

Notice of Decision – Powering Sydney’s Future

Section 2.22 and clause 20 of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

Application type	State Significant Infrastructure (SSI)
Application number and project name	Powering Sydney’s Future (SSI 8583)
Applicant	TransGrid
Approving authority	Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Decision

On 14 May 2020, the Executive Director granted approval to Powering Sydney’s Future – Potts Hill to Alexandria Transmission Cable Project, subject to conditions under delegation from the minister for Planning and Public Spaces and section 5.19 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (**the Act**).

The project involves construction and operation of a new 330 kilovolt (kV) underground transmission cable circuit between the existing Rookwood Road substation in Potts Hill and the Beaconsfield West substation in Alexandria, as well as upgrades to the Sydney South, Rookwood Road and Beaconsfield West substations.

A copy of the instrument of approval and the Department’s assessment report is available at: <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/9956>

Date of decision

14 May 2020

Reasons for decision

The following matters were taken into consideration in making this decision:

- the SSI project application;
- TransGrid’s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS);
- issues raised in submissions;
- TransGrid’s Submissions Report and additional information;
- TransGrid’s Amendment Report;
- advice from key government agencies;
- relevant NSW legislation, policies and guidelines; and
- the findings and recommendations of the Department’s assessment report.

The key reasons for approving the Powering Sydney’s Future project were:

- the project is required to address existing issues in the electricity supply network for inner Sydney, and is critical to support the continued growth of Sydney;
- with the implementation of suitable mitigation measures, it can be carried out without causing any significant impacts;
- the Department has considered all relevant issues raised by the community and agencies in submissions, and addressed any residual issues in the recommended conditions of approval;
- it would deliver economic benefits to the State, including:
 - attracting capital investment of \$285 million; and
 - creating up to 140 jobs over the 24 month construction period; and
- on balance, it is in the public interest.

Attachment 1 – Consideration of Community Views

During the assessment of the Powering Sydney’s Future project, the Department consulted with the community, including the three relevant Councils – including Canterbury Bankstown Council, Inner West Council and the City of Sydney. The engagement included:

- making all information associated with the application request publicly available on the Department’s website;
- exhibiting the EIS from 11 October 2019 until 22 November 2019;
- requiring TransGrid to provide a formal response to the issues raised in submissions;
- inspecting the site and surrounds; and
- working closely with the relevant government agencies, including the relevant Councils, to consider and address key issues raised in submissions.

During the exhibition, the Department received 21 submissions on the project, including 11 from government agencies, 3 from special interest groups and 7 from the general public. None of the government agencies or special interest groups objected to the project, though each provided comments. Five of the public submissions objected to the project, while the remaining two provided comments.

The table below includes a summary of how the key issues raised by the community were taken into consideration. Detailed consideration of the project is provided in the Department’s assessment report.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Consideration</i>
<p>Amenity / social impacts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on well-being and sense of place / stress • Dust, visual, traffic • Impacts on park use and recreation • Impacts to property sales and short term accommodation 	<p>The main impacts relate to temporary amenity impacts during construction such as noise and vibration, dust, visual amenity, and traffic and transport (including access, disruption and congestion).</p> <p>The approval conditions require TransGrid to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare and implement a range of management plans, in consultation with the Councils including a detailed Community Consultation Strategy and effective complaints management system; and • ensure public access to all applicable project information. <p>The project is not expected to have any significant ongoing adverse socio-economic impacts during operations. The project would have considerable benefits by shoring up Sydney’s critical energy network supply.</p>
<p>Noise and vibration, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excavation and traffic noise, particularly night time works • Cracking on residential buildings 	<p>The assessment indicates that construction noise would affect a large number of residents and other receivers for relatively short periods. For trenching activities, ‘highly affected’ noise levels (ie. >75 decibels) would be experienced at approximately 2,000 receivers intermittently for approximately four days at each residence as the trenching activities move past the receiver.</p> <p>Vibration levels are able to be managed to comply with relevant criteria subject to compliance with minimum working distances and other mitigation measures.</p> <p>The approval conditions require TransGrid to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement reasonable and feasible measures to meet applicable noise and vibration criteria; • undertake most works during standard construction hours only; • provide respite periods for highly noise intensive works; • undertake noisy works outside standard construction hours in accordance with an out-of-hours works protocol; and • prepare and implement a comprehensive Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan, Community Consultation Strategy and complaints management system.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Consideration</i>
<p>Traffic and transport, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on road surface condition • Narrow neighbourhood streets not suitable for construction vehicles • Impacts on footpaths and cyclists • Impediment on emergency vehicle access • Impact on on-street residential parking 	<p>The project is likely to result in some temporary impacts to the amenity of the community particularly in relation to traffic disruption and people using buses on some streets during the construction works. However, the disruptions are unlikely to significantly impact the wider transport network.</p> <p>The approval conditions require TransGrid to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain pedestrian, vehicle and public transport access, and reasonable parking, for all affected properties and businesses, as far as practicable; • avoid trenching and joint bays in classified roads; and • prepare and implement a comprehensive Construction Traffic Management Plan including detailed Traffic Control Plans for each work site, in consultation with the relevant roads authorities.
<p>Electromagnetic Fields (EMF), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged exposure to EMF and impacts on residents 	<p>The EIS demonstrates that incremental and cumulative EMF levels associated with the project (and its future expansion) would comply with applicable criteria.</p> <p>The approval conditions require TransGrid to comply with applicable EMF criteria at all times.</p>
<p>Adequacy of assessment, consultation and project need, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of detail about specific cable locations • Cumulative impacts • Information flyers handed out to residents not sufficient • Impacts on electricity prices • Opportunities to co-locate assets 	<p>The Department is satisfied that TransGrid has adequately assessed the project, including cumulative impacts associated with other infrastructure projects and the potential future second transmission cable circuit (which would be subject to separate approval).</p> <p>The Department is also satisfied that TransGrid has assessed the need for the project and alternatives (including potential co-location). Based on this assessment, the Department considers that the project is needed to address existing issues in the electricity supply network for inner Sydney, and is critical to support Sydney's continued growth.</p>
<p>Air quality, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction dust impacts 	<p>The Department is satisfied that the project is unlikely to result in any significant air quality and odour impacts. The approval conditions require TransGrid to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimise emissions of dust and other pollutants; and • investigate and manage landfill gas as part of a Contaminated Land Management Plan.
<p>Soil and water, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on groundwater, Longswamp Creek and Sydney catchment 	<p>The Department is satisfied that soil and water related impacts can be appropriately managed. The approval conditions require TransGrid to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not pollute any waters; • undertake works on waterfront land in accordance with applicable guidelines; and • prepare and implement a comprehensive Soil and Water Management Plan, including a range of sub-plans to manage erosion and sedimentation, surface water, flooding, contaminated land and acid sulfate soils.