

Woolgoolga to Ballina SSI-4963

Response to Covid19

Transport for NSW | May 2020

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Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1. Purpose of this report	1

Appendix 1: Environmental Planning and Assessment (COVID-19 Development—Infrastructure Construction Work Days) Order 2020

Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions



1. Introduction

On Thursday 9 April 2020, the NSW Government gazetted the Environmental Planning and Assessment (COVID-19 Development—Infrastructure Construction Work Days) Order 2020 (refer Appendix 1). This was accompanied by a Frequently Asked Questions information sheet (refer Appendix 2).

The FAQs advise that all proponents of development falling under:

- Part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 including State Significant Development and complying development
- already approved State Significant Infrastructure projects (including Critical State Significant Infrastructure)
- other public authority activities already assessed under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- drought relief projects authorised under the Water Supply (Critical Needs) Act 2019

are required to prepare a 'Response to COVID-19'. This should identify all the necessary changes required in response to the current circumstances and what measures they are putting in place to make sure they achieve the same objectives as set out in conditions of approval/consent and relevant post approval documentation. A project's Response to COVID-19 should be submitted to the Department of Planning Industry and Environment for information prior to any alternative measures being undertaken. It should also be communicated on each project website, so communities are kept informed.

For the purposes of the Order, the Woolgoolga to Ballina project is State Significant Infrastructure and is required to prepare, submit and publish a Response to COVID-19.

1.1. Purpose of this report

This report has been prepared to fulfil the requirements of COVID-19 Development - Infrastructure Construction Work Days Order 2020 and the accompanying FAQs. Section two outlines changes in response to COVID-19 operational restrictions and measures implemented by TfNSW to meet the project's conditions of approval and post approval documentation.

2. Changes to operation

In general, the principal impact to the project is the management and monitoring of appropriate social distancing and hygiene protocols for personnel carrying out work on site. This includes liaising with the community, including any private property access. Any procedures require community consultation will now include the option for alternative consultation methods such as telephone calls or video conferencing as an alternative to face to face meetings.

Table 1 identifies:

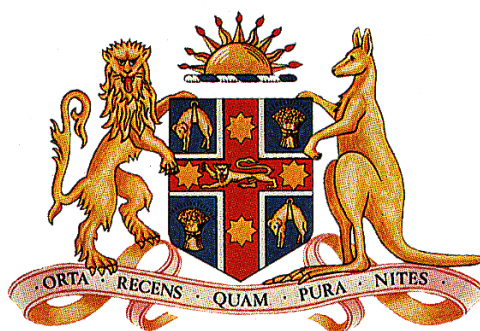
1. project conditions of approval that may require changes
2. measures being put in place to achieve the same objectives as set out in the condition of approval and relevant post approval documentation.

Table 1: Response to COVID19

MCoA	Requirement	Mitigation Measures
B29	Where feasible and reasonable, operational noise mitigation measures shall be implemented at the start of construction (or at other times during construction) to minimise construction noise impacts.	The majority of installation of at house architectural noise treatments have been completed. The final inspections of works and completion reports are currently underway, however there may be delays in this stage of the process. Residents have been given the opportunity to postpone the final inspection until a later date when they feel more comfortable with contractors entering their premises. This delay is not considered to be an impact on the outcomes of the condition.
C1	Ongoing consultation with stakeholders including individual landowners. Consultation includes distribution of progress updates on construction activities, responses to enquiries raised about the project, or seeking endorsement or agreements as required for matters between the project and the stakeholder.	Consultation is still occurring as outlined in the approved Community Communication Strategy. Appropriate physical distancing measures are being adopted by the project team and contractors in any community interactions. Public displays at community events eg markets have been put on hold until restrictions are eased. The personal circumstances of each stakeholder are being considered as part of any project interaction.
D5,D6, D7,D8,& D9	Ecological monitoring for specific species impacted by the project during the Construction and/or Operational Phase, in addition to inspections undertaken as part of Biodiversity Offset investigations or approvals.	<p>In some circumstances the specialists undertaking ecological monitoring may be replaced by other suitably qualified persons if travel restrictions or personal circumstances require. This will ensure that assessments and monitoring are undertaken to meet the outcomes of management plans and approvals conditions are met.</p> <p>Physical distancing measures are being adopted by project team and contractors in line with NSW Government requirements. Personal circumstances of each landowner are being considered as part of any project interaction.</p>

