) and discussed in Chapter 7 (Project description – operation).</p>
To promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health and safety of their occupants	<p>The construction of all buildings would be completed consistent with the applicable Australian and international safety standards.</p>
To promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning between the different levels of government in the State	<p>The responsibility for environmental planning and approval in relation to the project rests primarily with the NSW Government for areas of the project off-airport, with on-airport works subject to Commonwealth approval. No formal approval role is required by local government however, consultation has occurred across all levels of the government including councils and the Australian Government for the project and its interface with Western Sydney International.</p>
To provide increased opportunity for community participation in environmental planning and assessment	<p>An objective of community and stakeholder engagement for the project is to provide information about the planning approvals process and encourage community participation. The project team has developed a comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement program to proactively engage with local communities, key stakeholders and government agencies during and following exhibition of this Environmental Impact Statement (see Chapter 5 (Stakeholder and community engagement)).</p>

## 28.4 Conclusion

The project has been assessed as State significant infrastructure in accordance with the provisions under Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act. This Environmental Impact Statement addresses the requirements of the Secretary of the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. It also includes consideration of the issues raised by the community and stakeholders during the development of the project.

Key environmental issues have been examined throughout the design development process. Consultation has been carried out with affected stakeholders during the assessment process so that key potential impacts of the project have been identified at an early stage, and where possible, avoided or appropriate mitigation measures developed. This has resulted in a number of changes to the earlier designs that have mitigated many of the potential significant impacts.

Notwithstanding, it is inevitable that a project of this scale would have some residual impacts, particularly during construction. The following actions and risks would have a high residual risk after consideration of the project-specific mitigation measures and performance outcomes identified in this Environmental Impact Statement:

- temporary impacts to roads, parking, pedestrian and cycling access or worsening of road network performance due to construction vehicles, road closures or lane closures
- temporary localised airborne noise impacts to sensitive receivers from construction works during and outside of standard construction hours
- impacts (including clearing) on endangered populations, threatened species and threatened ecological communities including riparian and aquatic habitats during construction
- land use and property impacts associated with acquisition or temporary leasing of properties
- social and economic impacts associated with property acquisition
- cumulative impacts from the construction of multiple projects (including the construction of Western Sydney International and future M12 Motorway), including construction fatigue.

The potential residual impacts identified would not result in any unacceptable impacts and further mitigation would be considered during design development including the decision on appropriate construction methodologies and the implementation of the environmental management practices.

Identified potential residual impacts need to be considered within the context of the overall objectives of the project and the significant transportation and other benefits that the project would provide over the medium to longer term and particularly for future generations. The consequences of not proceeding (i.e. the 'do nothing' scenario) would compromise the sustainable and successful growth of the Western Parkland City for generations to come. In addition, the lack of high quality public transport connection to Western Sydney International would compromise the success of Sydney's newest airport.

On balancing the strategic need and benefits of the project with the residual impacts, the project is considered to be in the public interest.