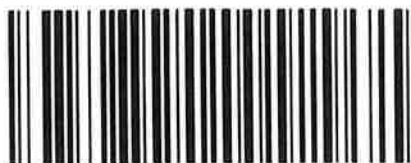




Heritage Council
of New South Wales



PCU012986

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Our Ref: A1228656
Your Ref: MP07-0171

Mick Fallon
Planner
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Mr Fallon

RE: Heritage Council comments on Hexham Redevelopment Project (incorporating QR National Trains Support Facility) – MP 07-0171.

The Heritage Council has received your letter inviting them to comment on the Environmental Assessment currently under exhibition for the QR National Train Support Facility which is part of the Hexham Redevelopment Project. Attached to your letter was a copy of the Environment Assessment by ADW Johnson and its accompanying appendices. Particular attention was paid to Appendix D- the Statement of Heritage Impact by EJE Heritage (dated August 2012).

It is noted that the object of the proposed works is to construct a train support facility within 38 hectares of the 255 hectare study area. This will involve:

- a provisioning road for the supply of fuel, water, wheel sand and the like;
- a train examination road for the monitoring of brakes, couplings, wheel profiles and wagon integrity;
- two cutting-out roads for the uncoupling of crippled wagons; and two wagon maintenance roads;
- storage sidings will also be laid.
- the facility will be connected by leads to and from the Down Coal Road; all movements will be protected by interlocked signals;
- a wagon maintenance running shed will be built, with a wash bay;
- a fuel storage area, initially consisting of two 100,000 litre tanks but with provision for future expansion to up to twice that capacity will also be installed;
- a second locomotive provisioning facility, locomotive running shed, wash bay, wheel lathe building and turntable will complete the motive power facilities;
- vehicular access to the site will be provided along an access road from the existing Tarro traffic interchange; and
- circulating roads and administrative offices will be built within the site.

It is also noted that a section of the proposed works takes place within the former Minmi-Hexham Railway, which was renamed the Richmond Vale Railway. This railway is considered to be of state historical significance as a rare example of a mid-nineteenth century private colliery railway whose route remains highly visible in the landscape today.

The proposed works necessitate the disturbance, concealment or removal of a range of built items related to this railway and the sites other former uses. These include the Hetton Bellbird weighbridge; the dairy; some concrete conveyor belt support footings; some coal preparation plant footings; the engine shed foundations; the Control Cabin; the Bath House; the footings of Brown's Crossing settlement; and some remnant items of track-work.

The Statement of Heritage Impact by EJE has assessed that the proposed QR National Train Support Facility (TSF) will have a very minimal inherent impact on the Heritage values of the site. While several items associated with previous uses, such as the dairy ruins, remnant track work, coal preparation plant footings and conveyor belt support footings, may be demolished, these have a low level of significance and their loss will not be detrimental.

There is also the potential for impacts to archaeological sites, specifically related to the settlement of Brown's Crossing and with the operation of steam locomotives and tTo offset these impacts, the Applicant has outlined 6 Statement of Commitments:

1. EH1: A Construction Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management Plan will be prepared and implemented, which will set out the mitigation and management strategies to be implemented to minimise potential impacts to European heritage items.
2. EH2: Serviceable bricks from the Control Box will be salvaged and appropriately reused in a symbolic linkage of the past and proposed uses of the place.
3. EH3: A plaque providing details of the site's heritage will to be located on the site.
4. EH4: An Excavation Director, with appropriate experience will be appointed prior to any excavation within the vicinity of the junction of the Minmi to Hexham Railway and the Great Northern Railway.
5. EH5: The Excavation Director will advise on archaeological matters associated with the excavation, and will ensure compliance with procedures to be adopted in the event of unexpected finds and measures for protecting heritage items that are to be conserved.
6. EH6: All archaeological deposits, features and relics that are exposed during the works associated with the proposed TSF will be recorded in accordance with Heritage Branch guidelines.

The Heritage Council considers that the above Statement of Commitments will be appropriate to manage the impacts of the proposal to the sites heritage with the addition of the following four supplementary Statement of Commitments:

- The Applicant will undertake an Interpretation Plan as an addendum of the Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management Plan to ensure that the proposed plaque and salvaged building materials are used to their fullest extent and placed in appropriate locations to ensure that the sites users are able understand and appreciate the sites history and heritage. This interpretation plan will be prepared by an appropriately qualified interpretation specialist and will be submitted to the Heritage Council for endorsement prior to the installation of these interpretive features.
- The Applicant will forward details of the proposed Excavation Director to the Heritage Council for endorsement prior to project works commencing.
- Should archaeological salvage excavation be required as part of the proposed works, the Excavation Director must forward an archaeological research design and methodology to the Heritage council for endorsement prior to any archaeological excavation commencing.
- At the end of archaeological works, the Applicant and Excavation Director will ensure that a final archaeological report is written which details all archaeological works and finds undertaken on site. This final archaeological report will conform to Heritage Council archaeological conditions regarding the style and content of final archaeological reports. A copy of the final archaeological report is required to be submitted to the Heritage Council Library.

If the above four supplementary conditions are not included in the final statement of commitments for Major Project 07_0171 (in addition to EH1-EH6), it is considered that this project will have an unacceptable impact on the heritage within the project boundaries.



If you have any questions regarding the above matter please contact Katrina Stankowski at the Heritage Branch on (02) 9873 8569.

Yours sincerely

11/12/2012

Vincent Sicari

Manager

Conservation Team

Office of Environment and Heritage

AS DELEGATE OF THE NSW HERITAGE COUNCIL