MCoA	Requirement	Mitigation Measures
D24	The Environmental Representative (ER) shall prepare and submit to the Secretary a monthly report on the Environmental Representative's actions and decision on matters specified in condition D23 for the preceding month. The reports shall be submitted for the duration of construction of the SSI, unless otherwise agreed by the Secretary.	The ER is maintaining the reporting schedule with an alternative inspection regime to monitor environmental performance on site and achieve the desired outcomes. The routine fortnightly inspections have been replaced with monthly site inspections undertaken by the ER and TfNSW with separate vehicle based inspections by EPA and DPI Fisheries. This separate inspection is based on EPA and DPI Fisheries organisational requirements. These inspections are supported by a monthly stakeholder meeting chaired by DPIE and attended by EPA and DPI Fisheries to discuss any environmental management requirements or outcomes on the project. These measures are considered flexible and are expected to revert to the pre-COVID-19 methods once restrictions are lifted.
D26 (a)	As part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan for the SSI, the Applicant shall prepare and implement: (a) a Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan.	At house vibration monitoring may require alternative measures to be agreed with potentially affected residents should concerns be raised regarding having contractors entering properties. This has not been required to date.

Appendix 1: Environmental Planning and Assessment (COVID-19 Development— Infrastructure Construction Work Days) Order 2020



Government Gazette

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New South Wales

Number 75

Thursday, 9 April 2020

The New South Wales Government Gazette is the permanent public record of official NSW Government notices. It also contains local council, non-government and other notices.

Each notice in the Government Gazette has a unique reference number that appears in parentheses at the end of the notice and can be used as a reference for that notice (for example, (n2019-14)).

The Gazette is compiled by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office and published on the NSW legislation website (www.legislation.nsw.gov.au) under the authority of the NSW Government. The website contains a permanent archive of past Gazettes.

To submit a notice for gazettal, see Gazette Information.

Environmental Planning and Assessment (COVID-19 Development—Infrastructure Construction Work Days) Order 2020

I, the Hon. Rob Stokes, MP, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, make the following Order under section 10.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

I am satisfied this Order is necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of members of the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, as it will facilitate social distancing by spreading infrastructure construction work over more days in a week.

I have consulted with the Minister for Health and Medical Research in relation to the making of this Order.

1 Name of Order

This Order is the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (COVID-19 Development—Infrastructure Construction Work Days) Order 2020*.

2 Commencement

This Order commences on the day it is published in the Gazette and remains in force for the prescribed period within the meaning of section 10.17 of the Act.

3 Definitions

(1) In this Order—

the Act means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Note. The Act and the Interpretation Act 1987 contain definitions and other provisions that affect the interpretation and application of this Order.

(2) Notes included in this Order do not form part of this Order.

4 Relationship with orders under the *Public Health Act 2010*

To the extent that this Order is inconsistent with an order under Part 2 of the *Public Health Act 2010*, the order under that Part prevails.

5 Development authorised by this Order

The development specified for this Order may be carried out without the need for any approval under the Act if it complies with the conditions specified for the development.

6 Infrastructure construction work days

- (1) The carrying out of any building work or work, or the demolition of a building or work, on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday is development specified for this Order.
- (2) The conditions specified for the development are that the development must—
 - (a) must be the subject of an approval granted before the commencement of this Order, and
 - (b) must comply with all conditions of the approval other than any condition that restricts the hours of work or operation on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, and
 - (c) for work or operation on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday—
 - (i) comply with the conditions of the approval that restrict the hours of work or operation on any other day as if the conditions applied to work or operation on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, and
 - (ii) not involve the carrying out of rock breaking, rock hammering, sheet piling, pile driving or similar activities during the hours of work or operation that would not be permitted but for this Order, and
 - (iii) take all feasible and reasonable measures to minimise noise.

- (3) In this clause—

approval means:

- (a) a State significant infrastructure approval,
- (b) an approval within the meaning of Division 5.1 of the Act that is granted in relation to an activity the subject of environmental assessment under Division 5.1 of the Act, and
- (c) an authorisation under Part 3 of the *Water Supply (Critical Needs) Act 2019*.

condition includes a limitation on the carrying out of an activity required by the determining authority when granting an approval in relation to the activity.

