Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements

Section 5.16 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

Part 8 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021

Application Number	SSI-70279722
Project	Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission Project, which includes: • a new double-circuit transmission line (minimum 330 kV) between the existing Mount Piper and Wallerawang substations; • augmentation of existing electricity transmission lines and substation infrastructure in the vicinity of the Mount Piper 330 kV/500 kV substation; • ancillary infrastructure, such as establishing temporary laydown areas, upgrading or establishing new access tracks, and site compounds.
Location	Approximately 14 km north-west of Lithgow between Transgrid's Mount Piper and Wallerawang substations for a length of approximately 8 km.
Proponent	Transgrid
Date of Issue	4 October 2024
General Requirements	The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the development must comply with the requirements in Part 8 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) and must have regard to the *State Significant Infrastructure Guidelines*. In particular, the EIS must include: • a stand-alone executive summary; • a summary of the background to the project, including alternatives that were considered to the project; • a full description of the project, accompanied by suitable maps and plans, including the: - disturbance area; - physical layout of the project over time, including sections of key components; - key uses and activities to be carried out on site; - likely timing of the project including any stages, the key phases within each stage (site preparation, construction, commissioning, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation) and the sequencing of these stages and phases; - the Project Area (as per Table 1 of the *SSI guidelines - preparing an environmental impact statement*) and Development Footprint (disturbance area including but not limited to areas for infrastructure, road works, access tracks); and - consistency in information presented in the EIS and all technical reports, including distances, development footprint, project design and infrastructure proposed, construction timeframes and receiver numbers; • the relevant strategic context for the project, having regard to: - State legislation, policies and guidelines including current initiatives to improve energy security and reliability in the National Electricity Market; - any other existing, approved or proposed projects that could result in cumulative impacts with the project; and

	- the need for the project and why the proposed project is preferred over other alternatives, including detailed consideration of alternative options and routes (including other existing easements and connections to other transmission lines) and justification for the preferred routes; • the relevant statutory context for the project, including: - the assessment pathway for the project under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*; - the approvals required before the project may be carried out; and - any relevant matters for consideration; • a description of the engagement that was carried out during the preparation of the EIS, the key issues raised during this engagement and the proposed engagement strategy for the project if it is approved; • a risk assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the project, identifying the key issues for further assessment; • an assessment of the likely economic, social and environmental impacts of the project having regard to the requirements in any relevant Government legislation, policies and guidelines (see below), and any other significant issues identified in the risk assessment, focusing on the specific issues identified below, including: - the state of the existing environment; - community views; - the measures that would be implemented to avoid or minimise impacts, including a consolidated summary of the proposed mitigation measures for the project; - the predicted impacts of the project, including any cumulative impacts of the site and existing or proposed developments in the region taking into consideration any relevant legislation, environmental planning instruments, guidelines, policies, plans and industry codes of practice including *Cumulative Impact Assessment Guideline* (DPIE); and - actions proposed to deal with any uncertainties associated with the assessment; and • a detailed evaluation of the merits of the project as a whole. **Estimated Development Cost and Employment** • Provide the estimated cost (EDC) of the project prepared in accordance with the relevant planning circular using the Standard Form of EDC Report. • Provide an estimate of the retained and new jobs that would be created during the construction and operational phases of the development, including details of the methodology to determine the figures provided. In addition the EIS must also be accompanied by a declaration from a Registered Environmental Practitioner that the EIS includes the information specified in the Department's *Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner Guidelines.*
Key issues	The level of assessment of key matters must be proportionate to the likely significance of the impacts on the matter. In particular, the EIS must address the following specific matters: **Biodiversity:** • an assessment of the biodiversity impacts of the project, including impacts associated with transport route road upgrades, in accordance with the *NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, having regard to the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM), and documented in a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). The BDAR must: - be prepared using the approved BDAR template; - document the application of the avoid, minimise and offset framework including assessing all direct, indirect and prescribed impacts in accordance with the BAM; - assess any impacts to nearby conservation areas and nature reserves; - assess the impacts associated with all ancillary infrastructure, including the transport route road upgrades; - include an assessment for SAII in accordance with Section 9.1 of the BAM; and

- be finalised by an accredited assessor as BAM-compliant within 14 days of submission;
- an assessment of the likely direct and indirect impacts on listed aquatic threatened species, populations or ecological communities, scheduled under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, and a description of the measures to minimise and rehabilitate impacts; and
- if an offset is required, details of the measures proposed to address the offset obligations.

Heritage:

- an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) prepared in accordance with the *Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW* (OEH, 2011) and the Code of Practice for the *Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in NSW* (DECCW, 2010) identifying, describing and assessing any impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage sites or values associated with the project, including results of archaeological survey and test excavations (where required) undertaken in accordance with the relevant standards and requirements;
- evidence of adequate consultation with Aboriginal parties in determining and assessing impacts, identifying and selecting options for avoidance of Aboriginal cultural heritage and identifying appropriate mitigation measures (including the final proposed measures), having regard to the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents* (DECCW, 2010), including the consultation process outlined within; and
- an assessment of the impact to historic heritage having regard to the *Guidelines for Preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact* (DPE, 2023).