7 Suspension of regulatory instruments

- (1) For the purpose of enabling development to be carried out in accordance with clause 6 of this Order, the following regulatory instruments do not apply to the extent necessary to serve that purpose:
- (a) any agreement, covenant or other similar instrument that restricts the carrying out of that development, and
 - (b) an environment protection licence under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* that was issued before the commencement of this Order.

Note. All other conditions of an environment protection licence continue to apply.

The Hon. Rob Stokes, MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Reference number:(n2020-975)

Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions

April 2020

FAQ for Ministerial Orders: COVID-19 Development – Construction Workdays

What construction activities can now occur on weekends and public holidays?

Construction work that was approved to occur during standard workdays (typically Monday to Friday, and for some projects part of Saturday) is now approved to also occur on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays. Exception to this include activities such as rock breaking, rock hammering, sheet piling, pile driving or similar noisy activities unless an existing consent or approval already allows these works to occur on any of the extended days. Any non-standard additional out of hours work will need to be approved as normal. Proponents and applicants should use a cautionary approach when considering what may constitute a similar noisy activity.

Compliance with the Orders will be monitored.

What development types do these extended hours apply to?

They apply to all development falling under:

- Part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 including State Significant Development and complying development
- already approved State Significant Infrastructure projects (including Critical State Significant Infrastructure)
- other public authority activities already assessed under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- drought relief projects authorised under the Water Supply (Critical Needs) Act 2019

The Orders apply to demolition, building and construction activities for projects.

For SSI/SSD - Do I need to update my post approval documentation to reflect these changes?

No, post approval documentation will not need to be updated. However, proponents are required to prepare a 'Response to COVID-19'. This should identify all the necessary changes required in response to the current circumstances and what measures they are putting in place to make sure they achieve the same objectives as set out in conditions of approval/consent and relevant post approval documentation. A project's Response to COVID-19 should be submitted to the Department for information prior to any alternative measures being undertaken. It should also be communicated on each project website, so communities are kept informed.

What background noise levels will be used for work on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays?

Background noise levels for Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays will be taken from those modelled during the preparation of the Statement of Environmental Effects or the Environmental Impact Statement or in the development of any post approval documentation.

What should proponents and applicants be aware of during this period?

Proponents and applicants must be mindful that background noise levels are likely to be reduced. With residents working from home, children off school and a heightened sense of anxiety in the community, they need to consider what additional measures they can take to reduce noise levels, including regular communication with their surrounding communities on their activities.

Any direction provided by NSW Health takes priority. It is also important that proponents and applicants can demonstrate that the intent of the conditions and the commitments made in the Environmental Impact Statement and post-approval documents are continuing to be achieved.

My project requires a changes of work hours to respond to COVID19. Do I still need to seek Out of Hours works approval?

Existing conditions of the approval / consent, including hours of work during the day, still apply.

If demolition, building or construction works are required outside of the extended workdays, proponents need to seek Out of Hours approval through the relevant approval pathway.

What do the Orders mean for Environmental Protection Licence requirements?

The Orders override Environmental Protection Licence requirements as they relate to extended workdays only (clause 6 of the Orders). All other conditions of an Environmental Protection Licence continue to apply.

Are there any changes to other conditions of approval or consent?

No. Other conditions of the approval or consent have not been changed. Projects must comply with any existing conditions, except for those that restrict weekend and public holiday works.

Are there any changes to the limits of materials allowed to be brought on-site?

The limit of materials allowed to be brought onsite are the same as would apply on a standard workday. Proponents and applicants should seek to minimise any large deliveries requiring temporary road closures on the extended days, where possible.

Can I continue with construction works on external roads as approved under conditions of approval / consent?

If works are only permitted on external roads on weekdays and public holidays, it is recommended proponents and applicants consult with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to determine if the restriction would still apply on a weekend or Public holiday.

Do the Orders allow for support business and industries that supply construction sites, to work on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays?

Ministerial Orders: COVID-19 Development Construction Work Days



Frequently Asked Questions

At this stage, the Orders relate to extending on site workplaces only. They do not apply to support industries such as concrete batching plants or waste facilities. These businesses continue to operate under the terms of their existing consents and approvals.

How long with these extended hours be in place for?

This Orders will be in place for six months from 25 March 2020 and may be extended if needed.