Water and Soils:

- an assessment of the impacts of the project on the quantity and quality of the region's surface water resources, including the Coxs River, Pipers Flat Creek and Lake Wallace, having regard to NSW Water Quality Objectives and the Neutral or Beneficial Effect (NorBE) Guideline. This should also include any potential groundwater dewatering required during construction and how this may impact on surface water resources;
- details of water requirements, supply arrangements and wastewater disposal arrangements for construction and operation (including consultation with suppliers);
- an assessment of the impacts of the project on groundwater aquifers and groundwater dependent ecosystems having regard to the *NSW Aquifer Interference Policy* and relevant Water Sharing Plans;
- an assessment of the potential flooding impacts and risks of the project;
- where the project involves works within 40 metres of the high bank of any river, lake or wetlands (collectively waterfront land), identify likely impacts to the waterfront land, and how the activities are to be designed and implemented in accordance with the DPI *Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land* (2018) and (if necessary) *Why Do Fish Need to Cross the Road? Fish Passage Requirements for Waterway Crossings* (DPI 2003); and *Policy & Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation & Management* (DPI, 2013); and
- a description of the erosion and sediment control measures that would be implemented to mitigate any impacts in accordance with *Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils & Construction* (Landcom 2004).

Land:

- an assessment of impacts of the project on soils and land capability of the site and surrounds;
- an assessment of the risk of soil contamination and disturbance of land (including associated with naturally occurring asbestos in the vicinity of the site); and
- assessment of impact of the project on agricultural land, land reserved under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, Crown lands including State Forests, travelling stock reserves, mineral resources and exploration licenses, rail reserves and pipeline corridors, including the WaterNSW Fish River Pipeline**.**

Transport:

- an assessment of the peak and average traffic generation, including light vehicles, shuttle buses, heavy vehicles and high risk heavy vehicles requiring escort and construction worker transportation;
- an assessment of the likely transport impacts to the site access route(s), including the above listed vehicles, site access point(s), any Crown land, particularly in relation to the capacity and condition of the roads, road safety and intersection performance;
- details of the ongoing maintenance works required to service assets, outlining the measures to maintain the road;
- a cumulative impact assessment of traffic from nearby developments (including mining operations); and
- provide details of measures to mitigate and / or manage potential impacts (developed in consultation with the relevant road**/**rail authorities) including:
  - a schedule of all required road upgrades (including resulting from heavy vehicle and over mass / over dimensional traffic haulage routes),
  - clear figures of proposed road upgrades (including the site access point); and
  - road maintenance contributions, and any other traffic control measures

Visual:

- a detailed assessment for the whole project of the likely visual impacts of the project on surrounding residences, scenic or significant vistas, night lighting, air traffic and road corridors in the public domain; and
- provide details of measures to mitigate and / or manage potential impacts.

Noise:

- including an assessment of the construction noise impacts of the project in accordance with the *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (ICNG), blasting impacts, cumulative noise impacts (considering other developments in the area), and operational noise impacts in accordance with the *NSW Noise Policy for Industry* (2017), including corona noise; and
- provide details of measures to mitigate and / or manage potential impacts.

Air Quality:

- an assessment of the air quality impacts of the project, including from dust.

Hazards:

- identify possible effects on telecommunications systems, assess impacts and mitigation measures to avoid potential disruptions to radio communication services, which may include the installation and maintenance of alternative sites;
- an assessment of potential hazards and risks associated with electric and magnetic fields (EMF) having regard to the latest advice of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA);
- an assessment of the risks to public safety, paying particular attention to bushfire risks, emergency egress and evacuation, the handling and use of any dangerous goods; and
- assess potential impacts on aviation safety, including:
  - defined air traffic routes, aircraft operating heights, approach / departure procedures, radar interference, communication systems, navigation aids, use of emergency helicopter access, aerial baiting and culling in the National Parks, safe and efficient aerial application of agricultural fertilisers and pesticide, and aerial fire control;
  - identify certified aerodromes within 30 km of the transmission line and uncertified aerodromes and landing areas within 10km of the transmission line, and consider the impact to nearby aerodromes and aircraft landing areas;
  - address impacts on obstacle limitation surfaces; and
  - identify aviation marking requirements, if any.

	Waste: • identify, quantify and classify the likely waste streams to be generated throughout all stages of the project, and describe the measures to be implemented to reduce waste generation, manage, reuse, recycle and safely dispose of this waste (in consultation with waste facilities, including Council). **Social Impact:** • an assessment of the social impacts or benefits of the project for the region and State as a whole in accordance with *Social Impact Assessment Guideline* (DPIE) and *SIA Guideline - Technical Supplement* (DPE) including consideration of any increase in demand for community infrastructure services, details of how the construction workforce will be managed to minimise local impacts and consideration of the need for construction workforce accommodation. **Economic:** • an assessment of the economic benefits of the project for the region and the State as a whole; and • details of any proposed benefit sharing arrangements.
Plans and Documents	The EIS must include all relevant plans, architectural drawings, diagrams and relevant documentation required under Part 8 of the EP&A Regulation. Provide these as part of the EIS rather than as separate documents. In addition, the EIS must include high quality files of maps and figures of the subject site and proposal.
Legislation, Policies & Guidelines	The assessment of the key issues listed above must take into account relevant guidelines, policies, and plans as identified. A list of some of the legislation, policies and guidelines that may be relevant to the assessment of the project can be found at: • https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Planning-reforms/Rapid-Assessment-Framework/Improving-assessment-guidance • https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/assessment/policies-and-guidelines; and • https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/publications#assessments.
Engagement	During the preparation of the EIS, you must consult with the relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, infrastructure and service providers, community groups, affected landowners, Native Title holders, exploration licence holders, quarry operators and mineral title holders.
Expiry Date	If you do not lodge an EIS for the infrastructure within 2 years of the issue date of these SEARs, your SEARs will expire. If an extension to these SEARs will be required, please consult with the Planning Secretary 3 months prior to the expiry date.